



IOWA DENTAL BOARD

Home

COVID-19 Update: April 22, 2020

Date: Wednesday, April 22, 2020

As we begin to shift our discussions to the future of dentistry and the changes that may need to be considered moving forward, I wanted to first say thank you. While there have been many unknowns in our profession over this past month, the one thing that has been apparent is our collective resolve and commitment to our patients and communities. From the PPE donations to the emergency care so many are still providing, your generosity and resilience during this difficult time is truly remarkable.

Here at the Dental Board we are also thankful for strong partnerships and strong leaders. From the Iowa Dental Association to the Iowa Dental Hygiene Association to the University of Iowa College of Dentistry and others, the collaboration and consideration being devoted to these very challenging issues have been extraordinary.

We know there are many questions about what is next. There are some things we know, but there are many we do not. Our promise is that we will keep you updated as these conversations evolve. In that spirit, I am sharing with you today what we know and what we are still discussing and learning.

Office Reopening: When Governor Reynolds and her team determine the next steps for reopening offices to non-urgent care, we will share that information.

IDPH PPE Shortage Order: On April 9, 2020, the IDPH issued a [PPE Shortage Order](#), which establishes mandatory requirements for health care providers, including dental health-care personnel. The Order requires all health care providers to decrease demand for PPE. The Order provides additional directives in the event the demand for PPE at a facility continues to exceed the supply. Additionally, this Order provides legal immunity to practitioners who utilize PPE as set forth in the Order. IDPH has additional resources regarding PPE, which can be found here:

<https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus/Healthcare>.

Infection Control/PPE: We know there are many questions and concerns about PPE. As of today, adherence to the [CDC 2003 Infection Control Guidance](#) is mandated by the Iowa Dental Board. While the [CDC Interim Guidance for Dental Offices](#) is not mandated, the Board recommends using the highest level of PPE available.

We recognize at this time offices are having difficulty obtaining respirator masks or full-face shields as discussed in the CDC Interim Guidance. Dentists may continue to provide emergency care consistent with the Board's previously issued guidance while utilizing professional judgment.

Please know that PPE discussions are ongoing, and requirements could change. For questions or concerns please contact jill.stuecker@iowa.gov.

Task Force to Make Recommendations as Offices Reopen: The Iowa Dental Association is currently developing a task force that will be charged with making recommendations as offices reopen. The Board will be involved in these discussions and updates will be provided as information becomes available.

Teledentistry: At our April 17, 2020 Board meeting, we had productive discussions about possible ways to creatively utilize teledentistry moving forward. We will be sharing more information on this in the coming weeks.

Clinical Exams for Students: The Board is currently in discussion regarding licensure and clinical exam requirements for dental hygiene students. At our April 3, 2020 meeting, the Board approved a waiver for D4 students at the University of Iowa, which permits a modified clinical exam. This includes the manikin portion of our current clinical exam plus an objective structured clinical exam. We are diligently working through options for hygiene students as well and are hoping to have more to report soon.

ACLS/PALS: For dentists who are renewing their ACLS/PALS certification during this time, an online course, coupled with a peer review of the checklist to meet the hands-on component of this training (with another permit holder), is sufficient for purposes of board rule.

Jurisprudence: We will have our jurisprudence webinar updated by May 1. In addition, we will host a live meeting the week of May 11 to supplement this webinar and to answer questions and provide general updates. More information on this to follow.

Jurisprudence exams are being administered online to individuals seeking licensure with the Board.

In an effort to keep you more informed, we will begin sending a weekly update. If there are issues you think should be addressed in future communications, please email jill.stuecker@iowa.gov.

On behalf of the Board, thanks for all you are doing during this time.

Will McBride, D.D.S
Board Chair

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