March 26, 2020

The Honorable Roy Cooper
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Dear Governor Cooper,

On behalf of the American Dental Hygienists’ Association (ADHA), thank you for your work to stem the outbreak of the coronavirus outbreak. The nation’s more than 185,000 dental hygienists are licensed health professionals and members of the oral health care team who focus on preventing oral disease and identifying and treating oral disease. In this time of crisis, I am urging you to utilize your gubernatorial authority over commerce and public health to implement a mandate that non-urgent, non-emergency, elective and routine dental procedures be postponed in order to protect the health of patients, oral health professionals, and preserve desperately needed personal protective equipment (PPE).

Due to the nature of their work, dental hygienists utilize personal PPE and because of their close proximity to the patient during procedures have one of the highest risks of transmission. To mitigate the spread of COVID-19, ADHA strongly recommends dental practices nationwide postpone non-emergency and elective procedures. Additionally, ADHA recommends dental practices remain available for patients with urgent needs. ADHA makes these recommendations out of an abundance of concern for the health and well-being of the public, dental hygienists, and the entire dental team.

ADHA’s recommendations are in line with recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and other national oral health organizations. However, our members are experiencing firsthand that not all dental offices are following these recommendations and may only comply if mandated by yourself.

Considering the urgency to mitigate and contain the COVID-19 pandemic, I implore you to use your gubernatorial authority over commerce and public health to limit dental services to emergency care. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ann Lynch, ADHA Director of Advocacy and Education, at 312-440-8942 or AnnL@adha.net.

Sincerely,

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President
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