

**REPORT TO THE
ROYAL COLLEGE OF DENTISTS OF CANADA
August 2023**

ACFD Structure

The ACFD Board for the period July 1st, 2023 to June 30th, 2025 is:

Dr. Jim Lai, University of Toronto – President
Dr. Ben Davis, Dalhousie University - Vice-President/Treasurer
Dr. Anastasia Cholakis – Chair, Deans’ Committee
Dr. Eli Whitney, University of British Columbia - Chair, Academic Affairs Committee
Dr. Trena Reeve, University of Manitoba – Chair, Clinical Affairs Committee
Dr. Raj Bhullar, University of Manitoba – Chair, Research Affairs Committee
Dr. Paul Major, University of Alberta – Past President
Dr. Paul Allison, McGill University - Executive Director

The Board meets 5-6 times annually, either in person or by video conference call.

Deans’ Committee

The Deans Committee includes the ACFD President, Executive Director and the Dean, Director or equivalent from each Canadian dental program. The Deans’ Committee meets four times a year either by video conference or in person at the ACFD Biennial Conference or Annual General Meeting.

Academic Affairs Committee

The Academic Affairs Committee includes the Associate Dean Academic or equivalent from each Canadian dental program. The Academic Affairs committee meets twice a year either by video conference or in person at the ACFD Biennial Conference or Annual General Meeting.

Clinical Affairs Committee

The Clinical Affairs Committee includes the Clinic Director or equivalent from each Canadian dental program. The Clinical Affairs committee meets twice a year either by video conference or in person at the ACFD Biennial Conference.

Research Affairs Committee

The Research Affairs Committee includes the Associate Dean of Research or equivalent from each Canadian dental program. The Research Affairs committee meets once a year either by video conference or in person at the ACFD Biennial Conference.

ACFD Mission and goals

The ACFD’s mission is to be the national voice and resource for academic dentistry in Canada by helping advance the teaching, research, and service activities of our members and by facilitating collaboration and communication among our members and related organizations.

The ACFD has five main goals.

1. To establish the visibility of ACFD as the focal point of academic dentistry in Canada.

2. To promote faculty development at Canadian Faculties of Dentistry.
3. To facilitate collaboration among the Canadian Faculties of Dentistry to enhance teaching, research, and leadership/management.
4. To advocate on behalf of the Canadian Faculties of Dentistry to promote the interests of academic dentistry.
5. To be a national resource for areas of academic interest.

2023 Awards

Distinguished Service Award: **Dr. Blaine Cleghorn, Dalhousie University**

National Dental Teaching Award: **Dr. Frances Power, McGill University**

ACFD-CADR National Dental Research Award: **Dr. Anil Kishen, University of Toronto**

Biennial Conference

Our 2022 biennial conference was hosted by the University of Alberta School of Dentistry in Edmonton in June 2022. The three-day event focused on the future of academic dentistry and ACFD's strategic planning. Our next biennial meeting will be hosted by the Faculty of Dentistry at Dalhousie University, in Halifax, NS, June 20-22nd, 2024. This up-coming meeting will be an enlarged one organized with CADR, NCOHR and IMHA.

Dental Research

ACFD has committed to support oral health research in Canada by giving funds to the Network for Canadian Oral Health Research (NCOHR), whose core funding through CIHR/IMHA was recently renewed until the end of 2027. Also, a research team with representatives from all 10 schools has been awarded funding by CIHR for the oral health element of the Canadian Health Measures Survey, cycle 7. The field work started in autumn 2022 and will continue until autumn 2024. Data and biosamples collected in the CHMS will be made available for analyses probably as of early 2026. Discussions are now occurring on how best to set up the RFAs and related research funding to make best use of the available data. Furthermore, the CHMS project, as well as the new federal dental program, the imminent release of the WHO global oral health strategic plan and other oral health related initiatives nationally and internationally have created an excellent environment to discuss oral health research strategies. IMHA has therefore decided to initiate a national oral health research strategic plan development process with a meeting that took place in Ottawa in March 2023. The process will involve multiple stakeholders and multiple means for input (eg other meetings, surveys, the IMHA website etc.). It is anticipated that this IMHA oral health research strategy will be published in spring 2024.

Strategic planning

Following multiple consultations through the 2021-22 academic year, culminating in those held at the June 2022 biennial, ACFD has developed a strategic action plan. We are now acting on it. We have initiated a working group on data collection and are initiating another on internal (ie within schools) engagement.

On-going issues

The on-going issues for ACFD, concerning which we are in regular communication with relevant stakeholders are:

- Accreditation: ACFD strongly supports accreditation and the manner in which CDAC has performed this work in the past. We also support the new governance model. We look forward to further discussions on the financing of CDAC and accreditation.

- The implications of the new Canadian Dental Care Program (CDCP) announced by the federal government for dental schools: The CDCP targets the same patient cohorts that schools do, so may reduce schools' patient numbers and thereby affect clinical training. However, ACFD has been in communication with the Minister of Health's office to explain this "unintended consequence" as well as offer schools' training, research and service delivery capacity to support the new program. A unit within Health Canada has been set up to explore how best to work with educational establishments to optimize the new program and the relevant workforce. ACFD is actively involved in these discussions.
- The NDSE and mechanisms to recognize and license dental specialists in Canada: ACFD strongly supports a national exam or assessment process, while recognizing the real issues of cost and psychometric validity of such exams, particularly for small specialty fields. We look forward to being involved in the process to develop the new NDSEs as the RCDC moves forward with the revised process.
- Defining and evaluating competency for graduating general dentists and throughout their careers – we are working with CDRAF and other stakeholders to review and agree on such a competency framework.
- Internationally-trained dentists (from non-accredited programs): working with CDRAF and the NDEB, ACFD recently submitted a proposal to the federal government for a "gap-training" program for internationally trained dentists, not trained by accredited programs, to enable them to obtain licensure as efficiently as possible.

Our schools face unique challenges and developing actions to address them are really important for ACFD, as is the need to work with other stakeholders in the dental profession in Canada, North America and internationally.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Jim Lai
President, ACFD