MDHA Update & Action Alert on Dental Hygienist and Patient Safety re: COVID-19

Dear Dental Hygienists,

As many of you are aware, the recent outbreak of COVID-19 across the United States has sparked a public health crisis in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and beyond. The Center for Disease Control and other experts have strongly recommended that our communities practice “social distancing,” avoiding any unnecessary interpersonal contact in the interest of slowing the spread of the disease and keeping our healthcare system within its capacity to operate and treat patients. In the Commonwealth, Governor Baker has strongly encouraged residents to work from home, has prohibited sit-down service at restaurants, and has prohibited the operation of nightclubs and bars. These measures are critical to ensuring that disease does not pass from person to person, and we strongly believe that all individuals who can stay home ought to do so.

Despite the measures taken by the government and the guidance of the CDC, it has come to our attention that a number of dental practices in Massachusetts have chosen to keep their doors open throughout the crisis, exposing everyone involved to the possibility of infection. This decision endangers dental hygienists, office staff, and patients, and MDHA has sent a letter to the Board of Registration in Dentistry (BORID) requesting that they mandate the closure of dental offices for all non-emergency procedures.

**WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

In order to preserve the health and safety of our members and the community as a whole, **we ask that members who are required to work non-emergency procedures or who are aware of an office remaining open for non-emergency procedures contact the Board of Registration in Dentistry immediately.** BORID can be reached at dentistry.admin@state.ma.us or (617) 973-0900.

Thank you! Your advocacy will ensure that BORID is aware of these important situations and will help preserve the health and safety of your colleagues and community.