



DENTAL INDUSTRY
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
DE L'INDUSTRIE DENTAIRE

Message from the President - COVID 19 & Gradual Return to Work

May 5, 2020

We are now turning our attention to the gradual opening of social systems and businesses. As the weeks of social distancing, business closures and economic crisis have continued it is important to remember that we as a society have accomplished a flattening and downturn of the “COVID CURVE” in most provinces, a job well done but not over.

What that looks like for the dental industry is unknown at the moment. Each province, dental regulatory body and associations are all taking a different approach to how the dental office is to conduct themselves when re-opened. What we do know is that it will not be the same as it was. Since March the dental industry has been in discussion with the associations, regulatory bodies and public health to develop a consistent plan, process, guidelines, protocols or principles to guide the return to work of the dental industry as a whole. We have provided advice and information on PPE shortage since January and we are here to support, provide guidance and address our client’s and stakeholders needs. Unfortunately we have had some negative comments from the dental associations and our clients suggesting “fear” sales tactics and pressure selling of products, specifically aerosol and air handling equipment that may not be required in the dental operatory or offices. We strongly discourage this type of sales tactic and encourage our members to recommend products supported by evidence and endorsed by the regulatory bodies and protocols in each province.

COVID 19 has had a dramatic impact on the industry and the Association. Major trade shows have been cancelled. We had postponed TECHNORAMA 2020, with a goal to run in the fall, but in looking out a few months it is unlikely that large gatherings will be allowed for some time. The Board of Directors unfortunately decided to cancel TECHNORAMA 2020. A separate communication will be coming out shortly with the details of the cancellation and process for refunding.

Health Canada has responded positively processing licences for PPE products and ventilator products through their interim orders. We in industry appreciate the efforts and commitment from Health Canada for triaging and obtaining PPE for Canadian health care workers. Many of our members have re-tooled and contributed ventilators, swabs, PPE and sanitizers, provided advice on employment issues and commentary on future state. Well done DIAC members and keep the innovation and agility going, we are not done with the virus yet.

The biggest question in the industry right now is dental office access to personal protective equipment and how we as an industry can increase our levels of supply to allow the dentists to operate. Traditional supply

chain has seen short supply of N95 respirators, face shields, gowns, shoe covers, caps, while still having a moderate supply of surgical masks and gloves. There has also been a spike in off shore manufacturers and new distributors entering into this market, some without proper MDEL's and MDL's, which is a bit concerning, given the high rate of poor quality and counterfeit products entering the country at this time and the negative outcomes of not having our medical and dental community protected properly.

We will need to work together with Health Canada, Public Health, the Colleges and Associations to ensure our clients have quality Health Canada approved PPE for the safety of their patients, themselves and their staff. DIAC is having ongoing discussions with all parties to come up with a principles, protocols, procedures to help provide consistent and timely responses to the needs of the dental offices.

As we emerge from this crisis your Board of Directors and the team at DIAC will keep you informed, represent your interests and work with our stakeholders to help get the dental community back to business. If you have any comments, questions or concerns, please reach out.



Jim Wareing
President