

# HPOA Fact Sheet

What you need to know as a licensed oral health professional

## Overview

The *Health Professions & Occupations Act (HPOA)* will come into full effect on **April 1, 2026**, replacing the current *Health Professions Act (HPA)*. The HPOA represents a sweeping overhaul of the regulatory framework for BC's health professions. While the legislation aims to modernize oversight and improve transparency, it is a significant departure from the prior model of self-regulation—raising concerns about government overreach and the potential for unintended consequences.

## Our Concerns

### Inadequate Consultation

- Consultation prior to the HPOA's passage was limited and high-level, offering little opportunity for meaningful feedback.
- Despite the Act's significant departure from the *Health Professions Act*, many stakeholder concerns were dismissed.
- Critical issues such as disciplinary processes and Board appointments were not thoroughly debated, raising serious concerns about transparency and government overreach.

### Regulatory Overreach

- Under the HPOA, the government appoints all college Board members. Dentists no longer have any direct influence on who will represent them on the Board.
- There is no direct democratic involvement in terms of any ability to nominate or select a particular individual to sit on the Board.
- The limited number of practicing oral health professionals on the Board, coupled with removing direct accountability through the election process, drastically reduces self-regulation.

### Workforce Impacts

- The HPOA's complex regulatory requirements such as expanded public disclosure of complaints and lower thresholds for summary protection orders may discourage health professionals from practicing in BC, exacerbating the province's existing labour shortages.

### Procedural Fairness & Transparency

- Summary protection orders may be made without notice, risking arbitrary restrictions on practitioners' licenses.
- There will no longer be a statutory right to appeal disciplinary orders to the Supreme Court of BC.
- This new process for internal reconsideration of decisions may unfairly damage reputations without due consideration of proportionality.

### Regulatory College Bylaw Consultation

- The rushed consultation process for proposed bylaws of the BC College of Oral Health Professionals (BCCOHP) presented little opportunity for meaningful input to a complex set of documents. This raises concerns about transparency and meaningful engagement.

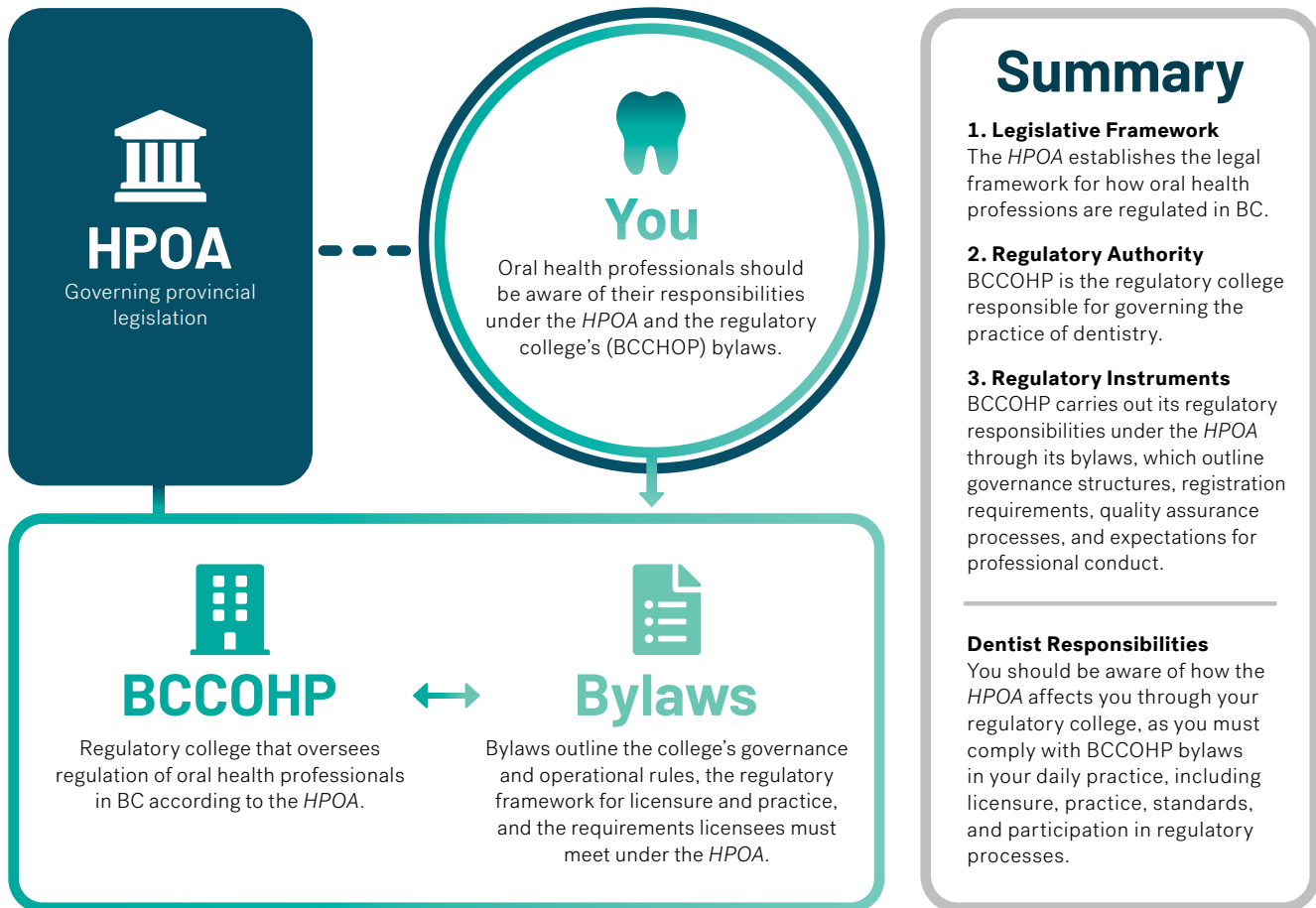
**Summary:** The HPOA, in its current form, poses a significant risk to BC's healthcare system with its rushed implementation threatening to reduce patient access and increase costs for both patients and healthcare professionals—outcomes that run counter to the government's goals of improving care and protecting the public.

Oral health professionals *must* urge the government to engage in meaningful, comprehensive consultations with all stakeholders, including frontline healthcare professionals. BC dentists are ready to contribute our expertise and participate fully in developing practical, effective solutions.

**How does the HPOA affect you? What can you do?**

See next page ►

# How the HPOA Shapes Dental Regulation



## What You Can Do

**Contact your local MLA:** Share your concerns about the unintended consequences of the *HPOA* and urge the Government of BC to pause implementation and revisit the legislation only after full and transparent consultation with all relevant stakeholders has taken place.

**Learn More:** Visit our members' website or contact us to learn more about the new BCCOHP bylaws developed under the *HPOA*, our analysis of these bylaws, and proposed changes to the Quality Assurance Program.



## Valued Aspects of the *HPOA*

- Inclusion of Indigenous Cultural Safety provisions, aligns with BC dentists' commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.
- Anti-discrimination measures embedded across governance and operations.