



Canadian Marketing Regulations for the Dental Industry by Province

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Introduction



Marketing and advertising your practice is important. However, in most cases, there are rules set out by a regulatory body detailing what can and cannot be said or implied in marketing materials. Moreover, these rules tend to change from region to region. This consolidated guide is designed to highlight all of the regulations applied to dental marketing for each province and territory.

Please note, this guide is only an interpretation of the bylaws it describes. It is not meant to replace or supercede any act, code, or regulatory documents. Please contact the regulatory body in your region for clarification.

What Constitutes Marketing Materials?

The term “marketing materials” refers to anything and everything designed to educate patients about your service and entice them to take advantage of your services. Marketing materials may include, but is not limited to:

- Websites
- Brochures
- Direct mail collateral
- Email campaigns
- Social media posts
- Blog entries
- Interior or exterior signage
- Display advertisements
- Search advertisements
- Radio and video advertisements



British Columbia

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British Columbia

Source: College of Dental Surgeons of British Columbia

General Rules

Content Must Be:

- 100% truthful. Dental practices cannot claim or imply anything that is not entirely true.
 - Unacceptable: *"Invisalign is more effective than traditional braces."*
 - Acceptable: *"Some patients may find Invisalign to be more effective than traditional braces."*
- Objectively verifiable. Dental practices that can not be proven as true and accurate.
 - Unacceptable: *"Our patients always leave satisfied."*
 - Acceptable: *"Our staff undergoes annual customer service training."*



British Columbia

Under No Circumstance Should Content:

- Encourage patients to ask for or receive services which are not in their best interest.
 - You can still cover and discuss the **potential** benefits of certain services assuming you also discuss the conditions of candidacy, making it clear that the service may not be right for every type of patient.
- Demean the dignity or integrity of the profession.
- Use the word specialise, or any variation, unless the doctor is certified by the College of Dental Surgeons of British Columbia to hold specialist distinction.
- Mention free or discounted services unless it refers to patients who would not otherwise have access to this care
 - *For example, dental practices may mention the availability of free services to patients living with homelessness.*



British Columbia

Qualifications

- When discussing a dentist, materials must include the dentist's name, followed by their distinction as either a general dentist or certified specialist.
- If discussing a certified specialist, you must **immediately** list their certified specialty.
- A dentist may list their additional degrees or designations aside from their dental certification, however, **their dental certification must be listed first.**
- When listing additional degrees or certifications, you must include the **year obtained, jurisdiction in which obtained,** and the **name of the granting institution.**

Example of Qualification Rules:

Certified Specialist

Dr. Faranak Zaeimdar
Board Certified Specialist in Prosthodontics
Clinical Assistant Professor, UBC Dental Faculty

General Dentist

Dr. Tom Karkanis
General Dentist
Doctor of Cellular Physiology, University of Western Ontario, 1991



Alberta

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Alberta

Source: Alberta Dental Association & College

General Rules

Content Must:

- Be 100% truthful. Dental practices cannot claim or imply anything that is not entirely true.
 - Unacceptable: *"Invisalign is more effective than traditional braces."*
 - Acceptable: *"Some patients may find Invisalign to be more effective than traditional braces."*
- Be objectively verifiable. Dental practices that can not be proven as true and accurate.
 - Unacceptable: *"Our patients always leave satisfied."*
 - Acceptable: *"Our staff undergoes annual customer service training."*
- Give patients **reasonable** expectations of service results
 - Unacceptable: *"You'll have the white smile you always dreamed of."*
 - Acceptable: *"You smile could be up to three shades lighter."*
- State that services are performed by general dentists (unless they are performed by ADA&C authorized specialists.)
 - You can comply with this rule by ensuring all materials include the phrase
"All services are performed by general dentists."



Alberta

Under No Circumstance Should Content:

- Encourage patients to ask for or receive services which are not in their best interest.
 - *You may still cover and discuss the **potential** benefits of certain services assuming you also discuss the conditions of candidacy, making it clear that the service may not be right for every type of patient.*
- Demean the dignity or integrity of the profession
- Use the word specialise, or any variation, unless the doctor is certified by the ADA&C to hold specialist distinction
- Mention free or discounted services unless it refers to patients who would not otherwise have access to this care
 - *For example, dental practices may mention the availability of free services to patients living with homelessness.*
- Imply staff, product, or service superiority over other practices



Alberta

Charity & Donations

If your practice runs a promotion wherein a portion of a service charge is donated to charity, marketing materials must disclose all details, including how much will be donated and to which organization the donations will be made. Patient-related details must be highlighted as well, which could include the timeframe of the promotion, whether all patients are eligible for the promotion, and who will receive a tax-deductible receipt.

Outside Sources

If the client wishes to reference or post content from an outside source (an article, a blog, a product website, etc.) the content must be properly credited and must not create unrealistic expectations among patients.

Qualifications

A dentist may only mention their DDS (Doctor of Dental Surgery) or DMD (Doctor of Medical Dentistry) degree in marketing materials. Degrees relevant to Council-recognised dental specialties may be mentioned as well. **You may not mention any degrees, diplomas, courses or awards that do not directly relate to Council recognized specialties.**



Alberta

Titles

All members of the Alberta Dental Association & College may be referred to as “*Dr.*”, “*Dentist*”, or “*Doctor*”. The following titles may only be applied to dentists authorized by the ADA&C:

- Endodontist
- Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon
- Orthodontist and Dentofacial Orthopedist;
- Pediatric Dentist
- Periodontist
- Oral Medicine and Pathology Specialist
- Oral and Maxillofacial Radiologist
- Public Health Dentist

Note that a fellowship in a specialized area does not equate specialist status.



Saskatchewan

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Saskatchewan

Source: Saskatchewan College of Dental Surgeons

General Rules

Content Must:

- Be 100% truthful. Dental practices cannot claim or imply anything that is not entirely true.
 - Unacceptable: *"Invisalign is more effective than traditional braces."*
 - Acceptable: *"Some patients may find Invisalign to be more effective than traditional braces."*
- Be objectively verifiable. Dental practices that can not be proven as true and accurate.
 - Unacceptable: *"Our patients always leave satisfied."*
 - Acceptable: *"Our staff undergoes annual customer service training."*
- Give patients **reasonable** expectations of service results.
 - Unacceptable: *"You'll have the white smile you always dreamed of."*
 - Acceptable: *"You smile could be up to three shades lighter."*
- Clarify that the practitioner is not a specialist when referencing a specific area of practice.
 - Unacceptable: *"We offer pediatric dentistry."*
 - Acceptable: *"We offer pediatric dentistry."*
Accompanied by the phrase
"Services performed by a general dentist" somewhere on the same page.

Saskatchewan

Under No Circumstance Should Content:

- Encourage patients to ask for or receive services which are not in their best interest
 - You may still cover and discuss the **potential** benefits of certain services assuming you also discuss the conditions of candidacy, making it clear that the service may not be right for every type of patient.
- Demean the dignity or integrity of the profession
- Use the word specialise, or any variation thereof unless the doctor is a board-certified specialist
- Mention free or discounted services
- Imply staff, product, or service superiority over other practices
- Include testimonials of any kind
- Mention any technology or products by name



Saskatchewan

Qualifications

A dentist may mention their DDS (Doctor of Dental Surgery) or DMD (Doctor of Medical Dentistry) degree in marketing materials. The content may reference other degrees, assuming they were awarded by an institution accredited by the Saskatchewan College of Dental Surgeons.

Awards, fellowships, and honorary degrees are not to be referenced in marketing materials.

Specialization

A general dentist may advertise the following specialized areas of practice, **as long as they indicate that the services are not performed by a specialist:**

- Endodontics
- Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
- Orthodontics
- Pediatrics
- Periodontics
- Prosthodontics
- Oral Radiology
- Public Health Dentistry
- Oral Medicine and Pathology

A practitioner may only advertise themselves as a specialist if they have a valid specialist's certificate.



Manitoba

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Manitoba

Source: Manitoba Dental Association

General Rules

Content Must:

- Be 100% truthful. Dental practices cannot claim or imply anything that is not entirely true.
 - Unacceptable: *"Invisalign is more effective than traditional braces."*
 - Acceptable: *"Some patients may find Invisalign to be more effective than traditional braces."*
- Be objectively verifiable. Dental practices that can not be proven as true and accurate.
 - Unacceptable: *"Our patients always leave satisfied."*
 - Acceptable: *"Our staff undergoes annual customer service training."*

Content Must Not

- Demean the dignity or integrity of the profession
- Use the word specialise, or any variation thereof unless the doctor is a board certified specialist
- Imply that common services or procedures (such as sterilization procedures or root canals) are unique to the practice in question



Manitoba

Outside Sources

If the client wishes to reference or post content from an outside source (an article, a blog, a product website, etc.) the content must be properly credited, and must not create unrealistic expectations among patients.

Titles

A dentist must specify whether they have a DDS (Doctor of Dental Surgery) or DMD (Doctor of Medical Dentistry) degree in marketing materials.

Fellowships and honorary degrees are not to be used in marketing materials.

Only doctors with express authorization from the MDA may use the titles:

- Endodontist
- Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon
- Orthodontist and Dentofacial Orthopedist
- Pediatric Dentist
- Periodontist
- Prosthodontist
- Oral Pathologist
- Oral and Maxillofacial Radiologist
- Oral Medicine Specialist
- Public Health Dentist



Ontario

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Ontario

Source: Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario

General Rules

Content Must:

- Be 100% truthful. Dental practices cannot claim or imply anything that is not entirely true.
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 - Acceptable: *"Some patients may find Invisalign to be more effective than traditional braces."*
- Be objectively verifiable. Dental practices that can not be proven as true and accurate.
 - Unacceptable: *"Our patients always leave satisfied."*
 - Acceptable: *"Our staff undergoes annual customer service training."*



Ontario

Content Must Not

- Demean the dignity or integrity of the profession
- Use the word specialise, or any variation thereof unless the doctor is a board-certified specialist
- Imply that common services or procedures (such as sterilization procedures or root canals) are unique to the practice in question
- Imply staff, product, or service superiority over other practices
- Create an expectation of results
- Prey on fears of the public
- Include testimonials based on opinions or beliefs.

Prices and Promotions

Dentists may advertise their standard fees for a service, however, **the advertised fee must be the maximum total cost** including material and laboratory costs. The advertised cost must be the same for all patients, including those without insurance coverage.

Giveaways, coupons, contests, draws, and free services or products are strictly prohibited.



Ontario

Titles & Additional Designations

You must indicate whether each dentist is a general dentist or a certified specialist. If you are a certified specialist (as certified by the College) you must specify in which field you specialize.

Any programs, degrees, fellowships, or diplomas a dentist has achieved or participated may not appear in any promotional copy, aside from the degrees or diplomas necessary to become certified by the college. You must also avoid mention of any continuing education institutions as well as memberships of any societies, etc.

This includes readers' choice awards and summa cum laude or cum laude distinction.



Quebec

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Quebec

Source: Ordre des Dentistes du Quebec

General Rules

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 - Acceptable: *"Some patients may find Invisalign to be more effective than traditional braces."*
- Be objectively verifiable. Dental practices that can not be proven as true and accurate.
 - Unacceptable: *"Our patients always leave satisfied."*
 - Acceptable: *"Our staff undergoes annual customer service training."*
- Give patients **reasonable** expectations of service results
 - Unacceptable: *"You'll have the white smile you always dreamed of."*
 - Acceptable: *"Your smile could be up to three shades lighter."*
- Include the word "Service" in the description of any service
 - Unacceptable: *"Our cosmetic dentistry is performed by a general dentist."*
 - Acceptable: *"Our cosmetic dentistry services are performed by a general dentist."*



Quebec

Under No Circumstance Should Content:

- Demean the dignity or integrity of the profession
- Use the word specialise, or any variation thereof unless the doctor is a board-certified specialist
- Include endorsements or testimonials
- Offer any sort of guarantee; literal or hypothetical
- Imply staff, product, or service superiority over other practices

Special Services & Specialisations

A general dentist **must** include “general dentist” as well as the abbreviations for their college-recognized degrees in any kind of advertisement for a service.

The dentist may only use the terms “dentist” or “dental surgeon” when describing themselves. If they are a certified specialist in an order-recognized area, the specialist title may be included as well.



Quebec

Listing Prices

When advertising prices, you must include the following:

- Regular price
- Date at which the exceptional price ends (MUST use the phrases “*regular price*,” “*exceptional price*,” and “*exceptional price ends*”)
- Where the exceptional price is offered
- What kind of services or products to which the exceptional price applies
- Any additional services required but not included

When represented graphically (such as on fliers or web pages) the regular price and exceptional price must be the same size.



Newfoundland & Labrador

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Newfoundland & Labrador

Source: Newfoundland & Labrador Dental Board

General Rules

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- Be 100% truthful. Dental practices cannot claim or imply anything that is not entirely true.
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 - Unacceptable: *"Our patients always leave satisfied."*
 - Acceptable: *"Our staff undergoes annual customer service training."*
- Give patients **reasonable** expectations of service results.
 - Unacceptable: *"You'll have the white smile you always dreamed of."*
 - Acceptable: *"You smile could be up to three shades lighter."*
- Clarify that the practitioner is a general dentist when referencing a specific area of practice.
 - Unacceptable: *"The doctor will then fasten a prosthetic tooth to the implant."*
 - Acceptable: *"Our general dentist with then fasten a prosthetic tooth to the implant."*



Newfoundland & Labrador

Under No Circumstance Should Content:

- Demean the dignity or integrity of the profession
- Use the word specialise, or any variation thereof unless the doctor is a board-certified specialist
- Imply staff, product, or service superiority over other practices
- Include testimonials
- Capitalize the “c” in cosmetic dentistry

Listing Prices

When advertising prices, you must include the following:

- Regular price
- Date at which the exceptional price ends (MUST use the phrases “*regular price*,” “*exceptional price*,” and “*exceptional price ends*”)
- Where the exceptional price is offered
- What kind of services or products to which the exceptional price applies
- Any additional services required but not included

When represented graphically (such as on fliers or web pages) the regular price and exceptional price must be the same size.



Nova Scotia

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Nova Scotia

Source: Provincial Dental Board of Nova Scotia

General Rules

Content Must:

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Nova Scotia

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- Demean the dignity or integrity of the profession
- Use the word specialise, or any variation, unless the doctor is a board certified specialist
- Imply staff, product, or service superiority over other practices
- Include testimonials
- Mention any technology or products by name
- Reference the quality of any particular service



Nova Scotia

Special Areas

When advertising specialized services, materials must clearly specify whether the service is provided by a general dentist or a certified specialist.

Relevant Public Information

When discussing the practice specifically (rather than the generalities of a service such as root canals), you may include the following details:

- A dentist's proper name
- A dentist's professional description
- Any academic degrees gained by examination
- A specialty recognized by the board, if applicable
- An office telephone number, fax number, and email address
- The office hours and days open
- The languages in which services can be provided
- Universal symbols such as the symbols for wheelchair accessibility, "VISA", and "Interac"
- A list of available services



PEI

New Brunswick

**Nunavut & The
Northwest
Territories**

**The Yukon
Territories**

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PEI

As of October 2018, the Dental Council of Prince Edward Island does not regulate marketing activities as they relate to dentistry.

New Brunswick

As of October 2018, the New Brunswick Dental Society does not regulate marketing activities as they relate to dentistry.

Nunavut & The Northwest Territories

As of October 2018, the Northwest Territories & Nunavut Dental Association does not regulate marketing activities as they relate to dentistry.

The Yukon Territories

As of October 2018, the Yukon Dental Association does not regulate marketing activities as they relate to dentistry.



For questions and Dental Industry Marketing & Advertising Support, please reach out to us, we're happy to support you and your practice.

1-855-236-1808

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