



COVID-19 – Guidelines for essential services

Update – April 7, 2020

On March 18, 2020, the College provided the regulated membership with guidelines on what would be considered essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic under the suspension of non-essential services. Council's guidelines may be found [here](#).

At the time of release, Council committed to revisiting their decisions at or before April 7, 2020 depending on emerging pandemic information and government direction. Council has reviewed the guidelines for essential services prior to April 7, 2020 based on the following developments:



-  Dr. Deena Hinshaw, Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health, has released an order, under the authority of the *Public Health Act*, for all non-essential services provided by all regulated health professionals to cease. This is inclusive of denturists.
-  The Alberta Dental Association & College has amended their guidelines on essential dental services to exclude denture repairs and adjustments as essential services

Council Decision



Given the recent legal developments regarding suspension of non-essential services and information and directives from local, provincial and federal authorities regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, Council has made the decision to maintain the current guidelines. Council's guidelines state that a denturist may perform only essential services and they have determined that essential care includes only those activities in which complications have arisen from a denture that cannot be removed by the patient themselves. At this time, no adjustments or repairs are permitted.

Emergent Cases

When treating patients with fixed denture complications, members must:

-  only perform the procedure if they are asymptomatic or not at risk of contracting or having contracted COVID-19
-  perform patient screening to ensure that the patient does not have influenza-like illness (ILI). If the patient has ILI symptoms, the member must postpone the procedure until the patient's symptoms resolve.

If proceeding with the procedure, the member must:

-  implement infection prevention and control measures including the use of appropriate personal protective equipment
-  ensure that the patient's record contains all applicable information including those prescribed above

Next Steps

Council continues to monitor the pandemic daily and has placed these extreme measures in place because this is a life and death situation. Albertans have given their trust in denturists through self-regulation and the College has been mandated by government to be responsible for protection of the public. Unfortunately, this may include conduct measures for those who willfully disregard Council's directive.



COLLEGE OF
ALBERTA DENTURISTS

At this time, due to the unpredictable nature of this pandemic, Council is unable to set a timeline for return to the provision of non-essential services. We know that the infection rate follows a curve. As we move through this curve, we will make every responsible effort to lighten (e.g., allowing essential repairs or adjustments) or perhaps remove the restrictions. Please know that Council seeks to restore denture practice as quickly as responsibly possible.

In the meantime, the College is working to provide resources for members who are providing essential services. Please [click here](#) for these resources. Others are encouraged to consider virtual options to assist their patients.