

April 13, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of our 163,000 members, we are writing regarding the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE).

The American Dental Association (ADA) has recommended that dentists keep their offices closed for all but urgent and emergency procedures until April 30 at the earliest. During this time, many of our dentists are treating emergency patients in an effort to keep them out of the emergency room and lessen the burden on our medical system. The difficulty our members have faced in obtaining appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including N95 masks, has serious implications for the dental team and treatment of patients.

Safety of the dental team and patients, or people accompanying patients, is essential while treating emergency patients during this COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the close proximity of individuals during dental procedures, and the frequent generation of aerosols necessary for many dental procedures, dentists, staff and patients are at risk of transmission. Additionally, the CDC's Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 in Healthcare Settings recommends prioritizing respirators for these aerosol-generating procedures. In order to effectively treat patients both during this time and in the future, our dentists need access to proper PPE, including N-95 masks.

As our dentists continue to provide emergency care during this pandemic and look to the future of protecting their patients, we must ensure that dentists are provided immediate access to proper PPE. The availability of appropriate PPE will be critically important to minimize any risk of transmission during dental care.

We thank you for the consideration and look forward to working together to safeguard our dentists, patients and the public from COVID-19. Please contact Natalie Hales at halesn@ada.org or 202-898-2404 for additional information.

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Sincerely,

Chad P. Gehani, D.D.S.
President

Kathleen T. O'Loughlin, D.M.D., M.P.H.
Executive Director

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