

COLLEGE OF DENTAL SURGEONS OF SASKATCHEWAN (CDSS)

RECOMMENDED PROTOCOL FOR PERSONS OBSERVABLY IMPAIRED BY DRUGS OR ALCOHOL (approved December 19,2016)

PREAMBLE

The CDSS recommends that members have an office protocol to deal with persons observably impaired by reason of drugs or alcohol. The protocol is intended to discourage an impaired person from operating a motor vehicle and would apply equally to patients, staff and dentists. A member's staff should be instructed on the operation of the protocol which should be posted in dental facilities for staff and members of the public to read.

PRINCIPLES

1. In the case of a patient observably impaired, the observing staff member or dentist should inform the patient accordingly and discourage the patient from operating a motor vehicle upon leaving the facility.
2. In the case of another person, staff member or dentist being observably impaired the observing staff member or dentist should inform that person accordingly and discourage the person from operating a motor vehicle upon leaving the facility.
3. Within the Informed Consent Process. prior to an appointment, it is the responsibility of a dentist to determine if administration of a drug (sedative or other) to a patient will cause an impairment which may pose a danger to the patient and/or other persons if the patient should operate a motor vehicle upon leaving the facility. The dentist must inform the patient accordingly and discourage the patient from operating a motor vehicle. If the dentist does not deal with the matter directly, then a staff person must advise the patient regarding this matter.
4. When it is observable that a person, including a patient, a staff member or a dentist intends to leave a facility to drive to another location regardless of being informed and discouraged (as in 1,2,3 above) from operating a motor vehicle, then the CDSS recommends the following:
 - A. Suggest alternative means of transportation for the impaired person that could include:
 - (i) a friend or relative in attendance to drive the person to another location;
 - (ii) a taxi or similar service to pick up and deliver the person to another location,

or:
 - B. If the person is uncooperative and refuses any assistance and still intends to drive a vehicle then the person should be advised that the observing person(s) will have no alternative but to call the police. It is important to advise the person that the reason they are calling the police is for the protection of both the person and members of the public.