



WOMEN IN DENTISTRY — THE CHANGING DENTAL WORKFORCE

- Up until the 1970s, dentistry was traditionally a profession dominated by men, with women principally working in supporting roles, such as dental assistants or dental hygienists.
- This has shifted significantly over the past several decades. As of 2021, roughly 40% of dentists in Canada were women, and gender parity is expected by 2035.
- This is even higher among new immigrants to Canada, with 45% of dentists being women according to 2016 census data.
- Since 2010, the majority of students enrolled in dental schools in North America are now women.
- There is still progress to be made for the dental sector as a whole when it comes to breaking traditional gender stereotypes. For example, as of 2021, 98% of dental hygienists and 99% of dental assistants were women.



CANADIAN
DENTAL
ASSOCIATION

CDA is a federation of Canada's provincial and territorial dental associations, representing over 21,000 practising dentists from coast to coast to coast.

The Canadian Dental Association (CDA) is the national voice for dentistry dedicated to the promotion of optimal oral health, an essential component of general health, and to the advancement and leadership of a unified profession.

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Women in Dentistry — The Changing Dental Workforce

Highlights of key women in Canadian dentistry:

- **Emma Gaudreau Casgrain** trained as a dentist under her husband and graduated from the Dental College of the Province of Quebec (precursor to McGill Faculty of Dentistry), she became licensed in 1898 and was the first woman to practise dentistry in Quebec.
- C.L. (Caroline Louisa) **Josephine Wells** gained admission to the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario to be able to take over the practice of her husband. She graduated in 1893 and began practising in Ontario, later completing her doctorate in 1899.
- Over a century later, in 2008, **Dr. Deborah Stymiest** became the first woman to lead the Canadian Dental Association (CDA) as President, having previously served as President of the New Brunswick Dental Society and on the CDA Board of Directors.

CDA is proud to welcome two women leaders in dentistry as our President over the next two years:

- **Dr. Lynn Tomkins**, of Toronto, recently became CDA's second female President, after previously serving as President of the Ontario Dental Association and on CDA's Board of Directors.
- She will be followed next year by **Dr. Heather Carr**, of Halifax, currently President-Elect of the CDA Board of Directors. She previously led the Nova Scotia Dental Association and served on the CDA Board.



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