

April 30, 2020

In early April, the Canadian Association of Orthodontists struck a task force to provide guidance to its members on safely providing care during the COVID-19 pandemic. The resulting recommendations are attached.

The task force assessed risk factors associated with virus transmission during orthodontic procedures and has developed a document providing recommendations to mitigate them. This process involved a review of the current literature as it relates to the transmission of the SARS-Co-V2 in the dental environment, as well as consulting with international orthodontic societies to assess the steps they have taken to begin safely providing patient care.

A key finding is that orthodontic procedures, relative to most other dental procedures present the lowest risk of virus transmission. This, along with the ability to reduce or completely eliminate aerosol production through modification of bonding and debonding procedures, further decreases the transmission risk.

Orthodontic care is unique in dentistry, in that active tooth movement is occurring between adjustment appointments and treatment is being rendered over an extended period. The closure of dental clinics has interrupted the necessary monitoring of treatment progress and has placed patients at risk. It is our hope that with the adoption of these interim recommendations, in conjunction with the pre-existing rigorous infection control regulations, that dentists will be able to return to safely seeing their orthodontic patients in the very near future.

Appended in the CAO Guidelines is the just released Interim Protocol Update from the College of Dental Surgeons of Saskatchewan which listed orthodontic procedures (non-aerosol generating) as acceptable procedures. Also appended is a document developed by the Australian Dental Association defining services restrictions. This week Australian dentists moved from level 3 to level 2 restrictions. This move was unanimously approved, using the ADA document, by coordination of the health ministers in all seven states/territories.

The CAO is providing this information to each provincial regulator and hope that it will be helpful as you begin the difficult task of developing protocols for the safe provision of dental care. If we can provide any additional information or support please do not hesitate to reach out to us directly at [cao@associationconcepts.ca](mailto:cao@associationconcepts.ca).

Kind Regards,

Dr. Mike Wagner, President

Drs. Rick Odegaard and Jay Philippon, Co-Chairs, Return-to-Work Task Force

Encl. Canadian Association of Orthodontists Return-to-Work Guidelines

Cc: All Dental Regulatory Authorities  
All Provincial Ministries of Health  
Canadian Dental Association  
All Provincial Dental Associations