

Ministry of Health

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July 7, 2020

MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM TO: **Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario, College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario, College of Denturists of Ontario, College of Dental Technologists of Ontario**

FROM: Dr. David Williams
Chief Medical Officer of Health
Ministry of Health

RE: **Aerosol Generating Dental Procedures**

The health and safety of all health care workers and patients is a key priority as health services have been gradually resuming in the province. I value the important role health regulatory colleges hold in supporting the health sector restart through the development of additional profession-specific guidance for their registrants.

I am writing following requests to my office for advice regarding required precautions for health workers in dental settings where aerosol-generating dental procedures (AGDPs) are conducted and the risk of transmission of SARS-CoV2 to dental care workers during these procedures.

In considering this request, I have concluded that at this time there is insufficient evidence to definitively assess the risk of conducting AGDPs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, I recognize that dental settings have unique characteristics that warrant specific infection control considerations. Given these factors and as an interim measure until a more comprehensive review can be undertaken, I am suggesting the consideration of the precautionary principle when regulatory colleges are developing Infection Prevention & Control and Occupational Health & Safety guidance for their members.

My office will continue to work with you and relevant experts to study this matter further and generate evidence to inform more specific recommendations on precautions for AGDPs.

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Thank you for your ongoing efforts and partnership to protect the health and safety of all Ontarians.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Dr. David Williams, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Chief Medical Officer of Health

c: Helen Angus, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health
Sean Court, Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy, Planning & French Language Services Division
Allison Henry, Director, Health Workforce Regulatory Oversight Branch
Dr. Barbara Yaffe, Associate Chief Medical Officer Health
Clint Shingler, Director, Health System Emergency Management Branch
Dr. Shelley Deeks, Chief Health Protection Officer, Public Health Ontario
Matthew Anderson, President and CEO, Ontario Health