Dear clinical staff,

In light of the recent developments of COVID-2019, there naturally seems to be some confusion and questions surrounding this topic as it pertains to you as Dental Health Care Providers (“DHCP”)

As your practice [*select as relevant* Ownership and/or Leadership], we want to assure you that **the safety of our DHCPs & Staff is the most important priority for us.**

Please note that we, as practice leadership, are actively monitoring this situation and following all Federal or state-specific mandates, and we encourage you to follow all developments on the local, state and Federal level. This message takes into account that the current situation with COVID- 2019, *is very fluid and subject to change.* Changes may be based on specific state mandates or any additional federal guidelines, or mandates, as applicable.

While keeping this in mind, we regularly review the most updated Centers for Disease Control and Prevention “CDC” and American Dental Association “ADA” guidance. Please note that as **recently as March 10, 2020, the CDC posted new updated guidelines and recommendations on COVID-2019 on its website.** The updated guidelines can be found at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/ control-recommendations.html The CDC updated guidelines specifically address Personal Protective Equipment “PPE.” These updated PPE recommendations more specifically addressed the use of masks – a common source of concern by DHCPs at this time.

The ADA recently weighed in on this issue, deferring to the CDC’s updated guidelines. According to the ADA, the CDC has not changed its guidance on single-use disposable facemasks, which are regulated by the FDA to be single use and should be worn once and discarded.

CDC Guidelines for Infection Control in Dental Health-Care Settings has the following guidance:

1. Wear a surgical mask and (**eye protection with solid side shields** or) a face shield to protect mucous membranes of the eyes, nose, and mouth during procedures likely to generate splashing or spattering of blood or other body fluids
2. Change masks between patients, or during patient treatment if the mask becomes wet.

At your practice, you are provided with – and should already be using – appropriate eye wear or face shield protection.

[*If relevant and if your practice currently uses Level 3 barrier masks also include the following paragraph* ]: You also have available and should be using **ASTM Level 3** barrier masks. Level 3 masks are the masks with the highest of the three levels of fluid resistance filtration efficiency, which are ideal for oral exams of high-risk patients and procedures involving high levels of spray, spatter, moisture, and airborne particles.

We strongly encourage you to continue using the above-described PPE while taking precautions to ensure that they are being used by you and your clinical staff correctly.

I also want to be explicitly clear that, as an official company policy, we are **not going to treat any patients** who are a COVID-2019 carrier, likely carrier, or symptomatic. Our policy is to only treat patients that have passed the Patient Screening Questionnaire, which should be utilized at check-in on each and every patient who walks in the door. I encourage each office to take the temperature of every patient who walks in the practice. The questionnaire should be completed and thoroughly reviewed before the patient proceeds to be seated in the dental chair. If a patient is COVID-2019 symptomatic or thinks that there is a likelihood that he/she may have it, the patient needs to be rescheduled and if necessary, referred to the local emergency department or to a maxillofacial surgeon/specialist for emergency dental treatment, as applicable- and notify the Health Department.

In assessing whether any patient may pose a risk to your practice, we urge you to err on the side of caution and reschedule the patient’s appointment **for no less than 14 days after the date of screening** – presuming that patient is no longer symptomatic upon his or her return and subsequent screening.

Please stay alert for more updates and communications. If you have any specific questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. In the event of further updates, we will provide them as this situation continues to evolve. We know this is a very unsettling time for everyone- so let’s all do our best to exercise patience and flexibility as we navigate this together.

Sincerely,

[*Practice Owner leader*]