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COVID-19 Update No 18

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- Phase 3, social distancing and Trace and Protect
- Key worker status and child care

Angus Walls, Director

Edinburgh Dental Institute

4th Floor Lauriston Building

Lauriston Place

Edinburgh EH3 9HA

Dear Colleagues,

Phase 3, social distancing and Trace and Protect

You were sent a briefing document about Trace and Protect and how it should be applied in a health care setting last week.

Trace and Protect is the Scottish implementation of the UK's "Track and Trace" program in which anybody who has been a contact of a person who is diagnosed with COVID-19 is contacted and told to socially isolate for 14 days to try to break the viral transmission cycle.

As we move into Phase 3 it is vital that you and your team maintain social distancing within the team, between the team and patients and between patients when PPE is not being worn. In terms of patient contact, can I remind you that your PPE should be "donned" prior to contact with the patient and "doffed" after the contact episode has ended. A breach in these protocols could result in transmission of virus but more importantly to you could also result in you and your staff being told to self-isolate for 14-days which we obviously want to avoid.

This is not just a theoretical risk. A patient in an adjacent health board had a SARS-CoV-2 test done and went to the dentist the following day. They were asymptomatic so were seen in the practice. Their test result came back 48h after the test, the day after they were seen by their dentist, and demonstrated SARS-CoV-2 carriage. The dentist and their team were then contacted by T&P and by the local public health team to ensure that there had been no breach of PPE use / social distancing. Fortunately none had but had that happened the staff would have had to socially isolate for 14 days.

In terms of trace and protect a contact is

- A person who has had face-to-face contact (within one metre), with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), including: being coughed on, having a face-to-face conversation, within one metre, or having skin-to-skin physical contact, or any contact within one metre for one minute or longer **(without appropriate PPE)**
- A person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) for more than 15 minutes **(without appropriate PPE)**
- A person who has travelled in a small vehicle with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) **(without appropriate PPE)**

Please do everything that you can within your practice to support the maintenance of social distancing and to use PPE safely at this time

Key worker status and childcare

I have written to you before about keyworker status and the anomaly that some local authorities were not recognizing the remobilizing dental teams as keyworkers because they

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had not been working throughout the pandemic. This was evident in Edinburgh but not in West Lothian. Thanks to the efforts of the LDC and John Davidson in particular Edinburgh has now agreed to recognize remobilizing dentists and their teams as key workers so they can now apply for the relevant child care places.

With all my best

Angus Walls

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