

AADA Checklist for Clarity and Consistency for Dental Staff during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Association of Alberta Dental Assistants is providing this checklist for use by our members in discussions with their employer to ensure safe, clear and consistent application of the directives, documents and CMOH orders that will be distributed to oral healthcare providers during the return to work stages as planned by the Government of Alberta and the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

1. Each of the five oral health profession Colleges have their own guidelines for return to practice.

In those areas where the guidelines differ how will our dental practice address those differences to ensure a consistent provision of dental services during the COVID-19 Pandemic?

2. The novel coronavirus SARS CoV-2 causes the disease known as COVID-19. This novel coronavirus has a long incubation period during which carriers of the virus may not show symptoms and still be contagious.

How will our dental practice ensure that asymptomatic patients are receiving dental services while mitigating the possibility of transmission of infection from one patient to another?

Will our practice be conducting AGDPs for patients during the active stages of the Covid-19 pandemic?

How will our practice determine whether an AGDP is necessary for a particular patient during the Covid-19 pandemic?

3. Certain dental procedures create aerosols which are one way that the novel coronavirus could spread.

Will our dental practice implement air quality control measures such as portable Hepa filter vacuum systems in the operatories where these procedures will take place?

Will our practice install plastic shrouding or close off the areas where AGDPs will be performed?

What is the air exchange per hour in our treatment areas?

What will the corresponding "settle time" be after conducting AGDPs before room disinfection and barrier replacement?

4. Due to the frequency of visits of other staff, dentists and dental patients, the characteristics of the novel coronavirus, the characteristics of dental procedures and the understanding that many dental procedures generate aerosols, we know that there is an elevated risk of contracting the novel coronavirus simply by being in a dental office. In Alberta the employer is required to ensure the worker has the Personal Protective Equipment that meet the required standards to do the job safely. The worker is also required to take all measures necessary to work in a safe manner for his/her own safety as well as for the safety of others in the workplace.

Do all clinical staff have a N95 respirator or equivalent?

Have all clinical staff been fit-tested for a N95 or equivalent respirator?

What PPE do we have available for staff to use for non-AGDPs?

What PPE do we have available for staff to use for AGDPs?

Do we have a sufficient supply of approved PPE to ensure all clinical staff will have access for a specific period of time?

If our practice is unable to secure a sufficient supply of approved PPE that is appropriate to the dental treatment scheduled to be provided to any individual patient (as per ADA&C Expectations and Pathways) during the Covid -19 pandemic what will be the contingency plan for the dental practice?

What will our office policy be with regard to staff employment and patient scheduling while we are waiting for appropriate and approved PPE to arrive?

5. The stringent and extensive protocols that have been directed by the CMOH for community health settings during the Covid-19 pandemic require additional time to conduct.

How will our dental practice assign the tasks of disinfecting common areas, treatment areas and staff areas?

How will our practice ensure that patient bookings allow for the proper protocols to be conducted between patients?

How will our dental practice deal with washable and reusable PPE such as gowns, caps, scrubs to ensure these items are not taken out of the office and the potential of transmission of infection to staff homes?

6. There is a possibility however small that dental staff could contract Covid-19 as a result of their work in a dental practice.

Does our dental staff have WCB or private insurance coverage to ensure financial recourse in the event that they contract a work related illness or injury?

What recourse would our dental staff have in the event that there is no insurance coverage provided?

*The Association of Alberta Dental Assistants – We've got you covered!
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