



Dr. Deborah Stymiest

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## A Time of Change

It is my pleasure to address you for the first time as president of the Canadian Dental Association. To have the opportunity to serve as the 90th president and to be CDA's first female leader is humbling and truly an honour.

CDA has a long and proud history, with a solid foundation laid by the many men and women in dentistry who have volunteered their time to strengthen the profession, ensuring that dentistry has a national voice and that Canadians receive optimal oral care. As a national organization, we have much to be proud of.

I have been most fortunate to work with CDA's immediate past-president Dr. Darryl Smith for many years. Dr. Smith served as a tireless and dedicated president, and in his travels across Canada, he reached out and reconnected with our corporate members and stakeholders along the way. As a result of his efforts, the wheels have been set in motion to enact positive change.

My tenure as CDA president will be focused on continuing the momentum and managing the changes that are anticipated in the coming months. At CDA's recent annual general meeting, roles and responsibilities were examined and priorities set. I am excited to work closely with members of the provincial dental associations, specialist groups, CDA staff and the Board of Directors as we reinforce our working relationships and realign our core activities.

CDA has traditionally performed the role of facilitating consensus among the provincial dental associations and our many stakeholders on matters important to all Canadian dentists. I believe that CDA can continue this valuable function of providing the appropriate forums for bringing people together to discuss and find

solutions to complex issues that are vital to the oral health of Canadians and to the advancement of the entire profession.

There is a consensus that CDA should begin to focus on fewer areas of expertise and identify activities that are more closely aligned to its mission statement and its role as the national unified voice of Canadian dentistry. I firmly believe that CDA can remain a highly effective organization by building a stronger Canadian dental community that is inclusive and collaborative.

Advocacy and communication will remain priorities throughout my presidency. CDA must continue to advocate strongly on behalf of dentists. The Association will provide a unified and consistent approach in its messaging to government, media and the public on national oral health issues. With communication, CDA will continue to keep dentists informed about important clinical and professional issues. Our corporate members and specialist groups will work more closely with CDA to bolster our efforts in these areas.

Communication can also take the form of more personal, colleague-to-colleague conversations. This is your opportunity to be heard and we will be listening. I encourage you to talk with members of your provincial organization or your provincial CDA representative, and offer your feedback and ideas for the profession. As my duties as CDA president take me across the country this year, I look forward to meeting many of you. I am approachable and a good listener, but most importantly, I am passionate about the profession.

CDA is committed to delivering exceptional value while we redefine our core activities and allocate resources to areas that require it most. When I address you at this time next year, I am confident that I can deliver a message of success, while forging an exciting new chapter in CDA's history.

Coming together is a beginning, keeping together will be progress and working together will be our success.

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