



# **Leading with Vision, Ensuring Public Trust**

**2025 – 30 Strategic Plan**



**College of Alberta  
Dental Assistants**

# Table of Contents

Strategic Vision (10-Year Outlook).....	3
Strategic Mission (5-Year Statement).....	3
Executive Summary .....	4
Strategic Goals .....	6
Enabling Objectives .....	7
Goal 1: Position the College in a Shifting Landscape .....	7
Goal 2: Elevate Practice Standards .....	10
Goal 3: Strengthen Stakeholder Trust and Engagement .....	14
Goal 4: Optimize Governance Effectiveness .....	22
Our Commitment to Accountability & Effective Governance .....	26
Anticipated Challenges and Mitigation Strategies .....	28
Key Actions: 2025-27 .....	29
Year 1 (2025-26): Foundational Work & Strategic Alignment .....	29
Year 2 (2026-27): Building Momentum & Enhancing Engagement .....	30
Conclusion.....	31



## **Strategic Vision (10-Year Outlook)**

**We are a trailblazing and trusted regulator.**

**We have unwavering public confidence and Albertans receive high quality oral health care from Registered Dental Assistants.**

## **Strategic Mission (5-Year Statement)**

**Our mandate under the *Health Professions Act* is to ensure patients receive safe, competent and ethical oral health care by Registered Dental Assistants.**

**We achieve this by setting and enforcing education and practice standards, providing fair and transparent registration and complaints processes, and proactively adapting to the evolving needs of oral health care.**

# Executive Summary

This Strategic Plan (2025-30) reflects the College of Alberta Dental Assistants' (the College) commitment to navigating a dynamic oral health environment while upholding its primary duty of public protection. It acts as a roadmap for transformative growth, regulatory excellence, and enhanced stakeholder trust.

Our strategy is anchored in four key strategic goals:



## Achieving our Vision through Action

To achieve our vision, we established a set of enabling objectives aligned with each strategic goal. These initiatives are actionable and measurable and ensure that we proactively respond to government policies, modern standards, emerging practices, and operate with agility and data-informed decision-making. These objectives allow the College to foster collaborative relationships as we work towards our long-term goals.

We are focused on clearly defining our value proposition for the public, Registered Dental Assistants (RDA) and our other stakeholders, enhancing educational and practice standards to meet future competencies, and promoting strong engagement with all stakeholders. Internally, we will streamline our processes, improve governance, and ensure financial sustainability.



## **Operating with Agility**

Objectives are based on a rolling 2-year plan – providing both stability and flexibility. This approach lets us stay focused on our long-term goals: proactively responding to government policies; advancing patient care by the dental assisting profession; encouraging collaboration; and operating with agility while also incorporating new insights and adapting to changing circumstances.

By regularly reviewing and updating our objectives within this timeframe, we ensure they stay relevant, actionable, and aligned with our main strategic goals. This ongoing process supports continuous progress toward our vision, enabling us to be responsive and strategic in our efforts.

## **A Bold and Daring Regulator**

This plan embodies a commitment to being a safe yet “Bold and Daring” regulator, moving beyond compliance to proactive excellence and anticipating future needs, with trust as our foundational currency.

By diligently executing tasks, continuously monitoring progress and processes, and committing to accountability, the College will strengthen its position as a leading regulatory body dedicated to promoting public safety in Alberta.

# Strategic Goals

1



## Position the College in a Shifting Landscape

By 2030, the College will secure its place in Alberta’s evolving regulatory system and oral health care landscape via ensuring public safety and enhancing its value proposition to the public, government, and registrants.

2



## Elevate Practice Standards

By 2030, the College will embrace patient-centred standards of practice and education via incorporating future competencies and safety culture for producing graduates and Registered Dental Assistants who are ready to practice into the future.

3



## Strengthen Stakeholder Trust and Engagement

By 2030, the College will champion high levels of trust, satisfaction, and collaboration via engaging with the public and stakeholders through transparent, fair, and accessible communication and regulatory processes.

4



## Optimize Governance Effectiveness

By 2030, the College will enhance governance performance via demonstrating agile and efficient internal processes, competency-based and strategically directed governance, data-informed decision-making, financial sustainability, and a high-performing, risk-focused and empowered Council and staff.

# Enabling Objectives

Our Strategic Goals serve as the foundation for our actions over the next five years. Beneath each goal, objectives will drive our progress over the next one to five years.

## Goal 1: Position the College in a Shifting Landscape

By 2030, the College will secure its place in Alberta's evolving regulatory system and oral health care landscape via ensuring public safety and enhancing its value proposition to the public, government, and registrants.

**What this means:** Proactively navigating external pressures, including government policies, deregulation threats, potential amalgamations, varying standards, and the influence of evolving business models, to affirm the College's value, ensure ongoing relevance, and uphold public protection.



## Objective 1.1: Proactive Policy & Trend Response

### Actions/Outputs

- Conduct ongoing environmental scanning and government relations to promote regulation.
- Develop and implement initiatives that transform external challenges identified through environmental scanning (e.g., artificial intelligence, perceived RDA shortages, career perception, rural limitations, etc.) into opportunities to shape and advance oral health regulation in the public interest.
- Become a policy influencer by building stronger relationships with our stakeholders (i.e., the public, government, oral health regulators, and national partners).
- Consider partnership models for collaboration or future amalgamation (e.g., investigate shared staff and space, resources, etc.).

### Success Metrics

- Number of interactions with the government; invitations to policy-making events.
- Completion of feasibility study/report on partnership models.
- Number and impact of proactive initiatives launched.
- Stakeholder feedback on the College's responsiveness and leadership.

## **Objective 1.2: Champion Interprofessional Collaboration**

### **Actions/Outputs**

- Increase awareness of collaborative initiatives via multiple communication channels.
- Convene or actively engage in oral health events centred on interprofessional collaboration.
- Continue to connect and meet with other oral health colleges.
- Explore and trial joint council meetings with other oral health colleges.

### **Success Metrics**

- Social media awareness metrics, survey feedback on awareness.
- Reports to the Council on event participation and outcomes to inform further actions.
- Council member evaluation reports on collaboration meetings.
- Implement formal measurement of productivity based on collaboration meeting (reference standard: closed council meetings).

## Goal 2: Elevate Practice Standards

By 2030, the College will embrace patient-centred standards of practice and education via incorporating future competencies and safety culture for producing graduates and Registered Dental Assistants who are ready to practice into the future.

What this means: Transitioning from historical competencies to include future skills (e.g., technology, artificial intelligence, advanced practices), addressing workplace realities (e.g., burnout, respect), enhancing ongoing competency, and ensuring that graduates are ready for future practice.



## Objective 2.1: Enhance Graduate Preparedness

### Actions/Outputs

- Conduct a review of the program approval function, with external expertise.
- Ensure program approval processes integrate standards of practice, registration provisions, code of ethics, and competency profiles to produce safe and competent RDAs.
- Review traditional vs. modern educational approaches, competency profiles, and curriculum in collaboration with educators and employers.
- Enhance collaboration with educators and employers to bridge the gap between educational requirements and workplace demands.
- Increase engagement with educators and associations to identify and integrate emerging topics (e.g., stress management, artificial intelligence, advanced practices) into curricula and the College's education principles.

### Success Metrics

- Graduate preparedness scores (surveys of new grads and employers).
- Feedback from educators on curriculum alignment.
- Updated education standards and curricula reflecting future competencies.
- Adoption rate of new/advanced competencies by RDAs (if applicable).

## Objective 2.2: Protect Patients by Fostering a Culture of Safety in Oral Care

### Actions/Outputs

- Establish professional standards and guidelines that are principle-based and patient-centred.
- Incorporate core principles of professional conduct, ethical practice, and patient safety into mandatory continuing competence program learning, focusing on preventing conduct that could jeopardize patient care or public trust.
- Collaborate with relevant stakeholders to promote a just and learning-oriented reporting culture and to identify systemic issues that may create an unsafe practice environment or endanger patient care.
- Create a cultural safety and humility resource(s) for oral health professionals.
- Provide RDAs with targeted information and resources for assessing risk.

### Success Metrics

- Within 24 months of implementation, assess the self-reported use of the new standards and guidelines among registrants.
- Within 24 months of implementation, a measurable reduction in the number of formal complaints related to professional conduct, ethical breaches, or patient safety incidents.
- Within 24 months of implementation, assess the registrants' ability to perform risk assessments and recognize potential risks in practice.

## Objective 2.3: Optimize Continuing Competence Program

### Actions/Outputs

- Review and revise the Continuing Competence Program to ensure requirements and resources are relevant, practical, and contribute meaningfully to promote the public interest, professional development and practice standards.

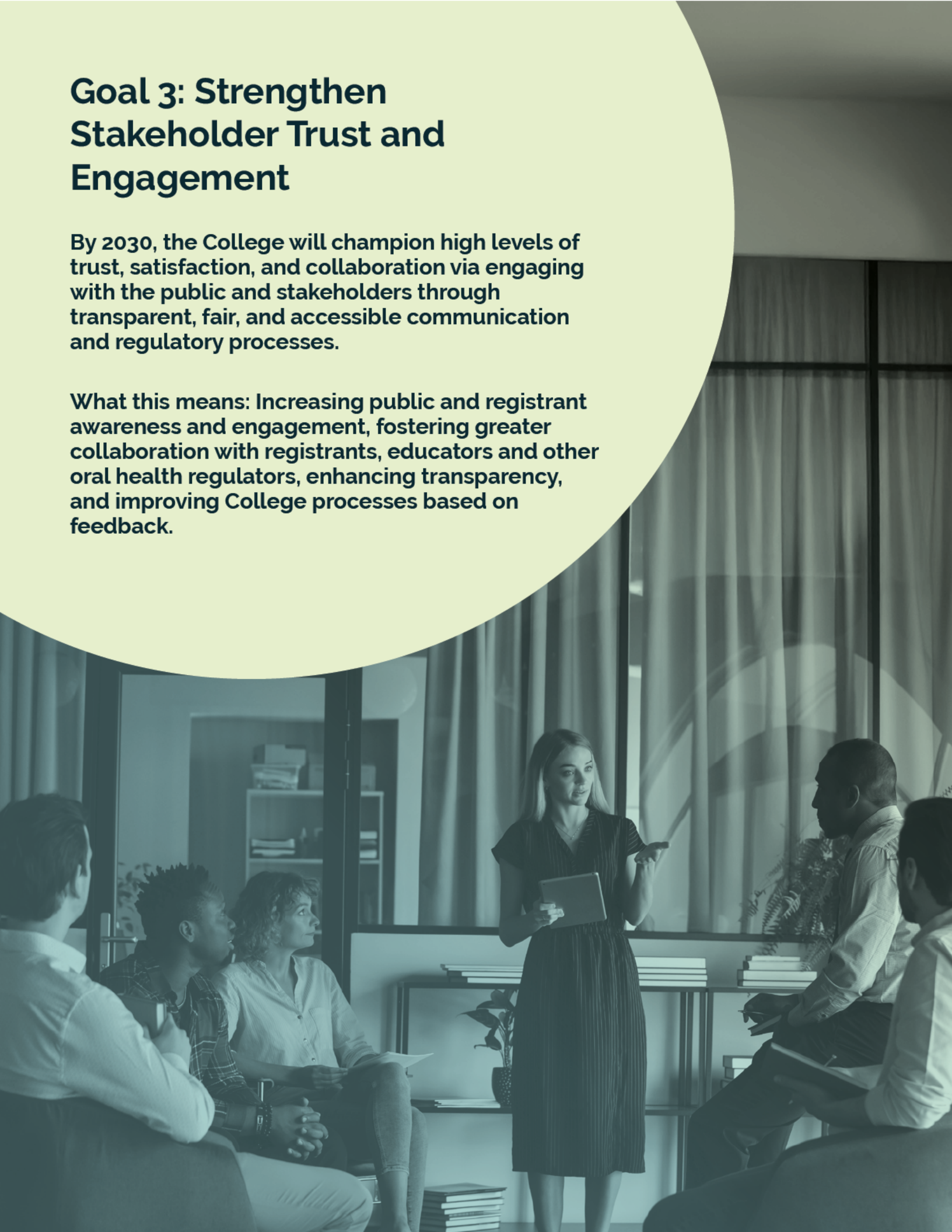
### Success Metrics

- Continuing Education Relevance Score (registrant surveys).

## Goal 3: Strengthen Stakeholder Trust and Engagement

By 2030, the College will champion high levels of trust, satisfaction, and collaboration via engaging with the public and stakeholders through transparent, fair, and accessible communication and regulatory processes.

What this means: Increasing public and registrant awareness and engagement, fostering greater collaboration with registrants, educators and other oral health regulators, enhancing transparency, and improving College processes based on feedback.



## Objective 3.1: Enhance Transparency & Processes

### Actions/Outputs

- Improve communication regarding the College's administrative processes.
- Optimize processes for clarity and efficiency.
- Engage a third-party to review the College's Registration Function.

### Success Metrics

- Annual survey including perceptions of fairness and transparency.
- Increase Applicant satisfaction with the registration process.
- Publicly accessible processes library.
- Reduction in formal complaints regarding College processes.
- Completion of third-party review of Registration Function.
- Implementation of Registration Review recommendations.

## Objective 3.2: Implement Data-Driven, Risk-Based Regulation

### Actions/Outputs

- Implement strong data management systems and a risk-based approach to regulation.
- Compile current training and learning needs of RDAs and communicate results with stakeholders (e.g., schools, associations, and employers).

### Success Metrics

- Percentage increase in the completeness and accuracy of regulatory data captured within the data management systems, verified through data audits.
- Increase in positive stakeholder feedback (e.g., from public, registrants, employers) regarding the clarity, fairness, and predictability of regulatory processes, as indicated in annual stakeholder surveys or feedback mechanisms.
- Number of high-risk areas or registrants identified through data analysis, and the percentage that received targeted regulatory action.

## Objective 3.3: Integrate the Strategic Plan into the Communication Plan

### Actions/Outputs

- Develop and implement a comprehensive communication strategy to align messaging with the College's strategic goals, build trust and credibility, proactively manage risk, improve internal alignment, support change and innovation, enhance decision making, and measure communications impact.
- Share the strategic plan and implementation progress with stakeholders (e.g., the public, government, other regulators, RDAs).
- Design and execute targeted communication strategies that clearly articulate the College's role in public protection, the regulation of the profession, and the value of professional accountability to the public and RDAs.
- Develop and disseminate educational resources and campaigns that clarify regulatory standards, professional expectations, and the benefits of a well-regulated profession.
- Proactively address common misconceptions or areas of stakeholder concern regarding the College's mandate and operations through transparent and evidence-based communication.

### Success Metrics

- Surveys measuring the communications plan's stated outcomes (e.g., increased awareness, increased trust, improved change management, internal cohesion, etc.).
- Council evaluation of communication effectiveness.
- Annual increase in registrant and public understanding of the College's regulatory mandate and functions, as measured by awareness surveys.
- Qualitative analysis of stakeholder feedback (e.g., from focus groups, inquiries) demonstrating enhanced perception of the College's transparency, fairness, and value.
- Regular review of communication materials and strategic initiatives to ensure alignment with public interest and registrant professional relevance (documented annually).

## Objective 3.4: Cultivate Effective Stakeholder Engagement and Feedback Mechanisms

### Actions/Outputs

- Complete a stakeholder analysis and develop a relations map.
- Establish and optimize diverse communication and feedback platforms (e.g., dedicated digital portals, virtual forums, in-person consultations, and structured feedback surveys) to facilitate open dialogue with the public and relevant stakeholders.
- Implement a structured process for capturing, analyzing, and responding to feedback received through all engagement channels to inform regulatory practices and initiatives.
- Develop a strategy to meaningfully engage the public in decision-making.

### Success Metrics

- Increase in the utilization rates of established communication and feedback platforms by target stakeholder groups (e.g., website analytics for portal use, attendance at virtual/in-person sessions).
- Documented evidence of feedback integration into regulatory decisions, policy reviews, or service improvements, as presented in annual reports or internal reviews.
- Stakeholder satisfaction scores with the accessibility and responsiveness of College communication and feedback channels (via annual surveys).

## Objective 3.5: Demonstrate the Relevance and Impact of Regulatory Practices

### Actions/Outputs

- Consistently integrate the public interest and registrants' professional experiences into the development and review of all regulatory standards, policies, and guidance.
- Publicly report on the outcomes and impacts of regulatory initiatives, illustrating how these contribute to public safety, quality of care, and professional standards.
- Showcase successful collaborations with stakeholders that have led to improvements in regulatory effectiveness or professional practice environments.

### Success Metrics

- Documented evidence of stakeholder consultation and feedback integration in the development and review of new or revised regulatory instruments.
- Stakeholder perception of the College's relevance to their professional lives and its contribution to public safety, as assessed through annual surveys and targeted feedback.
- Publication of an annual “Impact Report” or similar document detailing the outcomes of regulatory activities and their benefits to the public and profession.
- Positive media mentions or recognition of the College's leadership in regulatory best practices and public protection.

## Objective 3.6: Advance Truth and Reconciliation

### Actions/Outputs

- Develop a strategy with respect to Reconciliation.
- Review and revise College policies, standards of practice, and complaint resolution processes through an Indigenous lens to identify and remove systemic barriers and biases that may disproportionately impact Indigenous Peoples (i.e., patients and RDAs).

### Success Metrics

- Completion of a comprehensive review report identifying systemic barriers and biases in College policies and processes, followed by the implementation rate of recommended revisions.
- Feedback from an Indigenous Advisor or bona fide members of the Indigenous community who are proven/certified in assessing or adjudicating the execution and authenticity of the work completed.

## **Objective 3.7: Foster a Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Regulatory Environment**

### **Actions/Outputs**

- Develop a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategy.
- Conduct a comprehensive audit of College policies, procedures, and communication materials to identify and address potential biases, barriers, or exclusionary language related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

### **Success Metrics**

- Completion of the DEI policy and process audit report, followed by the implementation rate of recommended revisions.
- Personal testimony (before and after) for staff and Council based on how actions taken have impacted the work completed over a specified time period.

## **Goal 4: Optimize Governance Effectiveness**

**By 2030, the College will enhance governance performance via demonstrating agile and efficient internal processes, competency-based and strategically directed governance, data-informed decision-making, financial sustainability, and a high-performing, risk-focused and empowered Council and staff.**

**What this means: Achieving a more strategic focus for the Council, leveraging data, enhancing internal processes, and ensuring financial viability to lead the College boldly.**



## Objective 4.1: Enhance Council Effectiveness & Strategic Focus

### Actions/Outputs

- Refine Council meeting structures to prioritize strategic discussions.
- Refine the Council appointment process, including gap analysis for appointments.
- Refine the Council Chair and Vice Chair selection process.
- Increase Council capacity through planned learning.
- Increase Council confidence by fostering targeted, strategic discussions and increasing committee interaction.
- Refine and implement robust Council as a whole, council member (self and peer), and officer evaluations.
- Increase public members (non-Council members) on committees, including the governance-level and regulatory committees.
- Develop a strategy to recruit more Indigenous Council and committee members, or Council and committee advisors, or Indigenous knowledge-keepers, or all these roles.
- Refine Registrar & CEO evaluation and compensation processes.
- Continue to build and strengthen relationship with Registrar & CEO.
- Embrace and continue team building both for Council and Council-Registrar-staff.

### Success Metrics

- Council Meeting Engagement Score: peer/chair assessment of participation.
- Measurable increase in strategic discussion vs. operational “rubber-stamping.”
- Council self-evaluation on strategic oversight and quality of discussion
- More open communication and feedback, and frequent check-ins.

## Objective 4.2: Robust Strategic Plan Monitoring & Refresh

### Actions/Outputs

- Implement new strategic plan.
- Implement accountability mechanism to ensure that Council monitors progress towards strategic priorities quarterly.
- Establish a framework for ongoing evaluation and dynamic refresh of the strategic plan.

### Success Metrics

- Annual review and refresh of the Strategic Plan.
- Strategic Plan Objective dashboard.
- Council evaluation of the plan's responsiveness and results.
- Risk management reports and related scorecards with variance analysis.

## Objective 4.3: Strengthen Council Oversight Role

### Actions/Outputs

- Adopt a regulatory performance management framework.
- Develop a decision-making role matrix outlining the key decisions made within the College, those leaders or entities involved in the decision-making and what their specific roles are in each of these decisions.
- Continue to advance approach to enterprise risk oversight.
- Incorporate formal risk management processes when conducting Council oversight duties.
- Implement ongoing governance education and development.
- Implement a data collection strategy in the areas of Council oversight. This involves clarifying the required data, structuring data gathering, engaging stakeholders, utilizing data to measure needs, implementing initiatives based on the data, and mapping the data stream.

### Success Metrics

- Initiatives implemented based on data to meet or exceed needs.
- Definition and tracking of robust KPIs; number of “what if” strategic discussions.
- Council evaluates that their decisions are made considering the risk matrix.

# Our Commitment to Accountability & Effective Governance

The successful execution of this strategic plan depends on collective accountability from the College Council, leadership, and staff embracing the principles of a high-functioning team, prioritizing:

<b>Trust</b>	Fostering an environment that promotes open and honest disclosure.
<b>Healthy Conflict</b>	Engaging in constructive discussions about ideas and strategies.
<b>Commitment</b>	Ensuring clarity and engagement in decisions and directions.
<b>Accountability</b>	Holding ourselves and one another responsible for our behaviours and outcomes.
<b>Focus on Results</b>	Prioritizing the overall outcomes for the College and the communities we serve.

## Council & Staff Commitments

<b>Ownership</b>	Collective responsibility for the strategic planning process and its implementation.
<b>Preparation and Engagement</b>	Commit to being fully prepared for discussions, ask insightful questions to deepen understanding, and actively participate in Council business.
<b>Collaboration</b>	Working open-mindedly in a collaborative setting.
<b>Follow-through</b>	Ensuring that actionable items are followed up on and progress is monitored.
<b>Strategic Alignment</b>	Aligning all College activities with this strategic plan.
<b>Boldness and Accountability</b>	Encouraging bold strategic thinking, upholding focus, and ensuring accountability among one another in achieving our shared vision.
<b>Data-Informed Decisions</b>	Committing to exploring and employing more methods of data collection to inform our strategies and assess our impact.

**Regular updates on progress regarding this strategic plan will be a crucial element of Council meetings, ensuring ongoing oversight and the ability to adjust as needed.**

# Anticipated Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

Challenge	Context	Mitigation Strategies
<b>External Pressures &amp; Shifting Landscape</b>	Government leanings, potential deregulation (e.g., BC), discussion on amalgamations, and varying provincial standards.	Proactive environmental scanning, robust government relations strategy, clear articulation of the College's value proposition, and exploring collaborative/partnership models strategically.
<b>Ensuring Member Value &amp; Engagement</b>	Declining traditional workforce, age gap, engaging younger professionals, new registrant expectations, and relevance of offerings.	Continuous needs assessment, modernizing PD and networking, targeted value propositions for diverse segments, and enhancing communication on the value of the College.
<b>Workplace Realities for RDAs</b>	Burnout, lack of respect, safety concerns (abuse), and the impact of corporate dentistry models.	Advocate for psychologically safe workplaces (within regulatory mandate), develop resources/education on well-being, and collaborate with employers and stakeholders on practice environment standards.
<b>Maintaining Trust &amp; Transparency</b>	Need for increased awareness, desire for collaboration, and feedback on College processes (fees, communication).	Implement comprehensive communication and engagement strategies, ensure transparency in decision-making, establish precise feedback mechanisms, and optimize administrative processes for fairness and efficiency.
<b>Implementation Complexity &amp; Resource Limits</b>	Ensuring the strategic plan translates to operational effectiveness, including staff and volunteer bandwidth.	Phased implementation, clear prioritization of enabling objectives, regular progress monitoring, allocation of necessary resources, empowering staff and Council, and seeking external expertise where needed.

# Key Actions: 2025-27

To build momentum and achieve early wins, the College will prioritize the following key actions in the *first two years* of this strategic plan:

## Year 1 (2025-26):

### Foundational Work & Strategic Alignment

#### **Develop and implement a comprehensive communication strategy (Obj. 3.3)**

Launch a strategy to enhance registrant and stakeholder understanding of this new strategic plan, its progress, and the College's decision-making processes.

#### **Create a New Strategic Plan Document and Framework (Obj. 4.2)**

Finalize and distribute this strategic plan document to establish a robust framework for ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and updates.

#### **Enhance Government Relations & Environmental Scanning (Obj. 1.1)**

Formalize ongoing processes for environmental scanning and proactive engagement with the government on policy matters.

#### **Start implementing the data collection strategy (Obj. 4.3)**

Identify the data needed for strategic decision-making and outline an initial approach for data gathering.

## **Year 2 (2026-27):**

### **Building Momentum & Enhancing Engagement**

#### **Launch Focused Public and Registrant Awareness Campaigns (Obj. 3.3)**

Implement campaigns that significantly enhance understanding of the College's functions and regulatory responsibilities.

#### **Establish Enhanced Engagement and Feedback Channels (Obj. 3.4)**

Commence the rollout of new feedback channels and plan initial engagement events (e.g., town halls, sharing circles).

#### **Advance collaboration with educators on graduate preparedness (Obj.2.1)**

Enhance collaboration to evaluate curricula and integrate future competencies.

#### **Implement enhancements to Council effectiveness (Obj. 4.1)**

Begin refining meeting structures and further advancing the competency-based approach for the Council.



## Conclusion

**This Strategic Plan for 2025-30 outlines an intentional and ambitious direction for the College of Alberta Dental Assistants.**

By focusing on our strategic goals: Position the College in a Shifting Landscape; Elevate Professionalism and Practice Standards; Strengthen Stakeholder Trust and Engagement; and Enhance Governance Effectiveness – we commit to being a proactive, relevant, and trusted regulatory body.

The success of this plan depends on the dedication, expertise, and collaborative spirit of our Council, staff, registrants, and stakeholders.

By diligently implementing our objectives, continuously monitoring progress, and remaining adaptable to the evolving landscape, the College will not only fulfil its mandate of public protection but also champion the dental assisting profession in Alberta.

We are excited to collaborate in realizing this ambitious vision, ensuring that Albertans receive the safest, most competent, and ethical care from their Registered Dental Assistants.



**College of Alberta  
Dental Assistants**