

March 19, 2020 - COVID-19 UPDATE: NDDA President, Dr. Brad Anderson State Advisory/Response Representative to State Health Officer/Governor, Local Action/Response Leadership Teams and Guidance

As you know, the NDDA is in constant communication with the North Dakota Governor's Office, the North Dakota Board of Dental Examiners (NDBODE), the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDOH) and many other state agencies. We are striving to protect and ensure your health and safety which is our number one priority. **On the forefront of everyone's minds and we are doing our best to provide you specific North Dakota information on insurance, finances, human resources, etc. Please know the NDDA is in active dialogue with several state agencies about potential economic and regulatory relief for dental practice owners and employees as a result of the impacts of this unprecedented event.**

State Health Officer Tufte and Governor Burgum have convened a multi-professional task force of physicians, specialists, and other emergency/critical care experts. Through our continuous conversations with leadership it was decided that it is vital to have dental representation and input as a part of this advisory/response team. We need dental representation in these rooms and contributing to these conversations as they may affect practice settings and requirements in the future. **Dr. Brad Anderson, President of the NDDA, will provide insight, context, potential risks, best practices and any other advice to the State Health Officer and Governor as it pertains to the safe and healthy delivery of emergency dental care in our state.** It is imperative that we work with state and local officials to address this public health crisis and do our part to ensure the safety of our member dentists and their patients.

Due to the nature of this rapidly changing and evolving pandemic, **Dr. Jackie Nord and Dr. Marcus Tanabe will be presenting on best practices, next steps and local preparedness for response surrounding potential COVID-19 patients that need emergency dental treatment** to the NDDA Trustees and District Presidents. Following our discussion Local Trustees, District Presidents and district memberships will decide at the local level how they will proceed regarding COVID-19 in their communities. Local leadership will communicate with major medical systems and have contingencies and plans in place for worst case scenarios in preparation for the worst and how to handle specific scenarios of COVID-19 positive patients. Local leadership will communicate the content of this meeting (best practices, next steps and local preparedness) and local advice/direction to their local membership through their listservs. Dr. Tanabe will stress **the importance of dental offices continuing to see and provide emergency dental care to their patients in this public health emergency** to help support major medical systems and our dental specialists from being overrun with these cases. At this time, we need to do our part and assure our preparedness to help combat any potential outbreaks and to help provide some comfort to the public and our members. We are in uncharted waters and more than ever we need to stick together, work together, and do our best to provide a unified front in the best interest of the public and our profession.