

COVID-19 Update

Joint Statement from the Oral Health Professions Regulators

The CDHO has partnered with Ontario's oral health regulatory Colleges to produce the following statement on fallow times and closed operatories. This statement is endorsed by:

- Glenn Pettifer – Registrar/CEO, CDHO
- Roderick Tom-Ying – Acting Registrar/CEO, CDO
- Dan Faulkner – Registrar/CEO, RCDSO
- Judy Rigby – Registrar/CEO, CDTO

Ontario's oral health regulatory Colleges (Dental Hygienists, Denturists, Dentists, and Dental Technologists) have partnered to provide consistent infection prevention and control guidance for COVID-19 and its variants across the oral health professions. Collectively, we focus on the public interest and regularly monitor and update guidance for oral health care settings, as necessary.

The Colleges have established a Working Group (WG) consisting of staff representatives from each College.

In May, as part of this work, the WG convened an expert panel to provide recommendations on two key topics:

- requirements for fallow times following aerosol-generating procedures (AGPs)
- requirements for enclosed operatories during AGPs.

The expert panel included three infectious disease physicians – Dr. Kevin Katz, Dr. Alon Vaisman, and Dr. Matthew Muller as well as Dr. Paul Allison from the Association of the Canadian Faculties of Dentistry. Each College sent representatives, Sylvie Richer, Registered Dental Hygienist (CDHO), Braden Neron, Denturist (CDO), and Keito Endo, Dental Technologist (CDTO) to provide profession-specific context for the recommendations – with additional support provided by staff.

Based on a review of epidemiological data, cross-jurisdictional studies, public health indicators such as ICU capacity, hospital capacity outside the ICU current rates of infection, vaccination progress, as well as focused discussion about risk to the public, the infectious disease experts recommended making no modifications to the existing requirements for fallow times and enclosed operatories. Ultimately, the recommendation is founded on the continued risk of exposure/transmission in oral health care settings in Ontario.

Based on this recommendation, the oral health regulatory Colleges are not updating requirements for fallow times and enclosed operatories at this time.

The Colleges have been closely tracking and applying COVID-19 directives from the Chief Medical Officer of Health throughout the pandemic. We will explore how the planned lifting of the Directives on June 11th will apply in dental health settings.

The WG will continue to reconvene with a panel of subject matter experts to review existing guidance with the aim of releasing updated, clear, and simplified guidance in the near future. The WG will continue to review emerging evidence to ensure that patients and the professions are safe.

