

Summary - COVID 19 measures in dental practices in European and international comparison

2nd April 2020

Country	Actions taken	Compensation schemes for dentists	Source
<p>Austria</p>	<p>Oral request by the Minister of Health to the presidents of the regional dental chambers to keep practices open for the time being, but to limit treatments to emergency care.</p> <p>An official general closure of the dental practices, which many dentists wish for because of the business interruption insurance, is not considered by the Austrian federal government at the moment.</p> <p>Regional dental chambers have organized emergency service. Dramatic decline in number of patients.</p>	<p>Agreement with trade unions for easier access to short-time work (10 - 90 percent on average over a period of three months), where the dentist's employees receive most of the loss of earnings (approx. 85 percent) paid by the employment offices and initially limited to three months.</p> <p>Austria has set up various hardship funds from which allegedly compensation for loss of earnings is also to be paid to dentists. However, the funds are to be allocated according to economic performance.</p> <p>Furthermore, the possibility of deferring tax payments and social security contributions for an initial period of three months is given.</p>	<p>Austrian Dental Chamber</p> <p>https://www.zahnaerztekammer.at/fileadmin/content/oezak/RS_corona-virus_150320.pdf</p>

<p>Belgium</p>	<p>The <i>Chambre Syndicale Dentaire</i> and the Belgian Dental Society published a recommendation on 19th March 2020 that only emergency cases should be treated. Dentists must take various safety measures (e.g. FFP2 masks).</p>	<p>No schemes for financial compensation for dentists/dental practices</p>	<p>Chambre Syndicale Dentaire http://www.incisif.be/csd-news-00282020-communique-19-mars-2020/</p>
<p>Bulgaria</p>	<p>National state of emergency was declared on 9th March 2020. There are no official instructions for dental clinics. The Bulgarian Dental Association recommends to drastically reduce treatments of patients and to only accept emergency cases.</p>	<p>No schemes for financial compensation for dentists/dental practices</p>	<p>Bulgarian Dental Association</p>

<p>Canada</p>	<p>The dental practices remain open, but should only provide for emergency treatment. Some dentists try teledentistry. It is discussed how it could be reimbursed by the insurers. Personal protective equipment is rare and therefore difficult to obtain. Patient numbers dramatically declined.</p>	<p>No special compensation schemes for dentists are planned. The Canadian government however decided for general measures to support SMEs, and dental offices could profit from this scheme.</p>	<p>Canadian Dental Association</p>
<p>China</p>	<p>More than a month ago all dental practices and hospitals were closed and were only allowed to offer emergency treatments. Large dental clinics and hospitals are slowly starting to reopen, but only if they can provide for a strict screening system for patients. Patients are only allowed inside dental facilities if the screening was successful (fever check, travel history checked by a mobile app, etc.).</p>	<p>No compensation scheme is in place, neither by the government nor by the insurance.</p>	<p>Chinese Stomatological Association</p>

<p>Croatia</p>	<p>Dentist should keep their practices open, since they are a part of the national health system. However, the Croatian Dental Chamber recommends to only treating emergency patients and patients, whose treatment should be finalized. Appropriate protective equipment for the dentist and the personnel is mandatory.</p>	<p>The Croatian Dental Chamber demands appropriate financial assistance for dentists/dental practices on national as well as European level.</p>	<p>Croatian Dental Chamber https://www.hkdm.hr/novost/1783/PRIOPCENJE-PREDSJEDNIKA-KOMORE-o-poduzetim-mjerama-i-radnjama-Komore-u-epidemioloskoj-situaciji-sirenja-virusa-COVID-19</p>
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<p>Denmark</p>	<p>On 17th March 2020, the Danish National Board of Health decreed that dental practices may only perform so-called "critical tasks", i.e. only treating emergency patients and finalize cases amidst treatment</p>	<p>Temporary compensation schemes for self-employed persons with a maximum of 10 full-time employees will be provided (until June). Self-employed persons who have experienced a drop in income of more than 30 percent due to the COVID 19 virus outbreak can be compensated. According to the proposal, the compensation by the state would be 75 percent of the loss of income, but not more than DKK 23,000 (Euro 3,077) per month, which is the same as the rates of the wage compensation system for employees agreed with the social partners in a tripartite agreement. According to the proposal, the compensation can be up to DKK 34,500 per person per month if the self-employed person is married. The government has announced that a concrete model for compensation will be determined as soon as possible.</p>	<p>Danish Dental Association</p> <p>For the Danish compensation scheme: https://bm.dk/nyheder-presse/pressemeddelelser/2020/03/trepartsaftale-skal-hjaelpe-loenmodtagere/</p>
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Estonia	No official closure of dental practices is foreseen at the moment. Estonian Dental Association demands a closure for two weeks while maintaining emergency care.	The compensation rules for staff currently provide for 70 percent of salary and no more than 1,000 Euro.	Estonian Dental Association
Finland	No official closure of dental practices for the time being. Decision is left to local authorities. However, most of non-urgent dental care is postponed.		https://www.hammaslaakariliitto.fi/fi/tyoelama/koronavirustilanteeseen-varautuminen-suun-terveydenhuollosa#.XnPkmAxmpo

<p>France</p>	<p>Government decree of March 16 setting up the containment and addressed to the public. There is no decree for health professions that orders the closure of dental practices.</p> <p><i>Ordre National des Chirugiens-Dentistes (ONCD)</i> does not have the authority to close dental clinics. It has conveyed recommendations to dentists for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -closing clinics to the public -organizing the provision of urgent oral cares -condition: the practitioner has all guarantees and standard equipment. 	<p>Compensation has so far been provided for to a very small extent only. Social insurances pay 100 Euro per month. Further compensations are to follow. However, these will be capped. On 17th March, the French Minister of Economics announced a one-time payment of 1,500 euros for freelancers, as well as reliefs in the payment of social security contributions and taxes.</p>	<p>Ordre National des Chirugiens-Dentistes (ONCD)</p> <p>Les CDF https://lescdf.fr/sites/default/files/inline-files/20200317%20Point%20Services%20ECO.pdf_0.pdf</p>
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<p>Greece</p>	<p>The scientific committees of the Hellenic Dental Association and the Regional Dental Society of Athens (OSA) have issued recommendations to their members to treat only emergencies.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Council of European Dentists</p>
<p>Ireland</p>	<p>Contradictory situation: The Dental Regulatory Authority, the Irish Dental Council, has not issued a warning. The General Health Authority has issued a general warning for healthcare providers.</p> <p>Most dental practices have closed voluntarily and only treat emergencies.</p>	<p>Plans for state aid are underway. IDA wrote a letter to the minister of finance:</p> <p>https://www.dentist.ie/fileupload/Covid%2019/20c0024%20-%20ltr%20to%20minister%20pascal%20donohoe%20re%20covid-19%20outbreak.pdf</p>	<p>Irish Dental Association (IDA)</p> <p>https://www.dentist.ie/news/covid-19-advice.8333.html#bus%20support</p>

<p>Lithuania</p>	<p>The quarantine has been announced in Lithuania since March 16, providing only necessary treatment (in emergency cases) or treatment if the absence of treatment significantly worsens the patient's condition. All safeguards must be used (unfortunately missing). Necessary dental care (according to universities): periostitis, osteomyelitis, alveolitis, pulpitis, periodontitis apicalis ac.</p>	<p>Still not clear how and to what extent dentists can be financially compensated for the losses. Compensation is expected to be minimal. The State Tax Inspectorate has published on its website a list of taxpayers who are automatically eligible for these aid measures, such as non-recovery of declared taxes, relief from tax arrears, and tax credits. These payers are subject to similar measures to facilitate the payment of state social security contributions.</p>	<p>Lithuanian Dental Chamber</p>
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<p>Luxembourg</p>	<p>On 7th March 2020, the Luxembourg Ministry of Health instructed dental practices on how to deal with COVID-19 patients. Unnecessary treatment of such patients is to be postponed and necessary treatment is to be carried out only under observance of safety measures.</p> <p>On 16th March 2020, all freelance healthcare institutions were instructed to carry out only urgent necessary treatments.</p> <p>On 28th March 2020 all dental practices were closed. Three dental practices provide for emergency dental care.</p>		<p>Instructions by the Luxembourg Ministry of Health: https://sante.public.lu/fr/espace-profession-nel/recommandations/direction-sante/000-covid-191-annexes/050-recommandations-dentistes.pdf</p> <p>https://sante.public.lu/fr/espace-profession-nel/recommandations/direction-sante/000-covid-191-annexes/055-pro-sante-cabinet-liberal.pdf</p>
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<p>Netherlands</p>	<p>No official orders are published by health authorities. The Dutch Dental Associations KNMT and ANT have strongly recommended their members to limit dental treatment to emergency care until 6th April. The Ministry of Health supports this advice.</p>	<p>No schemes for financial compensation for dentists/dental practices</p> <p>It is the free decision of the dentist to stop treatment while he/she bears all consequences for paying dental staff and practice finances.</p>	<p>KNMT</p> <p>https://www.knmt.nl/nieuws/update-19-maart-coronavirus</p>
<p>Poland</p>	<p>The Polish authorities have not yet ordered the closure of dental practices. The Polish Dental Chamber recommends the suspension of all treatments that can be postponed from a medical point of view and leaves it up to the individual dentist to decide whether and to what extent the treatment should be continued.</p>	<p>Discussions about state aid are underway.</p> <p>Polish Dental Chamber sets up relief fund of 750,000 Euro for the purchase of protective masks. Moreover, private donations are planned.</p>	<p>Polish Chambers for Physicians and Dentists</p>

<p>Portugal</p>	<p>Since 1st March, the Portuguese Dental Association (<i>Ordem dos Médicos Dentistas</i>) has issued recommendations to its members, which define the preventive measures to be taken by dentists.</p> <p>On 14th March, the Portuguese Dental Association issued a statement recommending that all dental treatments should be postponed and that only emergencies should be allowed in dental surgeries during the COVID 19 outbreak.</p> <p>On 16th March, the Portuguese Ministry of Health adopted a decree ordering the closure of all dental surgeries in the country for 15 days while allowing only emergency treatment (according to a sample list).</p>	<p>No special compensations are announced up to now. General state aid programmes are foreseen.</p>	<p>Ordem dos Médicos Dentistas</p> <p>https://www.ond.pt/</p>
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<p>Slovenia</p>	<p>Decree of the Slovenian Ministry of Health on provisional measures to control the spread of the infectious disease COVID-19, ordering the closure of all dental surgeries in the country. Seven reception centres for emergency patients have been created nationwide, each of which has an outpatient clinic for healthy patients and a separate one for suspected cases.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ODRE2545</p>
<p>South Korea</p>	<p>Dental surgeries continue to be open, protective clothing was already mandatory before the COVID-19 outbreak. Outbreak of the disease was regionally limited and controlled.</p>	<p>No schemes for financial compensation for dentists/dental practices</p>	<p>Korean Dental Association</p>

<p>Spain</p>	<p>No official closure of the health care facilities is ordered. However, most dental clinics (dental practices) are only open for treating emergencies. Healthcare professionals face a serious lack of protective clothing.</p>	<p>No direct compensation scheme is planned, but there was an announcement of postponement of tax payments and offering transitional payments for dental staff.</p>	<p>Spanish Dental Council https://www.consejodentistas.es/ciudadanos/coronavirus.html</p>
<p>Switzerland</p>	<p>Federal Council (<i>Bundesrat</i>): Ordinance 2 on measures to combat coronavirus: "Dental offices may no longer perform non-emergency procedures or treatments."</p>	<p>Freelance dentists: No regulations are in place yet, interest-free loans are discussed.</p> <p>Dental personnel: Short-time working compensation is based on the Employment Insurance Act. 80 percent of the gross wage is paid. https://www.seco.admin.ch/seco/de/home/Arbeit/neues_coronavirus.html</p>	<p>SSO https://www.bag.admin.ch/bag/de/home/krankheiten/ausbrueche-epidemien-pandemien/aktuelle-ausbrueche-epidemien/novel-cov/massnahmen-des-bundes.html</p>

<p>United Kingdom</p>	<p>Order of the Chief Dental Officer dated 20 March 2020: "Radical reduction of patients" to treatments that cannot be delayed and to consolidate urgent dental problems. Emergency care should take place in selected emergency surgeries equipped with protective clothing. BDA has already pressed for these official guidelines and demanded clarifications as to what financial compensation could be provided.</p>	<p>State aid is foreseen for the dental personnel: https://www.bda.org/advice/Coronavirus/Pages/financial-impact.aspx</p> <p>Further state aid programs are announced.</p>	<p>British Dental Association https://www.bda.org/advice/Coronavirus/</p> <p>Order of the Chief Dental Officer on 20th March 2020: https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/Issue-2-Preparedness-letter-for-primary-dental-care-20-March-2020.pdf</p>
<p>United States of America (USA)</p>	<p>On March 16th, ADA called on dentists to postpone elective procedures for next three weeks. Only emergency dental care should be provided in the meantime.</p>	<p>On March 26th, the national legislators reached a deal on the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, which entails a US\$ 2 trillion economic stimulus package, provisions which are applicable to dentistry are included.</p>	<p>American Dental Association (ADA) www.ada.org/coronavirus</p>

Summary

A trend is emerging across Europe to allow dental treatment only in emergencies. The countries are taking different approaches, partly in the form of official orders, partly in the form of recommendations by the relevant dental associations or chambers. A certain number of EU member states is still in the process of finding a solution. As far as compensation is concerned, there are currently only general rules for the self-employed or SMEs, which would also cover dental practices. The amounts envisaged are comparatively low and always capped.

Official orders to close dental surgeries and ensure emergency care are available in: Denmark, Luxembourg, Portugal, Slovenia and Switzerland.

There are recommendations or demands to close the practice on the part of associations or chambers in: Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Estonia, the Netherlands and Spain.

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