

ACFD REPORT TO RCDC

September 2026

<https://acfd.ca/>

ACFD Structure

The ACFD Board for the period to June 30th, 2027 is:

- Dr. Ben Davis, Dalhousie University - President
- Dr. Anastasia Cholakis, University of Manitoba – Vice-President/Treasurer
- Dr. Jim Lai, University of Toronto – Past President
- Dr. Walter Siqueira, University of Saskatchewan - Chair, Deans' Committee
- Dr. Félix Girard, l'Université de Montréal - Chair, Academic Affairs Committee
- Dr. Jim Posluns, University of Toronto – Chair, Clinical Affairs Committee
- Dr. Maryam Amin, University of Alberta – Chair, Research Affairs Committee
- Dr. Paul Allison, McGill University - Executive Director

ACFD also has four standing committees:

1. **Deans' Committee:** The Deans Committee includes the ACFD President, Executive Director and the Dean, Director or equivalent from each Canadian dental program.
2. **Academic Affairs Committee:** The Academic Affairs Committee includes the Associate Dean Academic or equivalent from each Canadian dental program.
3. **Clinical Affairs Committee:** The Clinical Affairs Committee includes the Clinic Director or equivalent from each Canadian dental program.
4. **Research Affairs Committee:** The Research Affairs Committee includes the Associate Dean of Research or equivalent from each Canadian dental program.

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.

2026 Awards

The 2026 ACFD awards were announced at the 2026 Canadian Oral Health Summit with details of the awards and recipients being found at <https://acfd.ca/about/awards/>

Distinguished Service Award: **Dr. Debora Matthews, Dalhousie University**

National Dental Teaching Award: **Dr. Laura Tam, University of Toronto**

ACFD-CADR National Dental Research Award: **Dr. Luda Diatchenko, McGill University**

Biennial Conference/Canadian Oral Health Summit (COHS)

ACFD hosted the 2nd Canadian Oral Health Summit at the College of Dentistry, University of Saskatchewan. The team at the College of Dentistry did an outstanding job of organizing the summit, which had over 400 attendees from all Canadian dental schools, plus representatives from a broad range of oral health professions and organizations, and a significant group of private sponsors. The summit comprised 3 days of meetings, keynote and plenary presentations, symposia, as well as poster and oral presentations by more than 100 students.

ACFD/CDA Admissions event

The ACFD continues to work collaboratively with the CDA on admission related issues and research. In March 2026, coinciding with the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) annual conference in Montreal, the ACFD and CDA held a joint admissions meeting with the goal of generating ideas for further research in the field of recruiting and selecting candidates for dental school. Invitees from Canadian dental schools, including students, the private sector, the Association of Canadian Faculties of Medicine, the ADA, and medical admissions programs, presented on topics related to current and future admission processes. A summary report has been drafted and distributed for feedback, prior to the generation of research RFPs to be distributed during summer/autumn 2026, with a view to starting admission related projects in early 2027.

Dental Research

The ACFD has committed to financially supporting the Network for Canadian Oral Health Research (NCOHR), whose core funding through CIHR/IMHA was renewed until the end of 2027. Also, a research team with representatives from all 10 schools was awarded funding by CIHR for the oral health element of the Canadian Health Measures Survey (CHMS), cycle 7. The field work was completed in December 2024. Data and biosamples collected in the CHMS will be made available for analyses in early 2026. CIHR/IMHA has awarded six “catalyst grants” to make best use of the available data. Finally, the National Oral Health Research Strategy (NOHRS; <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/52773.html>) was announced at the COHS in June 2024 and an implementation team is driving it forward.

Bridge Training to Dental Practice in Canada Program

(see <https://acfd.ca/training-programs/btdpc-program/>)

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) awarded ACFD a significant grant over the period January 2024 to December 2027 to develop and pilot test the Bridge Training to Dental Practice in Canada (BTDP) program which targets general dentists who graduated from non-accredited programs with the goal to support their more rapid licensure in Canada. This would be a third pathway for such graduates in addition to the advance-standing programs and the NDEB exam pathway. The BTDP program is approximately 8 months in length and is being piloted at three universities. The call for candidates and the admissions process for the first pilot cohort was initiated in early 2025. The first pilot cohort of the BTDP program started in September 2025. Of 43 applicants, only 2 were accepted into the program in the 2025-26 cohort. Since then, the three pilot sites have requested and been granted preliminary CDAC accreditation for the BTDP program. This means trainees who successfully complete the BTDP program no longer need to take the NDEB NDECC and can go immediately challenge the NDEB’s VOSCE that graduates of Canadian dental schools take to obtain licensure. This has resulted in a dramatic increase in applications numbers for the 2026-27 cohort, to 193 applications. The process of selection has several stages, including a weeklong clinical assessment, with approximately 15 candidates being offered places

for the coming academic year. Once the ESDC grant concludes in December 2027, the intention is to offer the BTDP program at several universities across the country.

Oral Health Access Fund (OHAF) awards

ACFD member schools were awarded multiple OHAF stream 1 grants. The ACFD also received an OHAF grant to develop 11 learning modules related to the issues facing a range of marginalized groups trying to access dental care. These modules will be developed with a broad range of oral health professionals and students in mind. The project has just been initiated and will be completed in March 2028.

On-going issues

The primary ongoing issues for ACFD, requiring regular communication with relevant stakeholders are:

- **The impact of the new Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP) on our dental schools:** The CDCP targets the same patient cohorts that schools do, so the program has reduced most schools' patient numbers. This has impacted the experiential learning of our students and clinic revenue. The ACFD has been in regular communication with Health Canada to seek solutions to this unintended consequence.
- **CDAC:** the re-organization of CDAC, including its new budget model and new accreditation standards are important on-going issues for the ACFD.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Ben Davis
President, ACFD