

COVID-19 UPDATE: Executive Director's Message on Office Reopening May 1, 2020

**It is time to get you back to doing what you do best, taking care of North Dakotans. No one understands your practices, your patients and your communities better than you as highly trained and educated clinicians.** We at the NDDA Central Office encourage those of you looking to provide any dental care to seriously evaluate and consider all of your options this coming week of April 20-24, 2020.

**In the coming week, we will be providing you updates and resources around:**

- proper PPE,
- health and safety guidelines,
- liability concerns,
- supply chain issues,
- business relief and exposure questions, and
- many other areas.

You need to be thinking about what will be your "new normal" for providing dental care in our state. **At the NDDA, our number one priority always is and will be the health and safety of our dentists, your staff and most importantly your patients.** As your Executive Director, I am extremely proud of the NDDA Membership and dental offices across the state making the difficult, but correct decision, to limit care out of initial precautions due to this pandemic. **Through your unified decisions and actions, you have signaled, and Governor Burgum has noticed, the proactive intelligent decisions and preparedness from the dental community to handle this pandemic.** Since the beginning of this pandemic the NDDA has been in constant communication and working with the State Health Officer, the North Dakota Board of Dental Examiners, the North Dakota Department of Health and most importantly Governor Burgum.

**As a result of our unified action, the NDDA will strongly advocate for the most accurate and up to date health and safety resources when it comes to providing ANY dental care through this COVID-19 pandemic.** We believe in the clinical expertise, education and judgment of our over 400 member dentists across the state of North Dakota and will advocate that any and all practice decisions autonomously flow from our member dentists. Practices are encouraged to research and exceed standard infection control procedures and implement policies to minimize patients' time and possible contact in the waiting rooms. It is our intention that all NDDA members will keep up to date, informed and follow the highest health, safety and infection control recommendations. **For offices choosing to provide any dental care, they need to be reviewing all of our upcoming content, presentations, resources and guidance in the coming week in preparation for a strategic and controlled opening as soon as May 1, 2020.** The strategic and controlled opening of each individual dental office will rest with the clinical judgment of each individual clinician after reviewing the content, presentations, resources and guidance from the NDDA. **If at any point, any clinician feels it is best to limit or close their practice, the NDDA would strongly recommend the clinician follow their best clinical judgment.**

We are all in this together and want to thank you for your unified voice and effort through these extremely trying times. Just as we have been unified, prepared and cautious in our response to this pandemic, we urge you to take this same path when reopening your offices to care in North Dakota. **The NDDA's number one priority at this time is getting you back to work in a healthy and safe manner.** We appreciate your support and adherence to the highest standards of care in our state.