

PSOMS Member Alert: COVID-19 Update

As many of you may know by now, the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) has just issued a stop to all dental treatment, even emergencies, unless strict infection control guidelines have been met, notably

- All personnel must follow proper protocol when donning and doffing personal protective equipment (PPE).
- All personnel must use N95 masks or higher; goggles or a face-shield covering face and sides; disposable gowns and gloves.
- Treatment must be provided in negative pressure isolation rooms with HEPA filtration.

Needless to say, most of us do not have all these capabilities required to treat patients. Until these issues are resolved, dentists and oral surgeons should refrain from treating even emergency patients unless they have all of the entities outline in the most recent COVID-19 infection control guidelines.

While the DOH did not consult with PSOMS or the PDA prior to releasing its guidance, legal and medical issues concerning this new development are being discussed between the Pennsylvania State Board of Dentistry and the Pennsylvania Department of Health. Our PSOMS lobbyist is also working to get with the Governor's office and Department of Health to educate them on the full ramifications of this guidance (that no dental office or even indeed dental school could meet) and see if they can issue revised guidance. Unfortunately, until that occurs, the original guidance will still be in place.

I will update you on any developments in this ongoing issue.

Sincerely,

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President, Pennsylvania Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons