

# CDA COVID-19 UPDATE



## A Message for CDA Stakeholders

Below is a snapshot of the Canadian Dental Association's (CDA) pandemic work for the week ending June 12, 2020.

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### **This Week's Fast Facts: COVID-19 Situational Report**

- Currently, there are approximately 7.6 million cases worldwide. This represents a 19% increase in the past week. Also, one day last week saw more new one-day cases than ever previously recorded.
- In the United States, the number of cases exceed 2 million. There has been a 10% increase in cases in the past week, which continues the trend of the previous two weeks.
- In Canada, there has been a 5% increase in new cases in the past week with an 8% mortality rate largely due to outbreaks in health care settings, long-term care facilities, food processing plants, etc.
- The situation in Quebec and Ontario has improved and these provinces are finally seeing a drop in daily new cases. Quebec represents 63% of all COVID-related deaths in Canada and Ontario represents 31% of all COVID-related deaths in Canada.
- Ontario continued to see over 300 new cases per day up until today (Jun 12), where the numbers declined to just over 200. An increase in the number of new cases per day is considered a resurgence rather than a second wave of the virus as these outbreaks are in specific communities. A new concern is a spike in younger individuals (in their 20s) testing positive. Although the Premier has extended the state of emergency to the end of June, there are additional openings and return to services being announced.
- This week, the World Health Organization (WHO) on its [social media channels](#) attempted to clear up confusing comments about how often people can spread

- the coronavirus when they do not have symptoms. The parameters of this remain to be determined.
- The Government of Canada is anticipating a second wave, likely this Fall, and are stockpiling personal protective equipment (PPE).
  - The prospect of new medications, advanced testing and a vaccine to address the virus are not on the immediate horizon.
  - For the dental profession, there needs to be continued vigilance regarding the screening and pre-screening of patients.
  - The Public Health Agency of Canada's response to the pandemic seems to be moving from a crisis response to one of long-term management.

### Reminders!

1. **Non-medical masks for general population:** The Chief Public Health Officer of Canada is still recommending non-medical masks for the general population in situations where maintaining a two metre (2m) social distancing is difficult. It has also been recommended that patients wear masks while in the dental office.
2. **Common area contact tracing:** Outbreaks in common areas, such as lunchrooms or washrooms, remain a concern. Individuals are reminded not to let their guard down. Continue to take all necessary precautions, including disinfecting common area surfaces, including counters, door handles, faucets, sinks and toilets, and respect the need to socially distance to avoid the spread of the virus.

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## Advocacy Updates:

**New! CDA Appearance at Health Committee:** On June 10, 2020, CDA appeared at the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health as part of its study on the response to the COVID-19 crisis. CDA was represented by Dr. Jim Armstrong, President, and Dr. Aaron Burry, Associate Director, Professional Affairs. CDA made three recommendations to key Members of Parliament:

1. That greater consideration be given to dentistry as vital frontline health care workers when considering access to PPE.
2. That the Federal government create a specific oral health envelope of \$3 Billion as part of the Canada Health Transfer.
3. That basic oral health standards be part of any future review of the state of health in long-term care facilities.

The committee was appreciative of CDA's appearance and followed up with questions on the impact of COVID-19 on the profession. [View a copy](#) of CDA's opening remarks, and the [webcast](#) which begins at **16:42**.

**Coming Up! Changes to Canada Emergency Relief Benefit (CERB) and Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS):** Bill C-17, *An Act respecting additional COVID-19 measures*, was tabled in Parliament on June 10, 2020. This new bill would provide changes to both the CERB and the CEWS. The goal of these changes is to move Canadians who are able to work off the CERB and into the CEWS.

Some key changes that should benefit dental practices include:

- Rendering individuals ineligible for CERB if they fail to return to work when their employer requests their return, or decline a reasonable offer to work.
- Shortening the eligibility periods from four weeks to two weeks, effective July 5, 2020.
- Legislative allowances for businesses that use a payroll administrator to qualify for the CEWS. This was an issue that CDA raised, as it seemed to be affecting the ability of partnerships and cost-sharing relationships to qualify.

Currently, the opposition has refused to debate the bill, so further developments will be shared shortly.

**New! Pre-Budget Consultations 2020:** The Standing Committee on Finance announced this week that they will commence the annual pre-budget consultation process. The theme of this year's consultations will be "economic restart and recovery." The deadline for briefs will be August 7, 2020, and CDA will circulate a brief for discussion in the coming weeks.

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## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**

**Federal Government Initiatives:** The Government of Canada is working closely with partners to ensure Canadians have access to the information, resources and supplies that they need to stay safe and healthy in response to COVID-19.

**New!** The Government of Canada launched a new [web hub](#) to bring together available resources for organizations to buy and sell PPE. As organizations re-open for business, they need reliable information on how to buy and sell the necessary supplies required to keep themselves and others safe.

The Supply Hub connects Canadian organizations from coast to coast to coast with federal, provincial, territorial and other resources and information about PPE, including consumer guidance. Buyers will find PPE supplier lists, in addition to guidance to help

plan their PPE purchases. As Public Services and Procurement Canada continues to engage with our partners and advisory groups, the hub will evolve to include additional resources.

**Update: USC&LS Service Codes for the provision of additional PPE**

The additional charges for PPE introduced by some dentists are drawing the attention of the media. CDA has received requests for comments from the Globe and Mail.

CDA's position is that following consultations with PDAs who use the USC&LS for their fee guide, the CDA has approved two new codes for provision of enhanced PPE materials during a pandemic. One code pertains to the PPE required for non-aerosol generating procedures, while the second is for the PPE required for aerosol generating procedures.

Any fee recommendations are outside of CDA's mandate, and are the exclusive domain of the PDAs. CDA's role is limited to the definition of codes to support the publication of fee guides and the adjudication of dental claims.

All users of the USC&LS have been notified that two new codes are available for use. For specific details about the inclusion of these codes in fee guides, inquiries will be directed to [PDAs](#). Information about the coverage provided by dental benefit plans should be addressed to individual insurance companies and will be redirected accordingly.

**Reminders:**

- These codes are not to be used for the additional time dentists require to use these materials (donning and doffing) or the additional time required to see the patient.
- Claims that include these codes can be transmitted with CDAnet and insurance companies will be able to adjudicate those claims as soon as they make the necessary adjustments to their adjudication systems. However, at this point in time, it remains uncertain if plan sponsors will agree to cover the costs of these new service codes. Decisions on whether to reimburse these costs will be made by insurance companies on a plan-by-plan basis, and in collaboration with the plan sponsors.

**Upcoming:** CDA is aware that the time to provide dental treatments has increased under the provincial return to work protocols. Discussions with CHLIA are ongoing. Upcoming talks will focus on the time needed by dentists to accommodate new materials and other related costs to dentists. CDA will report any updates as new information becomes available.

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## **CDA's Return to Practice Task Force (The Task Force):**

The Task Force includes representatives from all Corporate Member PDAs. The Task Force will now meet bi-weekly 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.

### **New! Version 2 of the Return-to-Practice Office Manual Released to PDAs**

The French language version of Version 2 of the manual is now available and has been distributed to Corporate Member PDAs. Version 2 of the English manual was distributed last week. To avoid any confusion, please direct requests for the latest version of the manual from the [PDA](#) in your respective region.

### **Upcoming: Public Messaging: *Taking Care of your Oral Health, Your Dentist is Ready to See You***

As dental offices prepare to resume routine oral health care provision in different stages across the country, CDA is finalizing messaging with the Task Force, with input received from members of CDA's Dental Communications Working Group. The materials aim to encourage the public to see their dentist to get back to oral health and to restart routine care as soon as possible.

CDA is planning to issue a news release in the near future, which will be supported by a small social media campaign. Corporate Member PDAs will be supplied with a bilingual social media promo pack to use, like and share, as deemed appropriate.

### **Upcoming: Tips on Extending the Life of PPE**

To assist the Return to Practice Task Force in its work, CDA Oasis is conducting interviews and discussions from across the country with dentists related to their experiences in return to practice, as well as tips on how to extend the life of PPE in their part of the country. Stay tuned for more information.

**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.

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## **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.

CDA Oasis produces a series of video interviews with members of the CDA Board, CDA's COVID-19 Team, and other relevant subject matter experts. The following videos were published this week:

- [What is the Current Market Situation for PPEs in Dentistry?](#)  
Rhonda Lawson, Executive Director of the Dental Industry Association of Canada (DIAC), speaks about the shortages of personal protective equipment and what the association is doing to ease the challenge for Canadian dentists. (June 8)
- [Using Video to Reconnect with Patients After COVID-19](#)  
With plans afoot to reopen practices across Canada, one challenge for dentists is how to reconnect with patients and assure them that it is safe to return for treatment. Dr. Izchak Barzilay talks about how he is using video to break the ice with his patient base. (June 4)

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

**Reminder:** CDA Essentials Issue 3 is available [online](#).

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## Mental Health and Wellness:

The COVID-19 pandemic has placed significant strain on individuals and families across the country. It's more important than ever to safeguard your mental health and overall wellness.

The Government of Canada has a webpage dedicated to [taking care of your mental and physical health during the COVID-19 pandemic](#). The site provides helpful information on the following:

- [If you are in crisis](#)
- [Fear, stress and worry are normal in crisis](#)
- [Tips for taking care of yourself](#)
- [More ways to get help](#)
- [Provincial and territorial resources](#)



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

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## **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.

For assistance, please call **1-866-232-0385, M-F, 7:30 A.M. – 8:00 p.m. EDT.**



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*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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