



Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
HEALTH ALERT NETWORK
Advisory



TO: Dentists and Public Health

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RE: Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Nebraska Dental Health Community

DATE: March 23, 2020

The DHHS Office of Oral Health and Dentistry is closely monitoring the current COVID-19 situation in Nebraska and communicating directly with DHHS Officials, the Nebraska Dental Association, the U.S. Public Health Service and the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors. We are also in contact with the Nebraska Dental Schools, Community Health Centers and Local Public Health Departments.

The American Dental Association (ADA) released a bulletin on 16 March 2020 [ADA News](#) stating “the ADA recommends dentists nationwide postpone elective procedures for the next three weeks and concentrate on emergency dental care to alleviate the burden on hospital emergency departments. It is up to dentists to make well-informed decisions about their patients and practices.” Please find updates and further information from the ADA at [ADA.org/virus](#).

The Nebraska Dental Association (NDA) released a similar recommendation on 16 March 2020 (<https://www.nedental.org/>) along with guidelines for patient screening and proper infection control practices. **The Nebraska Board of Dentistry** issued a statement on 20 March 2020 in support of the ADA and NDA recommendations and defined emergent/essential dental care. The statement will be posted Monday March 23 at <http://dhhs.ne.gov/licensure/Pages/Dentist.aspx>.

The Chief Dental Officer for the U.S. Public Health Service, Rear Admiral Tim Ricks DMD, MPH recommends following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance on their website ([COVID-19](#)). The CDC is currently developing guidelines for COVID-19 in Dental Settings that should be released soon and available here: [CDC](#).

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) released a COVID-19 general information guide on 16 March 2020 ([DHHS COVID-19 Information](#)). The Nebraska DHHS Health Alert Network will issue regular advisory updates that can be found at <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Health-Alert-Network.aspx>.

Dentists and hygienists are a vital part of the healthcare community and have an obligation to protect the safety of patients and staff during this outbreak. Adhering to current and future national and state recommendations will reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the dental setting and help maintain the oral health of Nebraska’s citizens. This is a rapidly changing situation and the information continues to evolve. We thank you for your understanding, patience, and cooperation during these unprecedented times.