



# At-a-Glance: Managing and Mitigating Risks in Your Dental Office



Dental offices deal with risks on a daily basis. Whether it's personal, patient-related, professional, or a natural disaster—often the only element of risk you can control is how you prepare for and respond to situations, as they emerge.

The Canadian Dental Association's (CDA) *Preparedness in a Dental Office - Building Resilience When Deviating from Business-as-Usual*, is a step-by-step guide to help Canadian dental offices be risk resilient and crisis ready. Pulling together information from dental professionals' lived experiences, guidance documents and open-source resources, this guide will help ensure that your office is ready when something goes awry.

## Step 1: Risk Inventory

Think about what type of risks your office could face. Based on our research, CDA's guide lists several possible risks, divided into the following five categories:

- Personal
- Dental office-related
- Patient-related
- Profession-related
- Regional, national, or international

## Step 2: Risk Assessment

Think about how likely you are to face a risk and how you should prepare. This guide helps assess risk likelihood using factors including:

- Provider's location
- Past experiences as a predictor of the future
- Duration of risk

Determine what type of investments are needed to mitigate and prevent top risks. This can be based on your:

- **Personal risk tolerance:** A lower risk tolerance generally requires more preparation.
- **Practice risk tolerance:** This refers to the maximum loss you or your practice can endure due to a risk's impact. Consider the threshold beyond which recovery might be impossible without prior preparation.

## Step 3: Risk Mitigation

Applying a lens of negative impact, the guide outlines measures to prepare for and mitigate the causes of risk. Impacts include:

- Dental team-related concerns
- Adverse physical health outcomes
- Adverse mental health outcomes
- Facilities, dental equipment and material concerns
- Shutdown of practice
- Access to care
- Flooding in dental office
- Power outage
- Animal attack / infestation
- Cybersecurity concerns
- Complaints from patient