

Dear BCSO members,

We have prepared this memo to update you on the latest directives and guidelines but first we want to say we have been thinking about you and hope that you and your families are safe and healthy. The coronavirus pandemic is taking its physical, emotional and economic toll. As such, we endeavour to keep you abreast of our initiatives and findings to help you in your practice.

The BCSO executive, Peter Luu, Trista Felty and I, are here as your representatives. We have been working behind the scenes to navigate through the current situation as well as plan for the future. Below we review treatment of patients, future infection control guidelines and the handling of events going forward. Guidelines throughout the country vary greatly, so please make sure you are aware of the BC regulations.

TREATING PATIENTS

We are in communication with CDSBC, BCDA, CAO and PCSO. Ultimately, the CDSBC and government will be telling us when and how we will be re-opening our offices. The College's acting Director of Professional Practice, Dr. Meredith Moores has provided the following:

“During the pandemic, dentists are asked to practice in accordance with the College expectations outlined in the March 29 document ([which you can view here](#)), which are modelled on those of the PHO, that all non-essential and elective care provided by dentists be reduced to a minimum, subject to certain exceptions, including time-sensitive care or care provided in order to avoid negative patient outcomes.

Orthodontists, like all other dentists, assess and mitigate risk for each patient before providing treatment. It is appropriate for all dentists to continue to manage their patients' care based on that assessment.

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, if in your professional opinion, treatment is required to avoid a negative patient outcome, or the procedure is time sensitive and you have taken the appropriate screening steps to determine risk, and you have the appropriate PPE for the procedure you have determined is necessary, the decision to proceed must be based on the informed consent discussion with the patient.”

We would like to hear your opinion of Dr. Moore's communication and how you are assessing risks and addressing challenges in your practice. If any of you have direct connections with members of the College, we ask that you step forward and help represent our membership as a unified voice.

FUTURE INFECTION CONTROL GUIDELINES

We have requested that due to orthodontists having a different battery of procedures from those of either general dentistry or other dental specialties with regard to both definition of procedure urgency, and lower aerosol generation potential for most of our procedures; that in the development of any future legislation regarding dental infection control guidelines and recommendations, both during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, a certified specialist in orthodontics represents the orthodontic profession during any proceeding when such legislature may be discussed or approved. If any member would like to offer their time to head a COVID-19 task force to aid in communication with the College, we would greatly appreciate it.

At this time, return to work protocols are being devised by CAO, CDA and other groups which will help guide the College in their requirements.

EVENTS

As you know, we have had to cancel the American Orthodontics CE event on April 24th. We hope to reschedule this event in the future.

Our AGM was scheduled for June, but we have decided to cancel this event as well. We are reviewing our by-laws and requirements to see what our options are to host this meeting virtually.

IN THE MEANTIME

Two points to carry us forward:

1. We want to work with the College to have our voice heard and to create protocols that will work for orthodontists. We are asking for a member to liaise with the College. If you are interested, please let us know.
2. We would also like to set up a What'sApp Group for the BCSO which will allow us to talk in a private setting about orthodontic related issues. Peter Luu will be the admin. Please email your phone number to dr.peterluu@gmail.com and he will add you to the group.

We plan to communicate with our members more frequently hence forth. We are in new territory and we will do our best to keep you up to date while trying not to be redundant.

We are stronger as a collective group then individually. We welcome your questions and comments and please stay safe.

Sincerely,

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