Q&A on ADA an ISDA guidance for current Stay Home Order

Q1 a: In reading the email sent by the ISDA it is my understanding that as an essential business, as defined by Governor Little, dentists in Idaho can begin to see non-emergency patients as long as we are responsibly following CDC and OSHA guidelines. Is that what you are suggesting?

Q1 b: So I assume nothing has changed relative to the extension of the stay at home order from before. We still open for emergency treatment based on ADA guidelines? The email sent out was little vague and not specific. Made it sound like we could go back? Just checking.

Q1 c: Ok, this is pretty vague. It makes it sound like if you have PPE and an infection control protocol in place then you can start working again. Is that how you interpret it?

Q1 d: Apparently dental offices can proceed with seeing patients now, as long as CDC and ADA guidelines are followed. The last I knew, at least the ADA guidelines said to see emergency patients only until April 30th. I’m not sure if that was also by CDC recommendations or not. Has that changed and we can now see non-emergency patients?

Note – questions 1a – d are essentially the same and are answered with the same response

A: Fundamentally nothing has changed. The Governor’s order is still in place at least until April 30, and dentistry as an essential business has an obligation to provide care in a manner that supports the order. The ADA, CDC and OSHA guidelines have all been updated to reflect what is required to safely deliver treatment. As a health care provider you have the responsibility to be a steward for your community, your patients, and your team members which requires you to use your best judgment to deem what care is necessary and safely administered in the context of both the stay home order and the guidelines to minimize spread of the virus / provide protection.

We anticipate this will require a cautious approach and prioritizing care as it will take time to secure PPE, and truly integrate the guidelines into their practice. Without the appropriate PPE and social distancing protocols, the practice could be exposing themselves, their team, and their patients to legal, financial and physical risk.

Q2: The proposed guidelines look way too extensive. Are these just interim recommendations for a period of time? Then we can go back to normal?

We don’t yet know how OSHA and others will revise their guidelines as they a) learn more about the virus b) have consistent access to definitive testing and c) have widespread immunity. It is reasonable to assume that these guidelines will be in place for an extended period of time.

We do know that the ADA is working on guidelines for safely expanding patient care. We expect to receive these early the week of April 20 and will communicate them as quickly as we have them.

Q3: There was a regulation from the Trump administration, I believe, that said you could not have 10 or more people in a setting. Is that directive still in place? I can see 3 patients at a time, and have my whole staff here, and be under ten people. On the other hand, I know offices with just a staff of 20, without patients. How does that work. If that no more than ten people at a time order is still in effect, when does that end?
A: State level mandate would be the guidance to follow. Governor Little’s stay home order states that ALL residents of Idaho must self-isolate and stay and work from home as much as possible, unless you work in healthcare, public safety or an identified "essential business" as defined in order. The stay home order has a No Gatherings clause that limits all non-essential gatherings of any number of individuals outside the household. It also specifies that individuals who are out of the home should maintain a distance of 6 feet from each other. You should limit your staff to those who are needed to provide the care you deem essential, and you should configure your patient areas to accommodate the six feet of separation.

Q: The order limits out of state travel and imposes self quarantine restrictions for those coming into Idaho from another state. How does that apply to my patients who come from Washington? And how does that affect me when I work in my practice in Washington?

A: The order reads as follows: “Does not apply to those performing essential services or those who live in one state and work or gain essential services in another state.”

Q: It sounds like the N95 masks are for working with known or suspected cases? Is that how you read it?

A: ADA /CDC recommends N95 with face shield for the best protection along with a gown. Level 3 mask with face shield and gown is next best. There are patients who are asymptomatic who have COVID-19, accordingly, ADA recommends assuming all patients have COVID and take appropriate precautions to reduce aerosols, and use the highest level of PPE available.

Q: Can dentists administer tests for COVID 19?

A: Yes, this is within scope of practice for dentists in Idaho.

Q: Where can I find PPE?

A: Both the ADA and the ISDA are working to locate legitimate sources of PPE.

a) The process for requesting PPE through the state is driven by each regional health district. Contacts for each along with the processes for reporting PPE utilization can be found here: Idaho EOC PPE Ordering Guidance. Contacts for your region specific health district are on the last page of this guidance document.

b) We have identified an Idaho based manufacturer of reusable surgical gowns. These gowns are being used in hospital settings. Dentists can order direct from the manufacturer at:

Mary Beth Meyers
Customer Service/Sales
Idaho Sewing For Sports
7 Poplar Dr.
Grangeville, ID 83530-5347
208-983-0988
marybeth@idsewing.com
http://idsewing.com/digital-online-catalog/