

MDA STATEMENT TO MEMBERS Related to the COVID 19 - Pandemic

MARCH 28, 2020

The Province of Manitoba issued a State of Emergency on March 20, 2020

In direct consultation with CEO of Shared Health MB, Chief Medical Officer of Shared Health MB and Chief Nursing Officer of Shared Health MB, and following the Directive by Dr. Brent Roussin, Chief Provincial Public Health Officer;

The Manitoba Dental Association is strongly recommending that all non-essential and elective dental services be suspended until further notice. Only Emergency treatment should continue.

Updated Definition of Emergency

Emergency treatment includes treatment due to a significant infection, acute pain that cannot be managed pharmacologically, oro-facial trauma or prolonged bleeding, all of which as a result require immediate care. The MDA strongly advises that the dentist exercise reasonable and prudent judgment for assessing risk in these circumstances.

The MDA recognizes the importance for Manitobans who have emergency dental issues to seek advice or treatment and of the priority that dentists continue to take in managing these appropriately.

Manitoba dentists must continue to be responsible for managing their patients' needs. **It is critical that all dental offices maintain telephone communication access for their patients.** Maintaining a strong triage by telephone or other means is important to manage those less complex issues early to avoid escalation to our medical system. Should management of a particular issue be beyond a dentist's skill and judgement, an appropriate referral is to be made.

Medical management through pharmacological modalities, where appropriate, is strongly recommended.

COVID-19 is highly contagious and is transmitted via droplet. It is unknown at this time with certainty as to the length of viability of the virus outside the human body. Because of the nature of the infection, there is a higher risk of transmission of the virus when working in the oropharynx or oral cavity.

Aerosol Generating Medical Procedures (AGMP) present the biggest risk in dental procedures. Aerosols can be generated with dental equipment such as handpieces, suctions, air/water syringes, ultrasonic's among others. **Do not generate aerosols.**

There are increasing number of COVID-19 cases in Canada that appear to be non-travel related, therefore associated with community spread.

This is a reminder to members to manage their emergency treatment for asymptomatic patients only as screened by the most recent version of the Shared Health MB screening checklist with appropriate PPE. <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool>

Pre-screening phone calls, online screening, and screening upon patient arrival should be carefully followed to ensure that only asymptomatic emergent patients are being considered to be seen in person.

Please thoroughly review our Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) guidelines posted on our website for recommendations during this COVID-19 period. This guideline is continually being reviewed and updated. <https://www.manitobadentist.ca/covid-19-updates.cfm>

We are working closely with Shared Health MB to find a facility appropriate for treating serious dental emergencies for high risk, symptomatic or COVID-19 patients.

If you wish to be involved in the care and management of those patients, please make us aware and reach out to our CEO, Mr. Rafi Mohammed by email at rafi@manitobadentist.ca

Due to the fluid nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, dental services, protocols, and emergency definitions may change frequently. Please frequently visit the MDA website for resources and be sure to subscribe to the MDA EAlert system. Resources are posted on the MDA website as they become available. <https://www.manitobadentist.ca/index.cfm>

Dr. Marc Mollot

President and Chairman of the Board
Manitoba Dental Association