

FOR RELEASE  
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## **Government of Yukon tables Act to Amend the Dental Profession Act**

The Government of Yukon today tabled Bill No. 7, the Act to Amend the Dental Profession Act, which will authorize dental hygienists to offer services that are not permitted under the current Act.

At present, only dental therapists are authorized to provide dental care to children through the Yukon Children's Dental Program—which might include cleaning, scaling, and polishing—prior to a dentist seeing the patient.

Although dental hygienists are also trained and qualified to provide this care, the current statute prevents them from doing so—which makes offering a critical part of the children's dental program much more difficult.

The amended legislation will authorize dental hygienists to provide a number of services prior to a dentist's examination, and thus fully use their training and qualifications. They will also be able to provide additional care at the specific direction by the dentist after they have examined the patient.

### **Quotes**

"All Yukon children deserve good dental health. Expanding the scope of practice for the territory's dental hygienists will mean the Yukon Children's Dental Program will be able to continue to offer a high standard of care. Thanks to the feedback we received from the public and dental professionals, we know there is broad support for the proposed changes."

*—Minister of Community Services John Streicker*

### **Quick facts**

- At one time, there were as many as nine dental therapists providing care through the children's program. Today, only two remain. The closing of the only Canadian training program for dental therapists in 2011 has resulted in these professionals no longer being readily available.
- Dental professionals and the public in Yukon were invited to provide their feedback from May 19 to June 26, 2017 on proposed changes to the *Dental Professions Act* and regulations. Feedback was received from four dentists and nine dental hygienists.
- Modern dental hygienists are trained to deliver many of the same services as were previously provided only by dental therapists. They are qualified to provide services such as x-rays, applying fluoride treatments, applying sealant treatments and providing interim stabilization treatments.

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