

UPDATE Message to Licensed Denturists
Covid-19 – DSS Recommended Phase 4 Reintegration Approach
Effective June 15, 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, Recommended Phase 3 and now Recommended Phase 4, which is attached and effective June 15, 2020.

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

ALL DSS Licensed Denturists are required to review these recommended procedures and guidelines as you transition to DSS Recommended Phase 4.

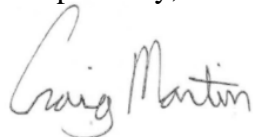
DSS Recommended Phase 4 – Effective June 15, 2020 - Full Procedures with heightened infection prevention and control with additional patient and clinic considerations.

There are not many changes to be noted from Phase 3 to Phase 4 and these changes have been highlighted for your ease of review and implementation. The major change is the expansion of the screening questions and the allowance from only 1 patient in the office to patient per operatory ratio with staggered appointment times, limit patient to patient contact, social distancing, disinfecting and sterilization etc. as outlined in the DSS Recommended Phase 4. The closed-door policy will remain in place at this time.

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 4 Reintegration Approach, Effective June 15, 2020

RECOMMENDED OUTLINE AND PROCEDURES – PHASE 4

Covid-19 – Phase 4 Reintegration Approach Effective June 15, 2020

Mandatory Closure, in effect if conditions of Phase 4 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](#).

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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.

Special Note: There are reports of counterfeit Personal Protective Equipment and we warn members to be careful in this regard and be cognizant of from who and what you are ordering, more information at the following link: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/usernotices/AdditionalTips.html>.

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.
- If you would like to implement a signed consent form then proper social distancing, proper hand washing, patient wears gloves and disinfection are followed unless suitable electronic means are available which is preferred i.e. for example what is available at clinicforms.co
- One patient to operatory ratio at a time with staggered appointments to limit patient to patient contact and to allow for proper disinfecting and sterilization. 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 operatory use must be kept to allow for proper disinfecting and sterilization. You must stagger patients per operatory in accordance with clinic layout and available operatories while allowing for social distancing and 15 minutes between patients in each operatory for proper disinfecting and sterilization of the operatories. To clarify this means the closed-door policy remains in place and patients should not be left idle in the waiting room.
- Recommendation is to advise patients that bathroom is not available for use unless absolutely necessary. If bathroom is used then it must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- General bathroom policy whether for public or staff use is that it must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Wipe down and disinfect any and all surfaces that were or could have been touched, in operatories, waiting room and reception.
- 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 (*an approved dental suction unit with a HEPA filter is preferred*) is 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.
- 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?”.
- 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>).
- 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.**

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.

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

DSS Recommended Phase 4: Procedures to Provide Services

1. Telephone contact is made with patient.
2. Office conducts a telephone/teleconference assessment asking the following questions (developed in part using, click [link](#)):
 - Did you travel or fly within the last 14 days?
 - Are you currently positive for Covid-19?
 - Do you have a fever (over 38 ° C)?
 - Do you have a new or worsening respiratory symptoms NOT RELATED to seasonal or environmental allergies i.e. cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, sore throat, runny nose?
 - Do you any new onset atypical symptoms including chills, aches and pains, headache, loss of sense of smell or taste?
 - 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 consults 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>.

Ask these additional screening questions and if a patient answers yes to any of these questions, 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 in the last 14 days?
- Are you living, working or volunteering at a long-term care home that has active cases of Covid-19?

- Have you travelled outside of Saskatchewan but within Canada in the past 14 days?
- Have you had NON-Close contact with a confirmed or probably case of Covid-19 in the last 14 days?
- Have you attended a mass gathering (more than 10 people) in the last 14 days? (*this does not apply to a single household or congregate living situation*)

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, 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.

A minimum of 15 minutes between operatory use must be kept to allow for proper disinfecting and sterilization. You must stagger patients per operatory in accordance with clinic layout and available operatories while allowing for social distancing and 15 minutes between patients in each operatory for proper disinfecting and sterilization of the operatories. To clarify this means the closed-door policy remains in place and patients should not be left idle in the waiting room

- 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 in operatories, waiting room and reception.
- 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)

Please refrain from accepting cash and cheques (in person) as payment options, you may accept Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Debit, e-transfer, direct billing to insurance carrier or another form of payment that has been mutually arranged.

You must follow proper record keeping guidelines ([link](#)).



If **ANY** of the following apply to you, please **phone** to reschedule your appointment **BEFORE ENTERING**:

- **Fever, cough, sneezing or difficulty breathing** (with or without pneumonia) **AND**
- **Travelled to a COVID-19 affected area within 14 days OR**
- **Close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 OR**
- **Close contact with someone who was ill and had travelled to a COVID-19 affected area within 14 days**

If you require **emergency** denture care, please inform us.

Thank You for Your Understanding and Cooperation.

Denture Practice Name
Telephone: ###-###-####