



JAMES B. ALLEY
Certified Public Accountant

2421 Pennsylvania Ave NW Second Floor
Washington, DC 20037
Mobile: (706) 255-2881
Fax: (866) 330-5275
Jim.alley.cpa@gmail.com

To My Dental Clients:

I hope this finds you and your family well and in good spirits. Last week was significant with the SBA announcement of 100% allocation of the initial funds available and the President placing reopening of businesses squarely on the Governors. I wanted to reach out to you directly and offer ways you can be proactive during this time and start preparing to reopen.

Grab a pen and paper or open Word to take some notes and let's get started.

1. Take this time to really take stock of your practice. Think through your normal processes, workflows and even your patient interactions. Are there changes you have been hesitant to implement? Now is the perfect time to really think about how your entire practice was functioning and how you envision it functioning in the future - without having to sacrifice your nights and weekends with family to do so. Heck, right now it just might be a good respite from your family during your extended stay at home!
2. Consider the state of your patients when they do come back to your office. How will they react to coming back into your office after this pandemic shutdown? What do you think they will want to see regarding how sterile your office is? Will they be comfortable sitting in a waiting room with other people (immediately after reopening and 6 months from that date). Will you schedule patients so there will be no wait for them, will they wait in their cars, or maybe just remove chairs so they wait at a social distance? Have you thought about what you may need to do to get your office cleaned up and ready to reopen? Why not use some simple messages around these things; I think it will be of utmost importance that you somehow communicate what you are doing to make your patients experience as safe, secure and as anxiety free as possible. There are a few ideas that come my mind that should be simple to implement, cost next to nothing and could vastly set you apart from your peers.
3. When do you think you will be able to open your practice back fully? You thought about the safety of your patients but what about your staff? How and when will they be coming back to work – I think it will be in stages. Expect some cancellations and rescheduling of cancelled appointments for well down the road. This means that you may be the only person needed in the office to do everything and then sometime later layer in the Front Desk, Hygienist, then Assistant, then all over again once the schedule gets back normal (and who knows how long that will take). Either way, you will need to provide some PPE for yourself and your staff that you may not have had prior to this COVID-19 shutdown. There are people out there calling for a significant investment in sterilization fixtures and equipment for your practice above and beyond your autoclaves. I cannot say whether this is right for you but some of these items are very expensive and may only be providing a sense of security for your patients rather than providing a more sterile environment for them. Try to contemplate whether you



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will implement safety/sterilization practices that will be a permanent change or only for some period. What protocols are you already using so your staff is safe when seeing patients and what additions might add more assurance of safety and protection? When should you order/reorder these products? The good thing is we can easily calculate that reorder point together with just a little data and conversation.

While these times are tremendously difficult, they do offer you the opportunity to analyze your practice in ways you may not have had the time to before. Take advantage of the time you have now to better yourself and your practice. As always, I am here to encourage and help you as best I can.

All the Best,

Jim Alley