

March 21, 2020

The Honorable Mike DeWine
Governor
State of Ohio
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

OHIO DENTAL ASSOCIATION
Informing – Representing – Serving



Dear Governor DeWine:

We know that these are difficult times for you and our state, and we deeply appreciate all you are doing to keep us safe. While you and your team consider a statewide “stay-at-home” order to curb the spread of COVID-19, we urge you to allow dental offices and clinics to remain open to treat patients who need urgent or emergency dental care. This will help to deter patients with dental pain and emergencies from seeking care at hospitals during this critical time.

As you know, to help preserve PPE and prevent the potential spread of the coronavirus, dental offices and clinics have stopped doing elective procedures and are only providing emergency services. Dentists and dental specialists remain a critical part of the healthcare system, and the complete closure of dental practices would exacerbate the burden to hospital emergency departments, many of which may soon be overwhelmed with higher patient volumes and protocol changes associated with the COVID-19 crisis.

Most Ohio hospitals lack on-site capabilities to treat dental emergencies and routinely refer patients with serious dental conditions or trauma to a dental office. In contrast, dentists regularly treat patients seeking care for potentially life-threatening dental conditions and those requiring immediate treatment because of pain, uncontrolled bleeding, facial infections, avulsed teeth, and other serious conditions.

Those states that have begun the process of restricting all non-essential business activity, including California, Connecticut, Illinois, Nevada, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, have all designated dentists’ offices and clinics as “essential” businesses because of their vital role in treating dental emergencies and diverting patients from hospitals.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. Ohio’s dentists remain ready to assist their communities and the state in addressing this unprecedented public health crisis by providing access to necessary and emergency dental care, thereby reducing demand on our hospitals.

Sincerely,

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President

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