

CDAA Response to COVID-19

As the national voice of dental assistants, the Canadian Dental Assistants' Association has been working diligently to ensure the concerns of our members are brought forward as the dental industry responds to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Information for the Profession:

- Shared recommendations for dental assistants.
- Provided roll-up of Government Benefits and how to apply.
- Provided daily media scan of evolution of provincial directives and relevant media articles both domestic and international.
- Donated two boxes of face shields received for free from a Canadian supplier, to a local dental office in need.
- Applied for membership to the Coalition of Organizations for Health Action (HEAL) to better connect with health professionals to address the needs of health workers in a post COVID-19 work environment.
- Shared important information on discounts for members offered by PROLINK Insurance.
- Met with PROLINK Insurance to examine the impact COVID-19 could have on CDAA insurance benefits.
- Shared free VEGA resources to our members to assist them in recognizing and responding safely to family violence.
- Provided information on employer/employee obligations
- Provided mental health resources

Government Relations

- Letter to Federal Ministers of Health, Small Business and Finance:
 - Requesting targeted, special support to get the dental industry back on its feet
 - Requesting measures to address the lack of PPE
 - Requesting measures to develop long-term, sustainable supply of PPE
 - Requesting special measures to help dental assistants who are primary caregivers to school-aged children and elderly parents, navigate return to practice
- Participating in calls with Public Health Canada to gain information of interest to our members.

- Disseminating government directives on how to impact the ordering of PPE for local dental offices.
- Disseminating international review of *Recommendations for the Re-opening of Dental Service during COVID-19*.
- Receiving important information from the Office of the Chief Dental Officer, for the purpose of sharing with our provincial members.

Regulators and Oral Health Professions:

- Letter to dental regulators and dental assisting regulators
 - highlighting recent reports that dental assistants are being asked to return to work to perform procedures outside of public health directives.
 - Urging regulators to speak to their members and ensure that their members adhere to the provincial health directives in order to protect the Canadian public and all members of the oral healthcare team.
 - Requesting regulators establish clear guidelines and communicate to all dentists and dental assistants with regard to the use of appropriate PPE in dentistry, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Expressing dental assistants' concerns about the possibility of cross-contamination in the dental office and the risk aerosol particles pose to both patients and the oral health team in the event that appropriate air quality protocols (negative pressure rooms, closed operatories) are not implemented.
 - Urging dental profession regulators to lobby the federal government to ask for supports specific to the oral health sector as the industry looks to navigate the provision of services in a post COVID-19 landscape.
- Advocating that the safety of the oral healthcare workforce must take precedence over a return to provision of full dental services.
- Providing extensive comments on CDA's first iteration of the *Return-to-Work Office Manual*.

CDAA: Advocating for you!