



Connecticut State Dental Association

Message from the President

May 15, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

As we reported earlier, the CSDA participated in the Governor's Reopen CT Dental Subgroup, which this morning completed its charge of developing guidelines that represent best-practices for Connecticut dental providers to begin to slowly expand their operations in as safe a manner as possible. Those guidelines have been finalized, and have been forwarded to the Governor. We anticipate that the Guidelines will be released as early as this weekend.

I want to ensure you that all members of the Reopen CT Dental Subgroup, which included the CSDA, ADHA-CT, the Connecticut Dental Assistants Association and the Chair of the Connecticut State Dental Commission are fully supportive of the guidelines that the group has developed. It was a collaborative process, with in-depth discussion and thorough consideration of all issues and their implications to the dentist, dental team members, and patients.

The guidelines, based on the recommendations outlined in the American Dental Association's "Return to Work Interim Guidance Toolkit" and the American Dental Hygiene Association's "Interim Guidance on Return to Work," provide additional definition and details in several areas—including Personal Protective Equipment and Work Practice Controls for both non-aerosol, and aerosol generating procedures for protecting staff and patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We will distribute the guidelines to our membership once they are released by the Governor's office. Once you have an opportunity to fully review the guidelines, I fully expect that there will be a lot of questions regarding the application of the guidelines. The CSDA will be developing Q&A to help explain the intent and expectations related to the various best practices, so that you can get back up and running without unnecessary delay.

Of course, the issue of securing appropriate PPE remains a primary challenge for all of us. The CSDA is working in earnest to find sources for the protective gear most needed by our members. Thanks to those of you who responded to our survey last weekend regarding your current PPE supply. We learned that our members have the greatest need for N95 masks and disposable gowns. I am hopeful that we will soon have some positive news to report on our quest for dental PPE.

Finally, I want to thank the leadership of ADHA-CT for providing their perspective and professionalism throughout this fast-tracked process. We recognize that dental hygienists and dental assistants are vital members of our dental care teams, and it is essential that we have open communications and robust conversations with our staff to ensure that we all work together with the end goal of providing the best care to our patients. I am happy to accept the request of the ADHA-CT for a joint statement with the CSDA as a demonstration of our mutual support for this process and the resulting guidelines. We will be sure to distribute that joint statement with our members as soon as it is available.

Be well and be safe.

Sincerely,
Tam Le, DMD
CSDA President