

Governor J.B. Pritzker

April 26, 2020

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At yesterday's press conference, you clarified that Dental offices should only be open to treat emergency patients. Dental offices cannot survive on seeing emergency patients alone. IDHA requests some kind of government aid for these offices. Many have applied for the PPP loans but not all offices were able to receive funds.

Another concern is not being able to acquire proper PPE and equipment. There is uncertainty as to what the recommended protocols are. We've been told repeatedly how infectious this virus is when in aerosol form, so we need to know what to do to protect ourselves and our patients. The CDC and OSHA provided guidelines, but nothing is really specific for dental. Dental offices need guidance because there is a lot of confusion and misinformation out there. We are requesting guidance or a protocol for when offices are open and resume aerosol producing procedures. What equipment will be needed such as air filters, and specifically which masks and what other PPE will be required to keep our patients and staff safe? All this new PPE and equipment costs money. Is there government assistance for this, too?

IDHA requests, and urges your office to release official guidance to not only protect those employees within the office, but to protect the public due to the lack of access for supply of necessary PPE. We are particularly worried about the lack of official guidance given regarding the proper safety measures (PPE, usage of aerosol creating dental equipment, air filtration systems, how to stagger patient appointments, etc) to keep our patients safe within the dental office. Without proper guidance, we cannot be sure that all offices are taking the respective measures to ensure their patients' and staff's safety. There have already been several instances of dental professionals across the country that have contracted this disease prior to following the Stay at Home guidelines, possibly contracting this disease while working in the dental office setting.

Thank you for your consideration of IDHA's views, and again for the important leadership role you are playing during this crisis. We would be pleased to provide additional information or answer questions regarding IDHA's position. Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Bosecker, BSN, RDH

Illinois Dental Hygienists' Association President

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