

#### Welcome to Our Survey

Thank you for participating in our survey. Your feedback is important to us and will help inform the development of updated requirements and guidance to promote safe and effective care for patients.

The Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario (RCDSO) is seeking feedback on our current Maintaining a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationship Practice Advisory, which sets out requirements and guidance related to:

- building a professional patient-dentist relationship
- resolving interpersonal conflicts that arise between the patient and the dentist
- ending the professional patient-dentist relationship.

The survey should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

Survey responses will be saved and submitted when you click the 'Next' or 'Done' button on each page of the survey. You may complete a portion of the survey and return later to finish the survey or edit your responses, however, you must use the same device and web browser that you used to start the survey.

The deadline to provide feedback is 11:59 pm on October 20, 2024.

All survey responses will be carefully reviewed, and a summary of the feedback received will be provided to RCDSO's Council after the consultation closes. Your feedback is anonymous. Responses submitted by individuals on behalf of organizations will be attributed to the organization and not the individual respondent.

If you have any questions about this survey or RCDSO's Standards review and development process, please see  $\underline{RCDSO}$ 's website or email the Policy Team at  $\underline{patient.dentist.relationships@rcdso.org.}$ 



Preliminary Consultation Survey: Maintaining/Ending a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationship

Participant Type

1. Are you a:
General dentist (including retired)
Specialist dentist (including retired)
Oental student
Patient / Member of the public
Oral health care professional, other than dentist (e.g., dental hygienist, denturist, dental technician, including retired)
Non-oral health care professional (e.g., nurse, doctor, pharmacist, etc., including retired)
I prefer not to answer
Person responding on behalf of an organization (please specify)
RCDSO Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario
Preliminary Consultation Survey: Maintaining/Ending a Professional Patient- Dentist Relationship
ecialist Type
2. What is your primary specialty or, if you have retired, what was your primary specialty?
Oental Anesthesiology
Oental Public Health
○ Endodontology
Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology
Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
Oral Medicine and Pathology
Oral Medicine and Pathology Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics
Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics
Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics Pediatrics
Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics Pediatrics Periodontics



## Dentist Characteristics

If you are retired, please respond to the questions on this page based on your past experience.

* 3.	Where did you complete your highest level of dental education?
	Canada
	Australia, Ireland, New Zealand or United States of America (countries that have a mutually recognized system of accreditation of training with the RCDSO)
	I prefer not to answer
	Other (please specify)
1	
* 4.	How many years have you been in practice?
	0-10 years
	11-25 years
	26+ years
* 5.	What is your primary practice environment?
	Solo private dental clinic (one or more locations with one dentist)
	Group private dental clinic (one or more locations with more than one dentist)
	Corporate dental clinic (practice with some degree of third-party ownership and/or business support)
	Not-for-profit dental clinic (e.g., public health, community health centre, hospital, school, community-based)
	Other (please specify)
,	
	We would like to know more about your role(s) in your practice. Which of the following describes your primary role(s) in dentistry? Please check all that apply.
	Owner/Principal
	Associate/Independent Contractor
	Employee
	Clinic/Practice Manager (either formally or informally)
	Other (please specify)

*7. Describe the general location(s) where you work or practice. Please check all that apply.				
Extra-large urban area (population of 500,000 or more)				
Large urban area (population between 100,000 and 499,999)				
Medium urban area (population between 30,000 and 99,999)				
Small urban area (population between 1,000 and 29,999)				
Rural and/or remote (population less than 1,000)				
Other (please specify)				
	1			
* 8. Do you currently provide clinical care?				
Yes				
○ No				



Use and Usefulness of Resource

We want to know if and how you have used the current <u>Maintaining a Professional</u> <u>Patient-Dentist Relationship</u> <u>Practice Advisory</u>.

If you are retired, please respond to these questions based on your past experience.

9. Have you read the current Practice Advisory?
Yes, I have read the entire Practice Advisory
I have read parts of the Practice Advisory (e.g., the sections most applicable to my practice)
No, I have not read the Practice Advisory (if you answer "no", you will be skipped to the next set of questions in this survey)



Preliminary Consultation Survey: Maintaining/Ending a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationship

Use and Usefulness of Resource

* 10. How often do you refer to this Practice Advisory to inform your practice?  More than 5 times a year  3 to 5 times a year  1 or 2 times a year  Less than 1 time per year  Never
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Preliminary Consultation Survey: Maintaining/Ending a Professional Patient- Dentist Relationship
e and Usefulness of Resource
* 11. What are the reasons you refer to this Practice Advisory? Please check all that apply.  To better understand my professional responsibilities (e.g., to ensure compliance with practice requirements)  To improve quality of care (e.g., to improve relationships with your patients)  To educate patients (e.g., explain requirements, answer questions, manage concerns and/or expectations)  To teach and/or conduct research  Other (please specify)
* 12. Which topics in this Practice Advisory have you referred to? Please check all that apply (Note: the options below correspond to the topic area titles in the Practice Advisory. The Practice Advisory is linked <a href="https://example.com/here-nce">here</a> for reference).
Building the relationship
Resolving a conflict
Dismissing a patient
Moving beyond a professional relationship
Sample patient dismissal letter
Professional patient-dentist relationship FAQs



### Dentist Relationship

### Resolving Interpersonal Conflict with a Patient

We are interested in hearing about your experience addressing interpersonal conflict in professional patient-dentist relationships.

Interpersonal conflicts or disagreements can arise between dentists and patients for various reasons. Sometimes they are the result of a single incident; other times they are the culmination of a series of incidents (e.g., non-compliance with office policies or inappropriate behaviors).

*	13. Have you ever experienced an interpersonal conflict or disagreement with a patient?
	Yes
	○ No



Preliminary Consultation Survey: Maintaining/Ending a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationship

#### Resolving Interpersonal Conflict with a Patient

* 14. Think about the interpersonal conflicts or disagreements that you have experienced
with patients. What types of issues have contributed to those situations? Please check all that
apply.

Miscommunication
Interpersonal differences (e.g., political, cultural, religious)
Disagreement regarding a treatment plan or treatment options
Patient did not adhere to the treatment plan
Patient was unsatisfied with treatment outcome(s)
Patient was non-compliant with office policies
Patient exhibited rude or otherwise disruptive behavior in the office
Patient consistently missed appointments
Patient failed to pay an outstanding fee, or their account was in arrears
I prefer not to answer
Others? (please explain)

* 15. In general, what steps did you take to resolve these interpersonal conflicts or disagreements, if any? Please check all that apply.
I spoke with the patient directly, via a phone call or video call, to help resolve the situation
I spoke with the patient directly, in-person, to help resolve the situation
I wrote to the patient to help resolve the situation (e.g., hardcopy letter, e-mail)
The office manager or another staff person spoke with, or wrote to, the patient to help resolve the situation
I acknowledged the patient's perspective and/or perception of the situation
I discussed options to resolve the situation with the patient (e.g., an adjustment of fees, further treatment, referral to a specialist for a second opinion, adjustment of office policies, etc.)
After the conversation, a written follow-up was sent to the patient that summarized what was discussed
I prefer not to answer
Others? (please explain)

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Preliminary Consultation Survey: Maintaining/Ending a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationship

Ending patient-dentist relationships

We are interested in hearing about your experience ending professional patientdentist relationships for reasons other than reaching the normal or expected conclusion of the patient's care, or your relocation or retirement from the practice of dentistry.

The <u>Maintaining a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationship</u> Practice Advisory communicates requirements and guidance for ending a patient-dentist relationship, particularly where there is a conflict between the dentist and the patient that cannot be resolved.

* 16. Have you ever ended a patient-dentist relationship for reasons other than having
reached the normal or expected conclusion of the patient's care, relocation, or retirement?
○ Yes
$\bigcirc$ No



## Dentist Relationship

## Ending patient-dentist relationships

* 17. apply	What factors have led you to end the patient-dentist relationship? Please check all that y:
	Leaving the practice (i.e., ceasing to practice/retirement, relocation to an area that the patient cannot reasonably travel to)
	Reduction in practice size/hours
	Breakdown or loss of trust in the patient-dentist relationship due to an interpersonal conflict or disagreement that could not be resolved
	A conflict of interest arose (e.g., personal, financial or other) that would have compromised your ability to provide objective care moving forward.
	Inappropriate or disruptive patient behavior (e.g., threatening language)
	Unreasonable patient expectations regarding treatment outcomes
	Patient fraud, such as for the purpose of obtaining narcotics or other drugs
	Patient's willingness or ability to pay the full costs of care have changed (e.g., lost private insurance, enrolled in a government support program)
	Patient did not pay an outstanding fee or invoice
	Patient's needs for care changed such that their needs were outside your scope of practice.
	I prefer not to answer
	Others? (please explain)



Preliminary Consultation Survey: Maintaining/Ending a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationship

Ending patient-dentist relationships

18. How important do you think it is for dentists to take the following actions when ending the dentist-patient relationship? When answering this question, assume that the relationship is not ending due to threatening or violent patient behaviour.

	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Low Importance	Not Important At All	Not Sure / Not Applicable
Providing verbal notice of the relationship ending	$\circ$	$\circ$	$\circ$		$\circ$	$\circ$
Providing written notice of the relationship ending	$\bigcirc$		$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\circ$
Explaining to the patient why the relationship is ending	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$		$\bigcirc$	
Transferring the care of the patient to another dentist	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
Providing assistance to the patient in seeking a new dentist	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\circ$	$\circ$	$\circ$	$\circ$
Offering to provide urgent or emergency care until the patient finds a new dentist (i.e., there is no set time limit on the offer to provide emergency care)	0	$\bigcirc$				
Making arrangements for the patient to obtain emergency dental services at another location	0	0	$\bigcirc$			
Others? (please explain)						

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Preliminary Consultation Survey: Maintaining/Ending a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationship

Ending the Patient-Specialist Dentist Relationship

* 19. Do you think there are any unique considerations for	ending a relationship between a
patient and a specialist dentist (e.g., an orthodontist) prior	to or as part of the natural or
expected end of care?	
○ No	
☐ I'm not sure	
Yes (please explain)	



Professional Patient-Dentist Relationships

We would like to learn about any experiences you may have had with your patient-dentist relationship ending for reasons other than the natural or expected end of care. This may have occurred, for example, in a situation where there was a fundamental disagreement between you and your dentist that could not be resolved.

\* 20. Has your dentist ever ended their professional relationship with you for reasons unrelated to the expected end of your care, or their retirement, relocation, or a leave of absence?

Yes No

I prefer not to say



Preliminary Consultation Survey: Maintaining/Ending a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationship

Professional Patient-Dentist Relationships

* 21.	. What was the reason that your dentist ended the relationship? Please check all that
appl	y.
	I moved away
	I joined a government-funded oral health program or started receiving social assistance
	I lost private insurance and could no longer afford care
	I was unable to pay an outstanding fee or invoice, or comply with payment terms outlined in an agreement between me and my dentist $\frac{1}{2}$
	I or the dentist identified a conflict of interest (e.g., personal, financial or other professional interest or obligation) that could not be resolved and would have compromised the dentist's ability to provide objective care moving forward
	Dentist reduced their practice size/hours
	Dentist did not meet your expectations with respect to treatment outcomes
	Breakdown or loss of trust in the patient-dentist relationship due to an interpersonal conflict or disagreement that could not be resolved
	Disciplinary action against the dentist by the RCDSO resulting in the revocation or suspension of their license, or other disciplinary outcomes
	The proposed treatment was outside of the dentist's scope of practice
	Others? (please explain)
	Did your dentist first try to resolve the issue that led to them ending the patient-dentist
relat	cionship? If so, how?
$\bigcirc$	No
	Not Applicable
	Yes, please explain
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Preliminary Consultation Survey: Maintaining/Ending a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationship

Professional Patient-Dentist Relationships

We are interested in hearing your opinions about dentists resolving interpersonal conflicts or disagreements with patients.

## 23. In your opinion, how important is it for dentists to take the following actions when resolving an interpersonal conflict or disagreement with a patient?

resolving an interpersonal connect of disagreement with a patient:						
	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Low Importance	Not Important At All	Not Sure/ Not Applicable
The dentist should speak with the patient directly, via a phone call or video call, to help resolve the situation	0	0	$\circ$	0	0	0
The dentist should speak with the patient directly, inperson, to help resolve the situation	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	0
The dentist should write to the patient to help resolve the situation (e.g., hardcopy letter, e-mail)	0	0	0	0	0	0
The office manager or another staff person should speak with, or write to, the patient to help resolve the situation	$\circ$	$\circ$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	0
The dentist should acknowledge the patient's perspective and/or perception of the situation	0	0	$\circ$	0	0	0
The dentist should discuss options to resolve the situation with the patient (e.g., an adjustment of fees, further treatment, referral to a specialist for a second opinion, adjustment of office policies, etc.)						
After the conversation, the dentist should send a written follow-up to the patient that summarizes what was discussed	0	0	0	0	0	0
I prefer not to answer		$\bigcirc$				$\bigcirc$
Others? (please explain)						



Professional Patient-Dentist Relationships

We are interested in hearing your opinions about dentists ending professional patient-dentist relationships.

# 24. In your opinion, how important is it for dentists to take the following actions when ending a patient-dentist relationship?

	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Low Importance	Not Important At All	Not Sure / Not Applicable
If there has been any sort of interpersonal conflict or disagreement between the patient and the dentist, the dentist should try to resolve the conflict or disagreement before ending the patient-dentist relationship					0	
The dentist should transfer the patient's care to another dentist			$\bigcirc$		$\bigcirc$	
The dentist should provide verbal notice of the relationship ending	$\circ$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\circ$	$\bigcirc$	$\circ$
The dentist should provide written notice of the relationship ending	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$
The dentist should explain the reason for the relationship ending	$\circ$	$\bigcirc$		$\circ$	$\circ$	$\circ$
The dentist should offer urgent or emergency care until a new dentist has been found	$\bigcirc$	$\circ$	$\circ$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	0
The dentist should support the patient in finding a new dentist (e.g., provide suggestions for how the patient can find a new dentist, provide contact information for other dentists)			0		0	
Others? (please explain)						

Review of the Maintaining a Professional-Patient-Dentist Relationship Practice Advisory

We would like to ask you some questions about the current Maintaining a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationship Practice Advisory. To answer these questions, it is important that you have read the Practice Advisory.

If you have not read the Practice Advisory, you can do so by clicking <u>here</u>. The Practice Advisory is less than 4 pages in length.

* 25. Have you read the current Maintaining a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationsl	nıp
Practice Advisory?	
Yes, I have read the Practice Advisory	
No, I have not read the Practice Advisory (if you answer "no", you will be skipped to the next set of questions in this survey)	f



Preliminary Consultation Survey: Maintaining/Ending a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationship

Evaluating the Maintaining a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationship Practice Advisory

The following questions will help us understand if the current Practice Advisory, linked <u>here</u>, meets your needs and/or expectations, and if not, why.

20. In your opinion, now older to the ourroiner radiation reavisory.
Extremely clear
○ Very clear
Somewhat clear
○ Not so clear
Not at all clear
Optional: What about the current Practice Advisory is unclear, if anything?

\* 26. In your opinion, how clear is the current Practice Advisory?

* 27. Overall, do you think the current Practice Advisory includes the important and relevant topics related to maintaining and ending professional patient-dentist relationships?
Yes
Partially
○ No
○ I'm not sure
Optional: If any are missing, which important and relevant topics should be included, and why?
* 28. Do you think the current Practice Advisory includes any unnecessary information that should be removed (e.g., unnecessary requirements, guidance, or other content)?
○ No
◯ I'm not sure
○ Yes
Optional: What information do you think is unnecessary, if any, and why do you think it's unnecessary?
* 29. Do you think the expectations in the current Practice Advisory are reasonable for dentists?  Yes, all are reasonable  Some are reasonable
No, none are reasonable
◯ I'm not sure
Optional: Which expectations in the current document do you think are unreasonable, if any, and why do you think they are unreasonable?
* 30. Do you think the current Practice Advisory adequately supports dentists in providing safe and effective oral health care?
Partially
○ No
○ I'm not sure
Optional: How do you think the current Practice Advisory could more effectively support dentists in providing safe and effective oral health care, if at all?



Sample Dismissal Letter

We would like to ask you about the RCDSO's current sample patient dismissal letter. To answer these questions, it is important that you have read the letter.

The sample dismissal letter is half a page long and can be found here.

	51.	. Have you read the current sample dismissal letter?
	$\bigcirc$	Yes, I have read the sample dismissal letter
this Practice Advisory)		No, I have not read the Practice Advisory (if you answer "no", you will be asked for your final feedback of this Practice Advisory)



Preliminary Consultation Survey: Maintaining/Ending a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationship

#### Sample Dismissal Letter

* 32. Do you think the current sample patient dismissal letter is helpful?
○ Very helpful
○ Helpful
Somewhat helpful
Slightly helpful
Not helpful at all
* 33. Do you have any suggestions for how the sample patient dismissal letter could be
improved or made more useful?
○ No
Yes (please explain)



Dentist Relationship	
Final Feedback on the Practice Advisory	
34. Optional: Please share with us any feedback that this Practice Advisory or on the topic of professional	0 1
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Demographics Introduction

#### Questions for all respondents, except organizations

We welcome you to voluntarily share some demographic information about yourself. The RCDSO strives to protect the public interest while using processes that achieve meaningful equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility across all of our regulatory programs and projects.

Therefore, we are collecting demographic information to help us identify whether our consultation process is inclusive, and whether we are receiving a diversity of perspectives.

Please note that any demographic information that you provide through the survey will be anonymous, and your responses will be stored securely. Your demographic information will be aggregated for internal/external reporting purposes and will not be linked to you.

* 35. Would	ld you like to complete thes	e demographic questions?
Yes		
O No		



Preliminary Consultation Survey: Maintaining/Ending a Professional Patient-Dentist Relationship

Demographics

* 36. What is the location of your primary residence?				
Ontario				
Another province or territory in Canada, please specify				
Outside of Canada				
I prefer not to answer				
Another province or territory in Canada (please specify)				
st 37. Describe the general area where your primary residence is located.				
Extra-large urban area (population of 500,000 or more)				
Large urban area (population between 100,000 and 499,999)				
Medium urban area (population between 30,000 and 99,999)				
Small urban area (population between 1,000 and 29,999)				
Rural and/or remote (population less than 1,000)				
I prefer not to answer				
Other (please specify)				
* 38. How old are you?				
19 years old or under				
20-29 years old				
30-39 years old				
○ 40-49 years old				
○ 50-59 years old				
○ 60-69 years old				
70+ years old				
☐ I prefer not to answer				

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* 42. Please indicate which of the following terms best describe your sexual orientation. Check as many as apply (options are in alphabetical order).		
Asexual		
Bisexual		
Gay		
Heterosexual		
Lesbian		
Pansexual		
Queer		
Questioning		
Two-Spirit		
Other (please specify)		
I prefer not to answer		
* 43. Do you identify as an Indigenous person? Please check all that apply.		
Yes, First Nations (Status and Non-Status)		
Yes, Métis		
Yes, Inuit		
Yes, an Indigenous person from outside of Canada		
I prefer not to answer		
Yes, other (please specify)		
No No		
14. Please describe your ethnicity in whatever terms are most meaningful to you.		
* 45. Do you speak French?		
Yes, I am fluent		
Yes, but with significant limitations		
○ No ○ I prefer not to answer		
/ ) I protor not to answer		

* 46	. What is your faith, religion and/or spiritual affiliation? Please check all that apply.
	Agnostic
	Atheist
	Buddhist
	Christian
	Hindu
	Indigenous spirituality
	Jewish
	Muslim
	Sikh
	I prefer not to answer
	Other (please specify)
	No religion or spiritual affiliation
* 47	. Do you identify as a person with a disability or disabilities?
$\bigcirc$	Yes
	Sometimes, depending on the context
$\bigcirc$	No
	I prefer not to answer



Demographics (Disability Type)

* 48 orde		disability. Pleas	se check all that app	oly (options are lis	ted in alphabetical	
	Auditory					
	Cognitive (memory,	focus, attention,	consciousness, etc.)			
	Dexterity (related to use of fingers, hands, etc.)					
	Developmental					
	Fatigue-related					
	Flexibility					
	Gastrointestinal					
	Intellectual (e.g., L	earning)				
	Invisible					
	Mobility (movemen	t, balance, coordi	nation, etc.)			
	Mental Health-related					
	Pain-related					
	Sight					
	Speech					
	Urinary					
	Other (please speci	fy)				
	I prefer not to answ	/er				
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	RC	CDSO	Royal College Dental Surge	of ons of Ontario	O	
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Surve	y Evaluation					
Thank	k you for partici	pating in our	survey!			
49. Ho	w would you rate	your overall	survey experience?			
Ver	y negative	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Very positive	



Dentist Relationship	J/Ending a Professional Patient-
Survey Evaluation	
50. How might your survey experience be improved?	