

Oral Health System: Pandemic Response

Virtual Meeting

May 21, 2020

3:00-4:30 pm EDT

Group Memory

Convenor:

[Michael Monopoli](#), Executive Director, Grant Strategy
DentaQuest Partnership for Oral Health Advancement

Facilitator:

[Patrick Finnerty](#), Strategic Advisor
DentaQuest Partnership for Oral Health Advancement

Content Manager:

[Sara Oaklander](#), Interaction Institute for Social Change

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I. Start-Ups

A. Welcome

Myechia Minter-Jordan MD, MBA, President and CEO, DentaQuest Partnership for Oral Health Advancement and Catalyst Institute opened the meeting by introducing herself and welcoming everyone to the third meeting of the Pandemic Response Workgroup. Highlights of her comments included:

- I want to begin our meeting with “thank you” – for all that you have accomplished over these past weeks.
- As you have seen, members of our group have been doing incredible work. They have been collecting data, reviewing the relevant science, developing guidelines, sharing information, securing PPE, working with state and federal agencies, and engaging dental providers – all in support of safely reopening dental offices.
- Individually and collectively, we’re envisioning and driving the future of oral health in our nation. We are fortunate to have each of you as participants in our workgroup.
- It is important to note that we are entering a new phase in this effort. And as you may recall, earlier in our collaboration, our intent was to be “ahead” of the reopening phase, providing a framework for safely reopening dental practices. But the reality is that we are already well into “reopening” – and as of May 18th - 40 states allowed dental practices to open for elective procedures. Here in MA we anticipate being there by the beginning of June.
- The reopening of dental offices is being done in various ways across the states, based on a number of different guidelines and safety protocols.
- I’ve been told that some dentists are carefully reviewing new practice guidelines and revising their protocols – and some are just reopening - with new masks.
- I am very concerned about this. Our enterprise owns dental practices and providers in those states are expected to follow different guidelines and standards. I am worried for the safety of our providers and our patients.
- We all know that if a dental provider contracts COVID-19 and get ill or dies – or their patient does, as a result of a dental procedure - there will be tremendous long-term negative economic impact on our dental providers, as well as the oral health outcomes of our patients in the field in general.
- It is now time to take action on the priorities that we have identified as critical to safely reopen dental offices, and to communicate clearly to providers and patients alike. To that end, today’s meeting is focused on actions and next steps.
- Our priority is to develop consensus around national-level, science-based guidelines that are communicated to all. We have all of the right people in our “virtual room.”
- I am hopeful that we can begin to rethink how we deliver oral health care in a manner that promotes more equitable access. As we all know – great challenges also create incredible opportunities for advancement.

B. Introductions

Participants and Guests

- American Dental Association (Marko Vujicic, PhD, Chief Economist and Vice President; Jane Grover, DDS, MPH, Director, Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention)
- Santa Fe Group (Terri Dolan, DDS, MPH, President-Elect)
- American Dental Hygienists Association (Ann Battrell, MDSH, Chief Executive Officer)

- DentaQuest Partnership for Oral Health Advancement (Myechia Minter-Jordan MD, MBA, President and CEO, DQP and Catalyst Institute) (Michael Monopoli, DMD, MPH, MS, Vice President for Grants Strategy) (Brenda Cocuzzo, Executive Assistant)
- National Association of Dental Plans (Eme Augustini, Executive Director)
- National Association of Community Health Centers (*Represented by:* Vicki Young, PhD, Chief Operating Officer S.C. Primary Health Care Association)
- Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (Janet Olszewski, Senior Fellow, Michigan Health Endowment Fund)
- Oral Health Progress and Equity Network (OPEN) (Ifetayo Johnson, MA, Executive Director)
- Association of Dental Support Organizations (ADSO) (Mitch Goldman, JD, MBA, Executive Committee ADSO and CEO of Mid-Atlantic Dental Partners, a Dental Support Organization)
- Oral Health Coordinating Committee/IHS/USPHS (RADM Tim Ricks, DMD, MPH, FICD, Chief Professional Officer)
- Delta Dental of Washington (Diane Oakes, MSW, MPH, Chief Mission Officer)
- Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (Chris Wood, Executive Director)

Unable to attend:

- Henry Schein (Steve William Kess, MBA, Vice President of Global Professional Relations)
- Dental Trade Alliance (Gregory Chavez, *CEO*)

Strategic Advisors:

Marcia Brand, former Deputy Administrator, Health Resources and Services Administration

Patrick Finnerty, Former Virginia State Medicaid Director

Laurie Norris, former Senior Policy Advisor for Oral Health, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Marianne Hughes, former Executive Director, Interaction Institute for Social Change

Invited Guest:

Michelle Lee, Organization for Safety, Asepsis and Prevention (OSAP)

C. Purpose of the Effort

To gather key stakeholders within the oral health system to deepen relationships, build alignment, and develop priorities that will guide our individual, organizational, and collaborative action in order to create economic and point of access stability in the oral health care system and to begin to envision what the post-pandemic oral healthcare system will look like.

D. Purpose of the Meeting

To build alignment on the need for national-level guidelines to inform the development of specific state-level guidelines for the safe reopening of dental practices and other oral health services.

E. Desired Outcomes

By the end of the meeting, the group expected to have:

- A shared understanding of the context for today's meeting and the need to focus on safety and communication
- A shared understanding of the CDC and OSHA interim guidelines regarding emergency care, and the process and timeline for the CDC's development of safety guidelines
- A shared understanding of OSAP as a resource for the field in moving through the COVID-19 crisis
- An awareness of the ADA's findings/insights regarding the re-opening of dental offices and related safety issues
- A shared understanding of the current reality of the PPE supply chain and next steps to develop a strategy, including a list of actions to address the outstanding safety and PPE issues

II. Setting the Context

A. Mike Monopoli, DentaQuest Partnership for Oral Health Advancement

Mike Monopoli shared opening remarks – including these key points.

- We are thankful this group has come together to work collaboratively across sectors, to look together at ways our industry is being impacted and to envision a new normal.
- It's an unprecedented time for the industry. There is so much change. Even as we planned for this meeting, the landscape was changing. The CDC guidelines will be coming out soon.
- The situation has laid bare the challenges facing our industry. We've been especially siloed and fragmented. And we have been left out of the planning for the response to the pandemic. In some ways we've been bystanders until now.
- But now we find ourselves on the cusp of restarting dental care and while our initial response may be more disorganized than we'd like, we are poised to rejoin the health care delivery system in a stronger way. We can build on a recognition of our problems. We can envision a new normal...with a new relationship to the health care system – one that is more equitable; one that has us breaking down siloes and increasing collaboration.
- It's been the "wild west" out there, but today we pause to focus on the fragmented way the infection guidelines have come together. We can use this as an example of how we can create a better outcome through collaboration.
- The CDC guidelines are being released. The ADA has said it will revise their practice guidelines for consistency and have those out early next week. We hope we will then have a more cohesive sense of our path forward.
- That said, there will still be work to with states as that is where the jurisdiction lies. We can talk about how this group can support that process.
- We are seeking to make the re-opening process accessible for providers – a one-stop shop format. And to the public in ways that make them comfortable accessing their dental practices as places where care will be delivered safely and effectively.
- I am more comfortable now about where we are for re-opening. We have a good chance now to proceed safely and effectively. Kudos to Admiral Ricks for the other groups he has brought together to collaborate on these issues and help get us to this point.
- I hope we use this meeting to embark on our thinking about the new normal.

B. Michelle Lee, OSAP (the Organization for Safety Asepsis and Prevention)

Michelle thanked everyone for having her here today. Michelle's remarks included:

- We are celebrating our 36th year at OSAP. We started in the 80s because of HIV/AIDS and the impact that was having on dentistry. We're hearing from folks involved back then about how this situation reminds them of that time.

About OSAP

- Vision: Every dental visit is a safe visit.
- Mission: To be the world's leading provider of education that supports safe dental visits.
- Community: Our membership includes clinicians, policy makers, researchers, consultants, manufacturers and distributors, educators, and companies. Individuals and organizations sharing the vision. Everyone has an equal membership. We alternate the chair position between providers and dental trade.
- I was in dental and medical staffing for thirty years in Atlanta. I learned all I know about dentistry by attending conferences and continuing education programming so that I could meet as many dentists and hygienists as possible. My education in the field has continued on since then.

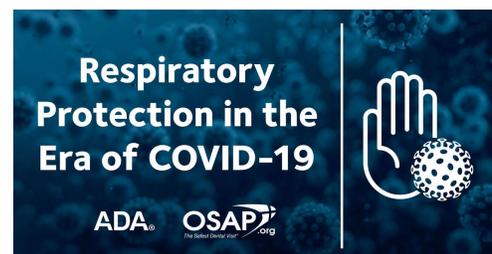
COVID-19 Response

- Throughout COVID-19, OSAP's response has been one of collaboration. Thank you to Admiral Ricks for all you've done to bring these groups together. Our only agenda is a safe dental visit – focused on dental infection control education. This is a part of what many of you do, and we do it exclusively.



I understood early on that OSAP would succeed through collaboration so our response to COVID was to ask how we could help. We knew doing our own webinars would not be sufficient. Instead, we've provided subject matters experts. ADA and OSAP have now done two co-branded webinars and we'll be doing another next week.

- COVID-19 Tool Kit
 - Links to all resources including ADA, CDC, OSHA, EPA, FDA, ADHA, State Associations, and more
- Subject Matter Experts
 - Webinars
 - Facebook Live events
 - Articles



Continued partnership with CDC

- Our partnership with CDC has also continued; we provide subject matter experts to CDC. The oral health division there is very small so they rely on OSAP to help convey the messaging and develop guidance. The delay has been frustrating for the Division of Oral Health. Thankfully, everyone has stepped up to deliver guidance. OSAP's job is to communicate guidance from CDC and OSHA...we've been working behind the scenes to assist with all of it.

- The history of the relationship...when the Division of Oral Health did not exist, OSAP played an important role in the early years – helping to create awareness of the need for a focus on oral health and how our membership – especially manufacturing – made a difference with CDC.
- We’ve also collaborated with CDC on an Infection Control Consortium and in 2016 the Consortium put together an infection control document for oral health providers. The proceedings were published in 2018 right after I started when I did not know enough to understand the significance.
- We’ve worked with the DALE Foundation to develop the first ever certification for dental infection control – and many people have earned this certificate during the pandemic and are now proudly sharing it.



Partnership with DentaQuest Partnership for Oral Health Advancement

We’re now excited to be partnering on the production of these two documents:

- **Best Practices Living Document** – A one-stop shop document for dental professionals so they will have a roadmap for reopening their practices. And the document will be a living one that can be updated as guidance changes. There will be links to existing documents so the sources are clear. And we’ll provide practical tips – to take existing guidance and put it in a format that makes it easy to understand.

We’re hoping some of you will join our advisory board to give feedback on the document and include your names to show support for the document. The first document is focused on general dentistry, and later we will include some special considerations for some of the specialties.

- **What to Expect - Patient Document** – This document will provide patients with information about what to expect when they do go in for a dental visit. We want to communicate that dentistry is putting patients first. There will be FAQs and questions patients can ask their providers.

2020 OSAP Annual Conference: A Clear Vision for Dental Safety – August 13-14-15

www.osap.org/page/2020annualconf

I’m happy to announce that we are going forward with our annual conference, which this year will be virtual.



**DENTAL INFECTION CONTROL
AWARENESS MONTH | SEPTEMBER**

Dental Infection Control Awareness Month: **DICAM – Every September**

I hope you all will help us celebrate this as it’s more important than ever.

Help Us Reinforce a Culture of Safety

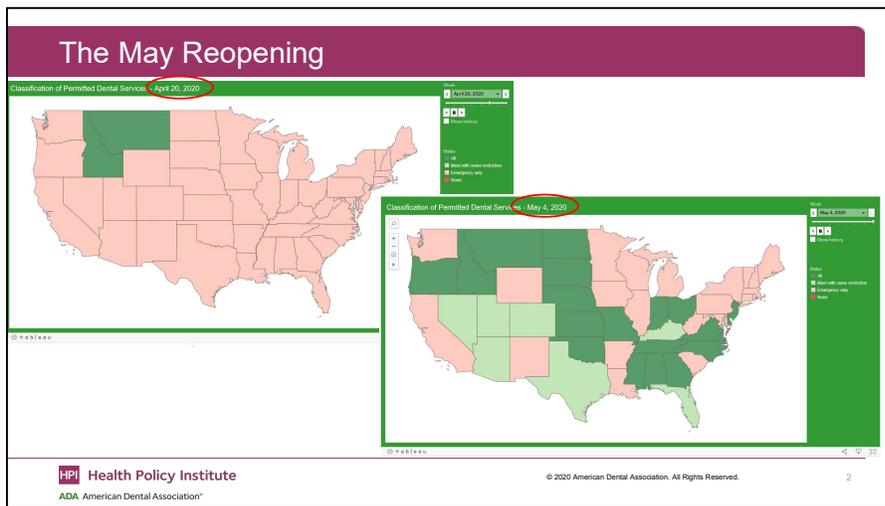
- Promote patient safety and build patients’ trust in infection control compliance

- Support the adoption of the CDC summary and infection control checklist
- Champion the role of the infection control coordinator
- Build awareness of OSAP as dentistry’s infection prevention partner

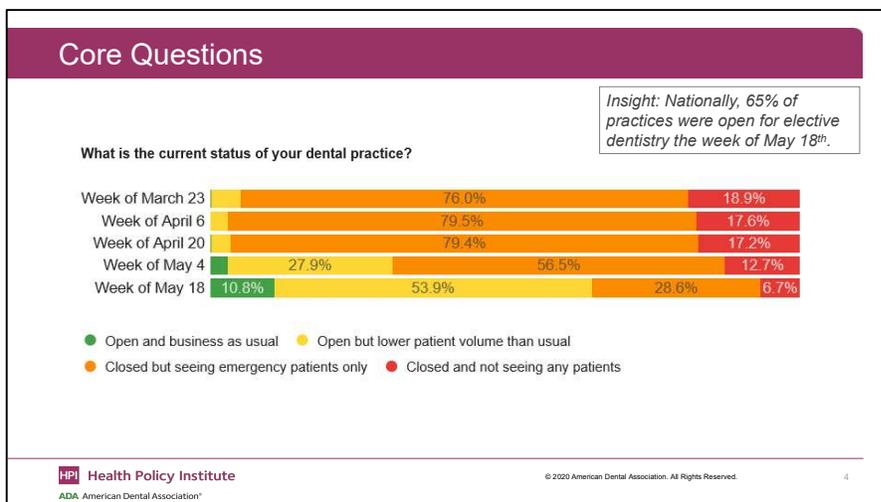
C. Marko Vujicic, American Dental Association

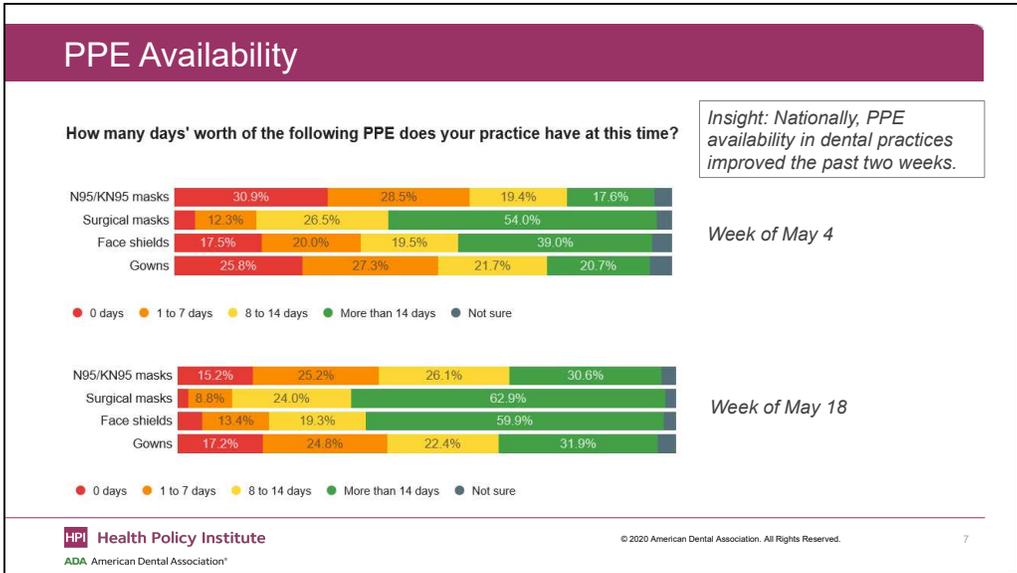
Marko presented on the economic impact of COVID-19 on the dental care sector in week three of “reopening,” based on latest data from HPI’s Economic Impact Poll. Some of his slides and accompanying comments are here.

NOTE: This data is not for distribution

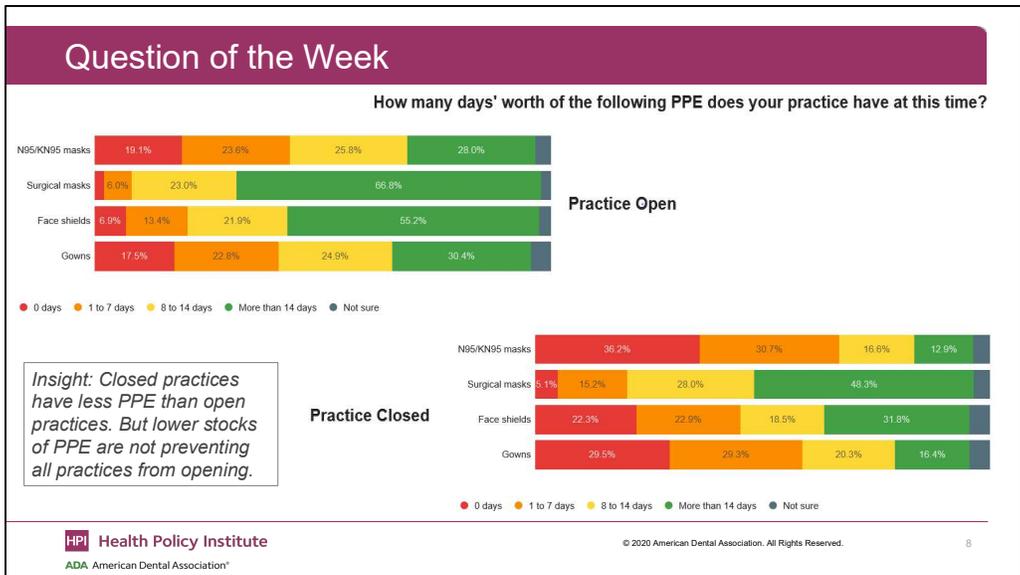


This is a snapshot. It’s more robust of a rebound than I would have predicted. The speed of reopening – three weeks in – is more robust than I would have expected. This data is for private practices. We will organize data for public health dentistry as well.



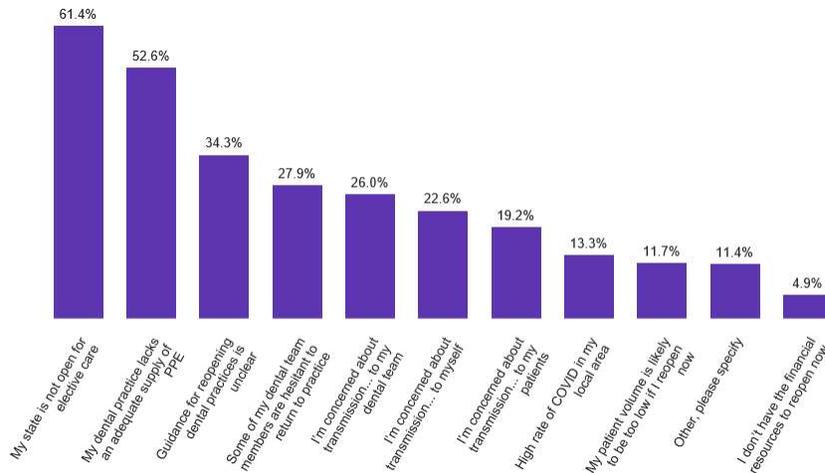


Best news – and this is not yet published – is that the PPE supplies seem to be rising. The ADA has been working tirelessly on prioritizing the dental industry for PPE and it seems to be helping.



Question of the Week

[If owner dentist and practice is closed or closed except for emergencies] What is keeping you from reopening your dental practice for elective care?



Insight: A variety of reasons are keeping more dental practices from reopening, including PPE shortages, confusion over guidance for reopening, and staffing issues.

We asked why practices were not open yet...and top two were obvious – state policy and PPE availability. After that was interesting to us – the third top reason was confusion over guidelines. We’ve been working behind the scenes to harmonize it all – with CDC, with OSHA. We need some flexibility at state and local level to respond to conditions. We are hopeful this gets resolved this week.

D. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Mike closed this section with a few final remarks about PPE.

- Regarding availability of PPE – N95 masks, face shields, and gowns. Dentists were on a low priority with FEMA but we’re now #4 with other alternative primary health care providers. There is a commitment from FEMA to put out two million masks to dental practices – we need significantly more but it’s a good first step.
- There are still issues of unscrupulous brokers, counterfeit PPE, sales that don’t materialize.
- Producers are ramping up and new ones are entering the market. We’re all hoping things even out by mid-July.

III. Break-out Conversations

A. Desired Outcomes

Pat Finnerty invited the participants to break out into small groups to focus on these desired outcomes:

- An understanding of key takeaways from the presentations and implications for the field
- A list of actions that must be taken, to ensure the safety of the field.

B. Group Reports

Takeaways

Group #1 - Ife, Ann, Vicki, Chris

- Great to have the data. Makes us want more. E.g., variations in different settings – geographic, racial and ethnic differences, and more.
- How does the fact that projections for PPE are only out two weeks – that uncertainty – how will that impact on decisions to return?
- Opportunities for the guidelines and education from those...could that be an opportunity to see where there would be opportunities for adaptation to different settings?

Group #2 - Tim, Diane, Jane

- Guidelines have been confusing so with CDC guidelines out it's an opportunity to rally around them.
- Providers have shown up to serve people with dental emergencies.

Group #3 - Marko, Terri, Janet, Mike

- Consumer/patient side of the equation – Marko's report did not suggest consumers view dentistry as a significant issue over other things. Let's wait and see where the holes are before we try to do something.
- Need more coordination with other members of healthcare team – communicating oral health central to overall health.
- It's inevitable we will see an infection occur as a result of a dental visit. We need to be ready.
- Dentists can be part of the testing system...it's chaotic everywhere and dentists being left out may be less deliberate than it looks. However, we don't have a great point of service test available.
- Impact on disadvantaged populations – concern re: impact of the economic downturn on adult dental benefits in Medicaid. This will impact access for sure.

Group #4 - Myechia, Mitch, Eme

- Need to think about things through lens of professional liability – given that an infection will occur. Raises questions re: guidance and mandated regulations.
- Interprofessional practice – clarity re: role of hygienists needed.
- Need to double down on need to get something out to consumers. Leverage social media messaging to consumers clearly answering the question they have: Is it safe to return to the dentist?

Actions

Group #1 - Ife, Ann, Vicki

- Adapt workflow and office layouts and improve ventilation.
- Explore opportunities for dental providers to do testing.

Group #2 - Tim, Diane, Jane

- Craft and distribute a general consensus letter of support for the guidelines.
- Determine how to build on this as an opportunity for greater integration of oral health and overall health – integration expansion of scope within oral health field around other health issues – immunization for example.
- Develop consistent messaging together for the public.

Group #4 - Marko, Terri, Janet, Mike

- Leverage social media messaging to consumers clearly answering the question they have: Is it safe to return to the dentist?

VI. Close

Dr. Jordan closed the meeting with the following remarks:

- Thank you again for coming.
- Michelle mentioned her desire to form an advisory group to help with OSAP's development of guidelines. For those of you interested in serving on this advisory group, could you please send an email to Mike immediately after our meeting today.
- We, then, will get those names to Michelle so she can decide the best mix of expertise and experience that she needs.
- Another next step - the planning team will synthesize the ideas you generated here today – we are hoping to launch a couple of work groups to move the actions identified here forward – and keep this good work going between our meetings.
- I think it is clear that there is much work to be done on Safety & PPE. DQP has resources that can support this work.
- It's great the CDC guidelines are released; we will need to create and implement a communications strategy. This is paramount. I am hopeful that some of you are interested in working on a sub-group to develop the communications strategy.
- Again, thank you for joining in this collective effort to support and sustain access to oral health care and will appreciate your willingness to get involved in the work we have yet to do.

VII. Appendix I: From the Zoom Chat

- From RADM Tim Ricks : How will the "What to Expect" document be marketed to patients? Will there be accompanying public service announcements on TV or radio?
- From Mitch Goldman : What role, if any, will dental professional liability insurers play in supporting the guidelines?
- From Mike Monopoli : a great topic for all to discuss in breakout.
- From Terri Dolan : Important point. There were early discussions with the ADA, DTA, and Dentsply Sirona about launching a consumer focused campaign. But I think it was appropriate to initially focus on getting the practices up and running. I agree that a consumer focused campaign would be valuable.
- From Jane Grover : Consumer focus has to include health literacy.
- From Terri Dolan : Marko - were there significant age group differences in the responses to the question of the week?
- From Myechia Minter-Jordan : What are thoughts on the use of the Battelle decontamination system?
- From RADM Tim Ricks : <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/dental-settings.html>
[Also, please hold Wednesday, June 3rd at 2pm eastern for a](#) CDC COCA (Clinician Outreach and Community Activity) Call/Webinar to summarize and discuss the new guidance for dental health care personnel and other interested parties. More details to come.
<https://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/calls/index.asp>
- From RADM Tim Ricks : New and long-awaited CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/dental-settings.html>
- From Myechia Minter-Jordan: Appreciate asking for an equity lens for all data.