

**UPDATE Message to Licensed Denturists**  
**Covid-19 – DSS Recommended Phase 3 Reintegration Approach**  
**Effective May 19, 2020**

The Government of Saskatchewan has released on Thursday, April 23, 2020 a phased in re-opening approach for the Province and dental clinics was included in their phase 1, as can be seen by clicking here (in particular pages 24 & 25; also attached for ease of reference); effective May 4, 2020.

Under this plan the opening of denture clinics does mean open, as long as physical distancing, proper infection control and personal protective equipment can be maintained at all times to keep patients and staff safe. The Denturist Society of Saskatchewan (DSS) has **recommended** a slower re-integration to full procedures as outlined in previous DSS Mandatory Phase 1, Recommended Phase 2 and now Recommended Phase 3 attached and effective May 19, 2020.

ALL DSS Licensed Denturists are required to review these recommended procedures and guidelines as you transition to DSS Recommended Phase 3.

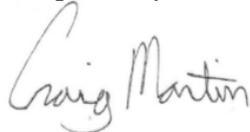
**DSS Recommended Phase 3 – Effective May 19, 2020 - Full Procedures with heightened infection prevention and control with patient and clinic considerations.**

The College of Dental Surgeons of Saskatchewan (CDSS) is also recommending a phased in reintegration approach, which can be found by [clicking here](#).

If you have any questions and/or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the office directly or any one of the Council members, the contact information can be found by [clicking here](#).

We can also be reached by telephone at 1-855-633-6875.

Respectfully,



Craig Martin, DD  
Registrar

Attachments: Guideline Outline and Procedures for Covid-19 – DSS Recommended Phase 3 Reintegration Approach, Effective May 19, 2020

# **RECOMMENDED OUTLINE AND PROCEDURES – PHASE 3**

## **Covid-19 – Phase 3 Reintegration Approach Effective May 19, 2020**

**Mandatory Closure, in effect if conditions of Phase 3 below are not met. ([March 20th, 2020 Communique](#)), ([March 27th, 2020 Communique](#)) and ([April 3rd, 2020 Communique](#))**

Telephone/teleconferencing availability for patients for triage purposes.

In cases where you are providing services to patients via electronic methods then these services can be billed accordingly using procedure code for a Professional Consultation (70050), which is to be used for an assessment or triage of the patients' emergency need and to determine next steps of whether an in person visit is necessary, additional information can be found by [clicking here](#).

### **DSS Recommended Phase 3 – Effective May 19, 2020 - Full Procedures with heightened infection prevention and control with patient and clinic considerations.**

The Government of Saskatchewan has released on Thursday, April 23, 2020 a phased in re-opening approach for the Province and dental clinics was included in their phase 1, as can be seen by [clicking here](#) (in particular pages 24 & 25; also attached for ease of reference); effective May 4, 2020.

Under this plan the opening of denture clinics does mean open, as long as physical distancing, proper infection control and personal protective equipment can be maintained at all times to keep patients and staff safe. The Denturist Society of Saskatchewan has **recommended** a slower re-integration to full procedures as outlined in previous DSS Mandatory Phase 1, Recommended Phase 2 and now Recommended Phase 3 below and effective May 19, 2020.

ALL DSS Licensed Denturists are required to review these recommended procedures and guidelines as you transition to DSS Recommended Phase 3.

Some clinics may choose to remain closed due to shortage of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or for other personal reasons. However, all DSS Licensed Denturists are required to remain available to patients via electronic communication methods by forwarding phones, checking messages and contacting patients who may require ongoing support.

It is important to note that patient appointments will need to be limited to maintain public health measures and to mitigate risks to patients, staff and practitioners; therefore, there should be a sense of an urgent need for the patient to attend your office and a question you should ask yourself is “can the patient wait to have this procedure and what is this patients risk level?”.

It is strongly recommended that your office:

- Keep doors locked to the general public to mitigate risk to patients, staff and practitioners.
- Implement a screening protocol for all personnel; the following has been developed by the Saskatchewan Health Authority: [HCW Screening Tool](#) & [Health Care Worker Screening Logbook](#).
- If the patient is a new patient then the initial patient questionnaire should be completed over the telephone to ensure reduced patient interaction when attending the office.

- Only 1 patient at a time in the office at their arranged appointment time. It is suggested that patients remain in their car or outside office upon arrival and to contact you by telephone to check-in. Any non-essential escorts/familial members should not be permitted unless absolutely necessary.
- A minimum of 15 minutes between scheduled appointments must be kept to allow for proper disinfecting and sterilization.
- Risk mitigation is key: a question you should ask is “can the patient wait to have this procedure and what is this patients risk level?”.
- Posting of a Warning Screening Sheet in your office (attached).
- Display posters in public view on universal measures to prevent infectious diseases (posters available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheets.html>).
- Wipe down and disinfect any and all surfaces that were or could have been touched.
- Disinfect work surfaces and sterilize all instruments used in the operatory and laboratory. Any instruments that cannot be sterilized must be disinfected.
- A suction unit to be utilized in both laboratory and operatory to be used in conjunction with proper disinfection procedures. It is important to contact the manufacturer of your specific suction unit to determine suitability and effectiveness.
- Complete an inventory of Personal Protective Equipment to ensure that you are able to complete treatment with each patient.
- Carefully consider any COVID-19 safe return-to-work recommendations provided by the Denturist Society of Saskatchewan contained herein.

**MUST maintain infection prevention and control standards ([link](#)), if at any time these standards cannot be maintained and proper personal protective equipment [mask (level 2 or 3), eyewear (glasses with side protection or faceshield) and gloves] is not available to provide services then your office must revert to **mandatory closure**, this information can be found at [www.saskdenturists.com](http://www.saskdenturists.com).**

The following applies to the office and all Personnel in the office:

**MUST** maintain a 6-foot distance between yourself and others (other than as required to provide services to patient).

Street clothes (including shoes) **must** be changed immediately upon arrival to clinic to office clothes and then change back to street clothes (including shoes) when leaving clinic. The office clothes must immediately be bagged. It is recommended that each clinic determine laundry protocols as long as laundry is being transported safely (from and to clinic), with safe handling using personal protective equipment and soiled laundry is to be done as a separate load. ([Page 25 of IPC Standards](#)).

Method of Personal Protective Equipment is as follows: mask (level 2 or 3), eyewear (glasses with side protection or faceshield), hand hygiene then gloves.

**MUST maintain infection prevention and control standards ([link](#)), if at any time these standards cannot be maintained and proper personal protective equipment [mask (level 2 or 3), eyewear (glasses with side protection or faceshield) and gloves] is not available to provide services then your office must revert to **mandatory closure**, this information can be found at [www.saskdenturists.com](http://www.saskdenturists.com).**

**MUST** maintain proper record keeping procedures ([link](#)).

### **DSS Recommended Phase 3: Procedures to Provide Services**

1. Telephone contact is made with patient.
2. Office conducts a telephone/teleconference assessment asking the following questions:
  - Did you travel or fly recently?
  - Do you have a new (worsening) cough?
  - Do you have a sore throat?
  - Do you have a fever (over 38 ° C)?
  - Are you having trouble breathing?
  - Were you exposed to someone who is under investigation for Covid-19 or has been confirmed as having Covid-19 within the last 14 days?

If the patient answers yes to anyone of these questions, then services **MUST NOT** be provided and suggest that the patient consult their doctor or complete the Government of Saskatchewan’s Self-Assessment Tool at:

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/emerging-public-health-issues/2019-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-self-assessment>.

A suggestion is to ask the following screening questions and if a patient answers yes, then use best judgement on whether to move forward with a patient appointment:

- Have you travelled to regions of Saskatchewan that have an outbreak currently listed under a public health order?
- Are you working or volunteering at a long-term care home that has active cases of Covid-19?

Risk mitigation is key: a question you should ask yourself is “can the patient wait to have this procedure and what is this patients risk level?”.

If the patient answers no to the above questions then you may proceed to the assessment of the patients’ needs to determine if services are required.

3. If proceeding with providing services, please follow the below guidelines:
  - a. Coordinate a time for the patient to attend the office (suggested to have only 1 patient in the office at a time and your office doors should remain locked to the general public to mitigate risk), remind patients to remove all jewelry from the neck-up prior to their appointment. If the patient is a new patient then the initial patient questionnaire should be completed over the telephone to ensure reduced patient interaction when attending the office.
  - b. It is suggested that patient remain in their car or outside office upon arrival and to contact you by telephone to check-in. Any non-essential escorts/familial members should not be permitted unless absolutely necessary.

- c. When patient checks-in and enters office have a table set up with disinfecting wipes and/or disinfecting spray with paper towel and hand sanitizer. It is recommended, prior to escorting patient to the operatory, that you take their temperature using a forehead thermometer only (safe temperature is below 38 ° C).
- d. If the patient's temperature is under 38 ° C then direct them to use the hand sanitizer and they should immediately be escorted to the operatory by personnel who must be wearing personal protective equipment: mask (level 2 or 3), eyewear (glasses with side protection or faceshield) and gloves. If the patient's temperature is over 38 ° C then they must immediately leave and must not return for no less than 14 days.
- e. Complete services with patient and at all times maintain proper infection prevention and control standards while wearing personal protective equipment: mask (level 2 or 3), eyewear (glasses with side protection or faceshield) and gloves. \*\*\* *It is recommended that the denture does not leave the operatory to mitigate risk and cross-contamination* \*\*\*. If at any point you leave the operatory to go to the lab then the denture MUST be disinfected and you must remove gloves, perform hand hygiene and replace gloves and while in lab wear lab coat. Before returning to the operatory, the denture MUST be disinfected and you must remove lab coat, remove gloves, perform hand hygiene and replace gloves.
- f. When services are completed and no further patient contact is required remove gloves, perform hand hygiene and escort the patient immediately out of the office unless payment is required. If payment is required then personnel completing payment with patient must wear mask (level 1) and gloves and ask the patient to limit contact with items other than those required to complete payment. If payment processing device is used ensure it is wiped down and gloves are immediately discarded and perform hand hygiene.
- g. Wipe down and disinfect any and all surfaces that were or could have been touched.
- h. Disinfect work surfaces and sterilize all instruments used in the operatory and laboratory. Any instruments that cannot be sterilized must be disinfected.
- i. Remove personal protective equipment: gloves, eyewear (glasses with side protection or faceshield), mask (level 2 or 3), disinfect glasses and perform hand-hygiene.

### **If the patient becomes symptomatic during the clinical visit:**

If a patient becomes symptomatic (cough, sore throat, runny nose, fever, shortness of breath) during a clinical visit, the following requirements apply:

- The symptomatic patient should be given a mask and sent home immediately in a private vehicle avoiding public transportation if possible.
- They should complete the online self-assessment tool once they have returned home and be tested for COVID-19.
- Once the symptomatic patient has left the clinic, clean and disinfect all surfaces and areas with which they may have come into contact.
- The employer should immediately assess and record the names of all close contacts of the symptomatic patient.
- The information will be necessary if the symptomatic patient tests positive for COVID-19.

### **Potential Exposure Guidance**

Even with the strictest screening procedures in place, it is possible that a non-symptomatic patient or healthcare professional who attended to the denture clinic for services, may after the fact, test positive for COVID-19. The oral health provider, when they become aware of the patient's positive test or onset of symptoms, must contact all patients and staff who were in the clinic in the 48 hours leading up to and past the positive patient's positive test result or their onset of symptoms. The provider should ask the patients or staff if they are experiencing any COVID-19 signs or symptoms (fever, sore throat, shortness of breath). If the patient reports any signs or symptoms, have them complete the Government of Saskatchewan's Self-Assessment Tool at the link below to arrange for testing and advise them to self-isolate:

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/emerging-public-health-issues/2019-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-self-assessment>.

If a provider or support staff becomes symptomatic your office must revert to mandatory closure until such time that a positive or negative Covid-19 test becomes available. If results are negative, operations may resume but if results are positive then the office must contact all patients that could have come into contact with your office 2 days prior to positive test results and you must remain closed for no less than 14 days upon which time you may return to the office for deep cleaning and then re-opening at the current recommended DSS Phase; for more information [click here](#).

### **Payment / Record Keeping Procedures (Must Be Complied With)**

1. Please refrain from accepting cash and cheques **(in person)** as payment options, you may accept Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Debit, etransfer, direct billing to insurance carrier or another form of payment that has been mutually arranged.
2. You must follow proper record keeping guidelines ([link](#)).



# Medical Professionals Guidelines

For general workplace guidelines, please refer to COVID-19 Workplace Information on [P. 10](#). All businesses operating in Saskatchewan must be in compliance with these guidelines. The information below provides specific information for medical professionals.



Beginning May 4, 2020, allow access to the following previously restricted medical services: dentistry, optometry, physical therapy, optician services, podiatry, occupational therapy and chiropractic treatment. All medical services providers must continue to take measures as outlined by the Chief Medical Health Officer to promote physical distancing where possible, and where not, use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

## Patient and Client Considerations

- Initial patient and client bookings will need to be limited to maintain necessary public health measures, but may need to be prioritized by urgency.
- Patient and client bookings should be scheduled in a manner that ensures no more than 10 patients/clients are required to gather in waiting areas.
- If clients must attend with children or other family members, those individuals must be included in the maximum number of people allowed in the area. Should scheduling errors result in more than 10 people, alternate waiting areas should be planned.
- Alternative solutions to waiting in the office should be considered, such as asking people to wait in vehicles and text messaging or calling when appointments are ready.
- At the time of booking or in advance of an appointment, clinic staff should call patients/clients to inform them of the public health measures. Staff should also ask if patients/clients have been experiencing symptoms of illness consistent with COVID-19.
- Seats in waiting areas should be spaced to maintain a minimum physical distance of two metres. Household contacts are not required to separate.
- Visual cues for areas where patients/clients are required to queue should be marked and a directional flow through the facility established.
- Non-essential items should be removed from client waiting areas, including magazines, toys, and remote controls.
- Staff should screen all patients/clients for visible symptoms consistent with COVID-19. Anyone who is symptomatic should be asked to wear a surgical/procedure mask. Note: Medical professionals may determine if appointments for symptomatic clients should be canceled.
- Common areas and other high-touch surfaces and objects should be cleaned and

- disinfected after each use, including reception counters, seating areas (including clinic room seats), doors, handrails and objects or machines used in therapies.
- All medical and health professionals must practice effective hand hygiene after each client - washing their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer approved by Health Canada (DIN or NPN number).
- Employers should carefully consider the appropriate use of personal protective equipment for staff and patients/clients. For more information, see [COVID-19 Appropriate Use of PPE for Employers](#).
- Carefully consider any COVID-19 safe return-to-work recommendations provided by professional associations or regulatory bodies.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting

- The COVID19 virus can survive for several days on different surfaces and objects. Frequent cleaning and disinfection is important to prevent spread of the disease.
- Workplaces should implement enhanced environmental cleaning. Commonly touched areas and shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily or whenever visibly soiled.
- Wherever possible, discourage workers from sharing phones, desks, offices and other tools and equipment.
- Commonly touched areas include light switches, door handles, toilets, taps, hand rails, counter tops, touch screens/mobile devices and keyboards.
- Clothing and fabric items should be laundered and dried on the highest temperature setting possible. Ensure items are thoroughly dried.
- [Cleaning and sanitizing information](#) is available at [saskatchewan.ca/COVID19](https://saskatchewan.ca/COVID19).
- Hand sanitizers should be approved by Health Canada (DIN or NPN number) to ensure they are effective.

For additional information, please call the Business Response Team at 1-844-800-8688 or email [supportforbusiness@gov.sk.ca](mailto:supportforbusiness@gov.sk.ca).