

Dear Colleagues,

As the expanding global outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) continues, the federal government continues to work closely with state, local, tribal, and territorial partners, as well as public health partners across the globe to respond to this public health threat.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Oral Health (DOH) is diligently working with CDC's Emergency Operations Center to develop tailored COVID-19 guidance for dental health care personnel (DHCP). Once this guidance is available online, DOH and partners will promote these resources as well as any related events (e.g., informational webinar, [Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity](#)) to the dental community.

It's unknown at this time what the full impact of COVID-19 will be in a U.S., however CDC is preparing as if this were the beginning of a pandemic. All healthcare facilities should take steps now to prepare for the possibility of a widespread and severe COVID-19 outbreak to prepare their practices and protect both their patients and staff. CDC urges providers to be familiar with the information on CDC's [COVID-19](#) website. Specific information is available for [Healthcare Professionals](#), including a [Healthcare Professional Preparedness Checklist](#), instructions on [Evaluating and Reporting Persons Under Investigation \(PUI\)](#), and a page on [What Healthcare Personnel Should Know](#). DHCP can also consider signing up for communications from CDC's [Health Alert Network](#), which is CDC's primary method of sharing cleared information about urgent public health incidents.

Standard precautions, including the use of proper personal protective equipment, should be followed when caring for any patient. These practices are designed to both protect DHCP and prevent DHCP from spreading infections among patients.

CDC's guidelines note that, if not clinically urgent, DHCP should consider postponing non-emergency or elective dental procedures in patients who have signs or symptoms of respiratory illness. For procedures which are considered clinically urgent, dental health care personnel and medical providers should work together to determine an appropriate facility for treatment. The urgency of a procedure is a decision based on clinical judgement and should be made on a case-by-case basis.

The Division of Oral Health will communicate through partners as soon as tailored guidance is available for the dental community. Thank you for all you are doing to keep our country safe and healthy.

Sincerely,
CDC Division of Oral Health