

Guide to Safely Closing a Practice

Patients Communications:

- Designate a responsible person for patient reach-out (i.e. treatment coordinator, receptionist, etc.)
- Contact ALL PATIENTS in the schedule for the next several weeks (date determined by minimum length of closure, sometimes defined by regulator) and reschedule (not cancel) their appointments due to COVID-19
 - It is important to keep patients in the schedule in order to meet their needs as soon as possible once services return to normal
- While speaking with patients, assess whether care needs are or may become urgent
- See those patients whose care needs constitute an emergency
 - Emergency services should be provided at the discretion of the practitioner, however as a reference point, a “true emergency situation” includes oral-facial trauma, significant infection, prolonged bleeding or pain which cannot be managed by over-the-counter medications.
- Inform patients in a calm and effective way why you have chosen this route and why you are doing this (following regulatory directives, our own sense of obligation to the community or Public Health etc.)
- Use the patient communication resource at the end of this document for your various communication channels

Patients in current/ongoing treatment:

- Ensure that all patients in ongoing treatment have a plan in place depending on their circumstance
 - (e.g., for ortho patients, continue with existing aligners until the next appointment)
- Perform post-op phone call for recent surgeries
 - Ask patient how they’re doing, outline symptoms to look for that may suggest infection
 - Obtain patient emergency contact information in case in the event an emergency arises
- For Phase 2 Endo and Restorative (e.g., permanent crown, fillings), emphasize the necessity to have procedures completed as soon as clinic reopens

Office:

- Route phones appropriately to the PM or regional call centre agent

- Ensure all calls are answered and documented
- Ensure the PM has remote access to the schedule in order to work with patients and ensure information is relayed in an appropriate and safe way
- Inform the designated “emergency” practice that you will be directing your patients to that location
 - Be sure you have double checked that this practice is open and has capacity to treat your emergency patients
- Consider whether utilities will be notified of shut down

Additional Procedures:

- Ensure the office is left in a manner that would be acceptable to reopen in an emergency situation:
 - Ensure all instruments are processed and stored correctly
 - Ensure all waterlines are flushed per MIFU and IPAC guidelines
 - Turn off and unplug all waterlines, suction lines, compressors, sedation monitors, x-rays, sterilizers etc.
 - Verify all sterilization equipment has completed appropriate testing and the BI has definitive pass/fail for the day of close
 - Notify your local IT team for guidance on how to ensure proper functioning of servers and networks while the practice is closed
- Take written inventory of PPE and send to dentalcorp operations and procurement teams
- Discard of any expired products
- Inform the landlord that the office will be closed for “X” days and confirm the re-open date
- Ensure plans are in place for
 - Mail
 - Deliveries of products
 - Payment plans (If automatic, suspend if treatment not yet provided)
- Depending on the practice, develop a weekly schedule for the PM to physically check the practice for issues outside of your control (i.e. flooding, broken windows etc.)
- Notify insurance companies and brokers of the closure
- Notify the regulatory body of closure via email

Patient Communication Resources

EMAIL TO PATIENTS:

To our patients and your families,

Your oral care is our number one priority and if you or your family member has a **dental emergency**, we are here for you.

Please **call our main number** immediately, so we can actively address your needs. You can also **visit www.hellodent.com** to find **immediate urgent care options** or to request a future appointment.

We keenly recognize our duty to minimize the spread of COVID-19 to protect the health and wellbeing of our patients, staff and the broader community, with best in class protective measures in place, our practice presents a safe and low-risk environment for you.

*We will be reaching out to **reschedule all of your routine visits once normal operations resume.***

EXTERIOR SIGN:

Given recent events around COVID-19, **we are suspending all services at [insert practice name] and referring all emergency patients to [insert practice name]**. Please call **[insert practice name]** at **[insert phone number]** should you have a need. In the event of a serious injury or infection requiring immediate attention visit a hospital or call 9-1-1.

We keenly recognize our shared obligation and duty to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and to protect the health and wellbeing of our patients, staff and the broader community.

You can also **visit www.hellodent.com** to find **immediate urgent care options** or to request a future appointment.

*We will be reaching out to **reschedule all of your routine visits once normal operations resume***

In the event of a serious injury or infection requiring immediate attention visit a hospital or call 9-1-1.

VOICEMAIL:

Please note, given recent events around COVID-19, we are suspending all services at [insert practice name] and referring all emergency patients to [insert practice name]. If you have a dental emergency, please leave a message or call **[insert phone number]** to book an appointment with **[insert practice name]**. We are actively monitoring this line and will call you back shortly.

In the event of a serious injury or infection requiring immediate attention visit a hospital or call 9-1-1.

Alternatively, if you would like to reschedule an appointment please leave a preferred date and time or visit www.hellodent.com.

As always, your care is very important to us!

FRONT DESK LETTER:

Given recent events around COVID-19, **we are suspending all services at [insert practice name] and referring all emergency patients to [insert practice name].** Please call [insert practice name] at [insert phone number] should you have a need.

We keenly recognize our shared obligation and duty to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and to protect the health and wellbeing of our patients, staff and the broader community.

You can also visit www.hellodent.com to find **immediate urgent care options** or to request a future appointment.

*We will be reaching out to **reschedule all of your routine visits once normal operations resume***

SOCIAL (Facebook & Instagram):

We are here for you during this unprecedented time.

Given recent events around COVID-19, **we are suspending all services until further notice.** If this is an emergency please visit www.hellodent.com to find **immediate urgent care options** or to request a future appointment.

For all routine visits we will reschedule once normal operations resume.

WEBSITE

HOME PAGE (ALERT ON HOME PAGE OF EACH PRACTICE):

An important message regarding COVID-19. We are here for you during this unprecedented time.

(LANDING PAGE COPY)

Given recent events around COVID-19, **we are suspending all services until further notice.** If this is an emergency please visit www.hellodent.com to find **immediate urgent care options** or to request a future appointment.

We keenly recognize our shared obligation and duty to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and to protect the health and wellbeing of our patients, staff and the broader community.

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