

CDA COVID-19 UPDATE



A Message for CDA Stakeholders

Below is a snapshot of the Canadian Dental Association's (CDA) pandemic-related work for the week ending January 22, 2021. CDA's next update is slated for February 19, 2021.

Fast Facts:

CDA's COVID-19 Team Lead, Dr. Aaron Burry, Deputy CEO - Professional Affairs, provides a video update on trends and case growth related to COVID-19 across Canada and some parts of the world. Click on the image below to view the video discussion. Highlights include:

- COVID-19 trends in case growth worldwide are starting to decline slightly.
- Germany and the United Kingdom are experiencing an increase in death rates week after week. This is concerning and heightens the possibility of new strains/mutations of the COVID-19 virus.
- In Canada, there is a decline in cases in Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec. The number of cases is returning to case growth trends reported in early December 2020. This can be attributed to the additional measures (i.e., hard lockdowns) that have been put in place around the holiday season. In some provinces, the public continues to be strongly encouraged to stay home, to go out for essential services only, and to reduce social gatherings.
- **New!** A highly contagious, suspected new variant of the COVID-19 virus has been found in long-term care facilities in Ontario. This variant appears to spread much more rapidly. The implications for dentistry mean that staff must be hyper vigilant when presenting to the office for work and when in non-clinical/common areas.
- **Trend:** In health care environments, spikes have been noted in staff testing positive for COVID-19, a few days after immunization. There is a misconception

that individuals are immune against the virus immediately after vaccination. With some vaccinations, immunizations offer guaranteed immunity **12 days after the second round of vaccination**. This means that people can still contract the virus and spread it to others if they let their guard down. Furthermore, data is not yet available on whether the COVID-19 vaccine protects individuals against other strains of the virus. Individuals who have been immunized are encouraged to continue practicing vigilance, even after vaccination.



Video Length: Approximately 6 minutes. Recorded: January 19, 2021.

CDA Advocacy and Federal Government Announcements

Mr. Don Moors, President of Temple Scott Associates, provides a video update on the Federal Government's funding support programs and more. Click on the image below to view the video discussion.



Video Length: Approximately 4 minutes. Recorded: January 19, 2021.

Highlights:

The Federal Government made changes to the eligibility criteria for some of its funding support programs. Key updates include:

- **Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS):** The government has increased the maximum wage subsidy rate under CEWS to 75% for the period beginning

December 20, 2020, which has been extended until March 13, 2021. Applications are now open for the December 20, 2020 to the January 16, 2021 claim period.

- **Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS):** To provide greater certainty to businesses and other organizations, the government has extended the subsidy rates of the CERS for an additional three periods. This includes a base subsidy rate of up to 65% for eligible expenses until March 13, 2021.
- **Lockdown Support:** Under the new Lockdown Support program, organizations that are subject to a lockdown and must shut their doors or significantly restrict their activities under a public health order are eligible for an additional 25% top-up, in addition to the CERS base subsidy of up to 65%. The government has extended the rate of 25% for the Lockdown Support for an additional three periods, until March 13, 2021.
- **Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA):** As of [December 4, 2020](#), eligible businesses facing financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic are able to access a second CEBA loan of up to \$20,000 – on top of the initial \$40,000 that was available to small businesses.

Half of this additional financing, up to \$10,000, will be forgivable if the loan is repaid by December 31, 2022. This means the additional loan effectively increases CEBA loans from the existing \$40,000 to \$60,000 for eligible businesses, of which a total of \$20,000 will be forgiven if the balance of the loan is repaid on time.

The deadline will be extended from December 31, 2020 to March 31, 2021. To apply, eligible businesses and not-for-profits need to contact the financial institution that provided their initial CEBA loan and provide the appropriate information and documentation.

See video for complete details.

New! CDA has updated its [federal funding program website pages](#) with the latest information available.

Other Key Federal Details:

New! Cabinet Shuffle: On January 12, 2021, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced changes in his Ministerial cabinet; however, none of the changes affect the health portfolio. Changes include:

- Francois Phillippe Champagne moves from Foreign Affairs to be Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry;
- Marc Garneau moves from Transport Canada to be Minister of Foreign Affairs;
- James Carr re-enters Cabinet as Minister without portfolio (Special Representative of the Prairies); and

- Omar Alhabra enters Cabinet as Minister of Transport.

Update: Supplementary Mandate Letters: The Prime Minister's Office published Supplementary Mandate Letters for Ministers on January 15, 2021, which are intended to be supplementary to existing mandate letters from 2019. The current supplementary letter for the Minister of Health does not include a reference to dental care, and largely focuses on concerns related to the pandemic; the need for a national commitment on long term care standards; expanded capacity for virtual care; accelerated steps towards national Pharmacare; and sustained partnership with indigenous communities. The full document can be found [here](#).

Deputy Prime Minister Freeland's Supplementary Mandate Letter includes a reference to expanding the existing Canadian Emergency Business Account. It was also stated that emergency spending programs to help support Canadians and businesses through the COVID-19 pandemic would be temporary in nature - while the pandemic is ongoing. The full document can be found [here](#).

Update: Members in the House of Commons will be voting on NDP MP Peter Julian's private member's bill - An Act to enact the Pharmacare Act, later in February, 2021. It is unlikely to pass.

Upcoming: CDA Monitoring Federal Budget Announcements: The federal government must table a budget before April 1, 2021. The federal Liberals continue to poll at a 4–5-point lead over the Conservatives, mounting speculation that an election could be near. It is possible that the budget could trigger an election.

Update: House of Commons and Committee Activity: The House of Commons will resume regular parliamentary activity on January 25, 2021, as will most Committee activity, including the House of Commons' Standing Committee on Health. CDA will report key updates as new information becomes available.

CDA's Return to Practice Task Force:

This group includes representatives from all Corporate Member provincial dental associations (PDAs). The Task Force continues to work together to discuss deliverables for:

1. information exchange on return-to-practice status across the country;
2. strategies for obtaining and securing PPEs; and
3. communications to the public on dentists returning to practice.

Ongoing: Mental Health in the Workplace. Safeguarding your mental health and overall wellness is important - especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Task

Force is coordinating the evaluation of a short course on mental health in the workplace to see if there would be value in adapting this for dentistry. More information to follow as this work progresses.

Reminder: The Task Force continues to review and prioritize its list of deliverables. Any specific expectations or special requests of the Task Force should be fed forward by Corporate Member PDAs to their PDA member Task Force representative.

CDA’s Infection Control Working Group (“The Working Group”):

This Working Group is responsible for collecting and assessing information on infection protection and control to support the *Return to Practice Task Force*. The Working Group meets regularly until its tasks are completed. The Working Group has organized their work into four key areas, including:

- minimizing the emission of infectant particles;
- controlling infectant particles’ dispersion to other surrounding areas;
- protecting staff and patients in the dental office, including PPE requirements; and
- contamination and disinfection protocols.

Coming Soon: Resource on Vaccine Hesitancy. It is anticipated that more vaccines will be made available to Canadians this March or April. In preparation for this milestone, CDA will produce a package of resources regarding vaccine hesitancy by dental office staff and patients. These materials will be made available to Corporate Members to use and adapt for their member dentists, as deemed appropriate.

Reminder: Medical Gown Use in Dentistry Resource. In collaboration with CDA’s Practice Recovery Task Force, the Working Group finalized this resource and CDA has distributed it to Corporate Members via the Dental Communications Group to co-brand and/or adapt, as deemed appropriate.



Knowledge and Information Broker:

[CDA Oasis](#) is CDA's primary channel of communication for delivering urgent information to the dental community during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following discussions have been recorded since CDA's last COVID-19 update. Be sure to check these out:

- [2021 COVID-19 Update - Impact on the Dental Practice:](#)
Dr. Aaron Burry speaks about vaccine roll-out, vaccine hesitancy and social media rumours, the validity of screening (or lack thereof) in light of the rapid community spread of the virus; and finally, the necessity to continue to implement safety protocols in the dental practice. **(January 14, 2021)**
- [Managing Your Worries:](#)
Dr. Sally Safa stresses the importance of categorizing worries into solvable and unsolvable problems. She recommends carving out dedicated "worry time" and highlights the value of confiding in others **(January 4, 2021)**.

This week's **CDA Oasis Bulletin** collated relevant and timely "[news that you can use](#)" related to COVID-19.

Reminder: **CDA Essentials, Issue 7** is available [online](#). Here are some of the edition's highlights pertaining to the pandemic:

- Your COVID-19 Questions Answered;
- Review of the Proposed Pharmacological Treatments for COVID-19



Click image to access CDA Essentials, Issue 7, 2020

CDA Help Desk:

CDA's Help Desk continues to assist dentists and dental office employees on how to navigate and access federal government support programs.

The latest federal funding program information has been updated on [CDA's website](#) on December 4, 2020. For assistance on how to navigate these support programs for Canadians and businesses, please call **1-866-232-0385, M-F, 7:30 A.M. – 8:00 p.m. EDT.**



Mental Health and Wellness:

New! National Healthy Professional Worker Study: An interdisciplinary, multi-university research team, led by Dr. Ivy Bourgeault at the University of Ottawa, is conducting an important study to explore the mental health experiences of professional workers, and how these experiences are affected by their personal, work and family life.

The case studies include academia, accounting, dentistry, medicine, midwifery, nursing and teaching professions. They are particularly interested in the role that gender has on these experiences. There will also be some questions about how COVID-19 has impacted these experiences.

Should dentists be interested in issues related to mental health at work, Corporate Members are welcome to invite them to participate in the Healthy Professional Worker study. See attached [poster and recruitment text package](#).

Two Ways to Participate:

1. an online survey: <https://bit.ly/3nk2gBf>
2. an online or telephone interview: HPW@uottawa.ca

The survey may take 15-20 minutes to complete. The interview may take 40-60 minutes. Interview participants will receive a \$20 honorarium.

Reminder: The Mental Health Commission of Canada offers valuable information on how to manage your mental health and wellness and how to deal with social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Key links:

- [Covid-19 Resources](#): This link offers a range of helpful resources, including posters, infographics, tip sheets, training opportunities, webinars, and more.
- Brochure: [Mental Health in the Workplace](#)
- Tip sheet: [Cultivating resilience in the wake of COVID-19](#)
- Tip sheet: [Talking to someone in crisis during COVID-19](#)

Reminder: Individuals can access mental health and wellness support by calling CDSPI's Members' Assistance Program (MAP) at **1.844.578.4040** or visiting www.workhealthlife.com

MAP provides a variety of resources to help individuals deal with life's challenges. It is a confidential counselling, referral and information service for individuals who are dealing with mental health challenges or need advice on topics such as physical fitness, nutrition or parenting. MAP services and resources are offered through Shepell, Canada's largest provider of Employee and Family Assistance Programs.



Free counselling, referral and information service for dentists, dental office employees, and their families.

The CDA COVID-19 Response Team works diligently on a range of fronts to help minimize and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the dental profession. CDA is working to address scientific, clinical, economic and business-related matters impacting dentistry, including efforts to increase awareness about the mental health and wellness of dentists, their families and dental office employees during these challenging times. CDA will communicate regular updates as new information becomes available.



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