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Message from President
Victor L. Nannini, DDS, FACS

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[Spread of COVID-19 prompts request from CMS](#)

With patient safety and resource conservation of the utmost importance during this ever-changing pandemic, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is asking all healthcare professionals to limit non-essential elective medical and surgical procedures, including all dental procedures, releasing its [CMS Adult Elective Surgery and Procedures Recommendations: Limit all non-essential planned surgeries and procedures, including dental, until further notice](#).

We must do our part to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, AAOMS recommends OMSs follow federal and state recommendations related to surgical treatment for those patients requiring emergency services in the oral and maxillofacial surgery office. Our top priority must be the health of the public and your patients.

The [CMS recommendations](#) released Wednesday night state: "Dental procedures use PPE and have one of the highest risks of transmission due to the close proximity of the healthcare provider to the patient. To reduce the risk of spread and to preserve PPE, we are recommending that all non-essential dental exams and procedures be postponed until further notice."

CMS said healthcare providers should "consider resources and how best to provide surgical services and procedures to those whose condition requires emergent or urgent attention to save a life, preserve organ function, and avoid further harms from underlying condition or disease. Decisions remain the responsibility of local healthcare delivery systems, including state and local health officials, and those surgeons who have direct responsibility to their patients. However, in analyzing the risk and benefit of any planned procedure, not only must the clinical situation be evaluated, but resource conservation must also be considered."

We are confident that by concentrating on these patients, you will be providing essential services to the patients most in need – thereby minimizing visits to our overtaxed emergency departments and hospitals.

Furthermore, as suggested by CMS, by treating only those patients who require emergency care, we will be supporting the healthcare profession by minimizing our use of personal protective equipment and helping alleviate supply shortages occurring in many areas of the country.

The ADA did release [guidance](#) on what constitutes a dental emergency. However, states are continuing to issue their own recommendations, so please check your local laws and/or directives. (AAOMS is tracking these changes and posting [daily state-by-state updates](#).)

AAOMS is continuing to evaluate this rapidly changing environment. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation with these recommendations, which may change as new information becomes available. For the latest OMS resources and updates, visit the [AAOMS COVID-19 webpage](#).

Sincerely,

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