

# JOINT POSITION STATEMENT

## Qualified Dental Hygiene Providers

**The American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA®) and the International Federation of Dental Hygienists (IFDH) strongly advocate for the delivery of dental hygiene care exclusively by qualified professionals who have completed proper accredited educational programs and obtained licensure in compliance with the regulatory standards of the nation in which they are practicing.**

As essential oral health professionals, dental hygienists play a vital role in disease prevention, health promotion, clinical assessments and therapeutic care. At the entry level, licensed dental hygienists take at a minimum 84-120 credit hours to complete a rigorous, focused curriculum [ADEA - Dental Hygiene Programs](#). Those with advanced degrees take even more credit hours to enhance their professional knowledge and competency. To safeguard public health, uphold quality standards, and maintain professional accountability, it is imperative that only those who have met established educational, clinical, and licensing requirements provide dental hygiene services.

We advocate for policies that:

- Recognize dental hygienists as primary oral healthcare providers with the authority to practice autonomously within their full scope of education and licensure.
- Ensure that all providers of dental hygiene care meet rigorous educational standards established by accredited institutions to maintain excellence in person-centered care.
- Support licensure systems that uphold competency-based qualifications to protect patient safety and advance best practices in oral healthcare.
- Oppose the provision of dental hygiene services by unqualified or inadequately trained individuals, as this compromises patient outcomes, professional integrity, and public trust.
- Oppose the provision of dental hygiene services by unqualified or inadequately trained individuals as this could be detrimental to patient health.

The ADHA and IFDH remain steadfast in their commitment to advancing the profession, protecting public health, and ensuring that all individuals receive safe, high-quality care from properly trained, educated, and licensed dental hygienists. Such standards are vital to promote the health of the public in the United States and around the world.