



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

## Ministry of Health

DENTAL SERVICES

#63 Park Street, Port of Spain

March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020

County Medical Officers of Health  
All Dentists  
Dental Nurses  
Dental Surgery Assistants

Dear All,

Subject: Recommendations for Clinical Dental Services

As Trinidad and Tobago and the world continues to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, the unprecedented and extraordinary circumstances dentists and all health care professionals face related to such concerns must be noted growing concern about COVID-19.

As dental staff, we interface directly with the public and early research has placed the dental clinic among the highest risk areas for possible transmission of SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for COVID-19. This is due to the unique characteristics of dental procedures where a large number of droplets and aerosols could be generated. As such the standard protective measures in daily clinical work are not effective enough to prevent the spread of COVID-19, especially when patients are in the incubation period, are unaware they are infected, or choose to conceal their infection.

Also, as dental services are considered essential, said service cannot be suspended in its entirety.

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It is in this context and following recent Cabinet decisions that the following guidelines are issued regarding the delivery of dental services in the public health sector.

1. Dental staff must maintain **ALL** standard infection control practices, inclusive of regular hand washing
2. Personal protective equipment (masks, gloves, gown or clinical coat) **MUST** be worn at all times when screening, interacting and treating patients, consistent with infection control best practice
3. Prior to delivering treatment, all patients must be screened to ascertain travel history, contact with persons with travel history or the presence of cold or flu-like symptoms over the last fourteen (14) days
4. Patients with cold or flu-like symptoms shall be advised that their treatment will be postponed until symptoms cease
5. Patients with travel history within the last fourteen (14) days shall be asked to contact the County Medical Officer of Health
6. Dental staff exhibiting cold or flu-like symptoms shall not be allowing in the clinical setting for the next fourteen(14) days or until their symptoms cease
7. Routine dental services (fillings, cleaning, oral hygiene instructions, etc.) for children up to age twelve(12) as delivered by dental nurses in the clinical settings shall be suspended for the next fourteen (14) days, in the first instance and be subject to review thereafter
8. Treatment for children up to age 12 as delivered by dental nurses shall be limited to emergency care (extractions and pain relief) only
9. Routine dental treatment for adolescents (12-18 years old) as delivered by a dentist shall be suspended for the next fourteen(14) days, in the first instance and be subject to review thereafter
10. Treatment for adolescents shall be limited to emergency care (extractions and pain relief) only
11. Treatment for adults (18 years or older) is already limited to emergency care and pain management and shall be maintained as such

With deep concern for the health and well-being of the public and our dental team, we must do our part to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, as we continue to provide relief to our catchment populations.

For further information or clarification please contact the Dental Services Unit or your respective County Medical Officer of Health (CMOH).

Please be guided accordingly and let's stay safe.

Respectfully



Dr. Don Carrington  
Manager  
Dental Services

