

## **RECOMMENDED OUTLINE AND PROCEDURES – PHASE 6**

### **Covid-19 – Phase 6 Reintegration Approach Effective July 11, 2021**

**Mandatory Closure, in effect if conditions of Phase 6 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 6 – Full Procedures with relaxed considerations. Mandatory Masking remains in place. Effective July 11, 2021.**

The Government of Saskatchewan released back on Thursday, April 23, 2020 a phased in re-opening approach, as can be seen by [clicking here](#) (pages 60-61 are directly related).

Under this plan denture clinics are 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, Recommended Phase 4, Recommended Phase 5 and now Recommended Phase 6, effective July 11, 2021. The Saskatchewan Health Authority has released a Safety Bulletin to provide ongoing direction to health care workers regarding the recommended safety guidelines, processes and personal protective equipment (PPE), as can be seen by [clicking here](#). **Please review these thoroughly.**

ALL DSS Licensed Denturists are required to review these recommended procedures and guidelines as you transition to DSS Recommended Phase 6. If you have any questions or concerns with regards to these DSS Recommended Guidelines, then please contact the DSS directly for direction first and await a response from the DSS. To further clarify, please do not venture outside of the authority of the DSS to answer your questions as it pertains to clinic operation guidelines.

**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 strongly recommended that your office:

- You may now unlock your doors, at your discretion, to the general public as long as your clinic layout allows for the social distancing requirements. We would suggest that at any time the waiting room is at capacity that in order to maintain social distancing that you ask those patients to wait outside until such time that there is room. This will 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](#).
- 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 ensure that proper social distancing is maintained, proper hand hygiene and disinfection is completed, unless suitable electronic means are available which is preferred i.e. for example what is available at [clinicforms.co](http://clinicforms.co)
- One patient per operatory ratio at a time with staggered appointments to limit patient to patient contact and to allow for proper disinfecting and sterilization. If your clinic layout allows for social distancing in the waiting room then you may open your waiting room with a minimum of 6 feet social distancing remains in effect. If your clinic layout does not allow for a minimum of 6 feet social distancing remains in effect then 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.
- The **Mandatory Mask policy remains in effect** and applies to all person(s) attending your clinic and all will be subject to the screening protocols that are outlined in these guidelines.
- Posting of a STOP Masking Policy remains in effect as per the Denturist Society of Saskatchewan, available at [click here](#).
- 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.
- You may open the bathroom to patients but a strong recommendation is to let settle after use for a minimum of 15 minutes prior to cleaning and disinfecting, while wearing full personal protective equipment: mask (level 2 or 3), eyewear (glasses with side protection OR faceshield), gloves and gown. Once cleaning and disinfection are complete then please remove personal protective equipment, discard safely and replace required personal protective equipment for next task.
- General bathroom policy for staff use is that it must be cleaned and disinfected after each use wearing full personal protective equipment: mask (level 2 or 3), eyewear (glasses with side protection OR faceshield), gloves and gown. Once cleaning and disinfection are complete then please remove personal protective equipment, discard safely and replace required personal protective equipment for next task.
- You may display denture models in the operatories but they must be wiped down and disinfected after each patient.
- 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.
- Posting of a Warning Screening Sheet in your office, available at [click here](#).

- Display posters in public view on universal measures to prevent infectious diseases (posters available at <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/basics/standard-precautions.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](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: hand hygiene, mask (level 2 or 3), eyewear (glasses with side protection OR faceshield), hand hygiene then gloves.

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

**PRACTITIONER REMINDER**: It is important to ensure that prior to entering the operatory that you must be donned with the necessary personal protective equipment as follows: hand hygiene, mask (level 2 or 3), eyewear (glasses with side protection OR faceshield) then once in operatory complete proper hand hygiene then gloves.

**Additional Recommended Guidelines for House Calls and Mobile Services.** You may ONLY provide services to patients in long term care facilities once you have received permission from each health care facilities Director of Care and by following their protocols they have in place (*please note that all other guidelines contained within Phase 6 are in full force and effect unless otherwise stated in the points below*):

- If the house call is at a nursing home then you must follow and adhere to all of their set guidelines.
- If the house call is at a nursing home then the screening protocols can be completed with the nursing staff, at your discretion.
- Multiple house calls or multiple mobile visits with multiple patients per visit is not allowed to allow for proper sterilization and disinfection to be completed between visits and patients. For further clarification, you **MUST** return to clinic to ensure proper sterilization and disinfection is before going back out for another house call or mobile visit.
- Gowns **MUST** be donned while on house calls or mobile visits and doffed properly.
- You must be wearing the proper Personal Protective Equipment as outlined in these guidelines prior to entering the patient's room or designated treatment area.

- Shoes must be wiped with a disinfecting wipe upon entering and leaving location.
- All materials and dentures **MUST** be transported in a sealed, wipeable container that can be easily disinfected and/or sterilized.
- A portable suction unit is suggested (i.e. Quatro) 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.
- It is suggested, that if possible, adjustments be done in a separate ventilated area away from other persons.
- **CLARIFICATION** – for house calls and mobile services you **MUST** maintain infection prevention and control standards ([link](#)).

### **DSS Recommended Phase 6: Procedures to Provide Services**

1. Telephone contact is made with patient.
2. Office conducts a telephone/teleconference assessment asking the following screening questions. There is also a screening document that outlines these questions as well that can be used by your office, which can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

#### **a. Do you have any of the following symptoms?**

- Fever (over 38 ° C)
- **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
- **New onset atypical** symptoms including:
  - Chills
  - loss of sense of smell or taste
  - Headache
  - aches and pains

#### **b. Are you currently or in the past tested positive for Covid-19** or are you currently awaiting results from a Covid-19 test? If yes, have you been cleared by your Public Health Authority and/or Public Health Representative? If yes, have you been symptom free for the past 48 hours?

#### **c. In the last 14 days have you:**

- Been outside of Canada, including the United States?
- Travelled outside of Saskatchewan but within Canada?
- Had NON-close contact with a confirmed or probably case of Covid-19?
- Had CLOSE contact with a confirmed or probable case of Covid-19? If Yes, have you received clearance by occupational health, employee health, or public health
- Lived in, visited, or worked in a community or facility deemed an area of concern for Covid-19? (a current list can be found at: [link](#))

If the patient (and any non-essential escorts/familial members) answers yes to any one of these questions (unless the patient and any non-essential escorts/familial members has been cleared by their Public Health Authority and/or Public Health Representative), then direct them to contact HealthLine 811. It is our strong suggestion to use best judgement on whether to move forward with a patient appointment 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/about-covid-19/covid-19-self-assessment>.

Once the patient (and any essential escorts/familial members) answers all of the above questions and then (if able) 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.

*\*\*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 that you may now have your waiting room open as long as your clinic layout allows for social distancing.\*\**

- b. When patient checks-in and enters office they and any other persons should be wearing a mask (*any non-essential escorts/familial members should not be permitted unless absolutely necessary*), 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).
- c. 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.
- d. Prior to entering the operatory the practitioner must be donned with the necessary personal protective equipment as follows: hand hygiene, mask (level 2 or 3), eyewear (glasses with side protection OR faceshield) then once in operatory complete proper hand hygiene then gloves.
- 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, laboratory, 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 clinic should immediately assess and record the names of all close contacts of the symptomatic patient. This 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 the clinic for services, may after the fact, test positive for Covid-19.

It is important to remember that with any positive Covid-19 test that Public Health completes a thorough investigation that outlines contact tracing wherein you would be advised of possible transmission. Upon receiving such notification, Public Health will give you guidelines to follow moving forward.

If a provider or support staff becomes symptomatic your clinic must take their direction directly from Public Health, please contact the appropriate Public Health office based upon your location: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/public-health/public-health-offices>.

If Public Health contacts you as a result of contact tracing and/or a provider or support staff in your clinic tests positive for Covid-19 then immediately notify the QAC Chair (Ashley Ball at [qualityassurance@saskdenturists.com](mailto:qualityassurance@saskdenturists.com)) BUT the office must take their direction directly from Public Health.

**Important Note:** The pre-screening and screening protocols remain in place even if the patient has been vaccinated. The patient advising you that they have been vaccinated does not negate your responsibility to ensure that the pre-screening and screening protocols and all other protocols are continuing to be followed as per all guidelines currently in place.

If a provider or a support staff tests positive for Covid-19 it is advisable that you be prepared to answer and

provide supporting information for the 2 days prior to the onset of the first symptom:

- What is the name and contact information of the patients that attended your office?
- How much exposure time was there with each patient i.e. patient unmasked? (note, it is **STRONGLY** recommended that a patient **MUST** wear a mask at any point you are not intraoral)

With respect to the first point above, it is strongly suggested that each office have a preparedness plan in place if at some point a provider or support staff tests positive for Covid-19. Whether this be remote access to your patient files and scheduler, printing your daily schedules at the end of the day that has detailed contact information, physically taking home your appointment book at the end of each day, creating an accessible excel spreadsheet with all the required information etc.

We would also suggest that you have a designated person outside of the office who could be given access to retrieve any additional information required by the Saskatchewan Health Authority through their contact tracing procedures. This could be the listed “Alternate Denturist or Person of Record” that is currently on file with the DSS or another designated person at your choosing. This alternate person must be fully prepared with knowledge to access any and all of the required information while maintaining strict confidence of patient information i.e., signing a confidentiality agreement with your office.

The DSS attends weekly information sessions with the Saskatchewan Health Authority in attendance and there have been many instances where it was mentioned that they would strongly suggest, as an additional protective barrier, that a faceshield in addition to the mask be worn by practitioners and support staff when patients are in the office. Currently, our recommended procedures and guidelines state:

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

We would strongly suggest, that if wherever possible, the faceshield be the preferred eyewear protective worn in addition to your mask and gloves.

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](#).

### **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, etransfer, direct billing to insurance carriers or another form of payment that has been mutually arranged.

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