1. **Patient Communication** :
   * + Send letter to all patients – See Sample at ADA Toolkit letter and make modifications to better represent your office. **Note: 5 bullet points on sample letter can be better elaborated** .
       - Via e-mail or third party communication systems
       - Hard copy to patient’s where a valid e-mail is not available and “elderly patient’s” that are likely not to open e-mail on a daily basis
       - Post on all Social Media venues related to practice
       - Post on Website
     + Create a video and post on social media and website
       - Welcome back – here is what we have done to ensure your and our safety!
     + Continue to contact patients via Phone
       - How are you doing?
       - Inform of actions we have taken to ensure their safety and ours – Did you receive our e-mail?
       - Guide patients to visit website for video
       - When Scheduling patients follow **ADA-Patient Screening Form**

Phone calls priorities:

* + - Patients that called with an emergency and were not treated
    - Patients under care (in the middle of treatment)
    - Patients whose appointments were interrupted due to practice closing (we cancelled or they cancelled and pre-existing appointment)
    - Patients with unscheduled treatment plans
    - Patients due and overdue for hygiene that were not previously scheduled

1. **Social Distancing Scheduling Protocols:**
   * + Extend Business hours to accommodate patients
     + Implement “virtual reception room”
     + Extend time allowed per procedure depending on availability of treatment rooms and staff to accommodate additional need for disinfection protocols- (15 minutes to ½ hour )
     + Set up a “scheduling grid” to what procedures should be scheduled at different times- That will allow a more productive day , extra time to disinfect treatment rooms after extensive procedures and utilization of different treatment rooms when possible.
     + Example : Room 1- Aerosol generating procedure

Room 2- Non aerosol generating procedure

1. **Update Practice’s Pre-existing Guidelines and Systems** ( they might no longer be effective )
   * + Update financial policies:
     + Set up direct deposit, credit card authorization forms
     + Consider creating alternative payment plans, or/and no interest charges

* Extended courtesies for front-line workers
* Apply a PPE – charge- check insurance companies allowance for charge
* Consider setting up tele-dentistry for your practice:
  + - * triage
      * consults
      * new patient experience
      * follow-ups
      * review of findings
      * case presentation
      * financial arrangements
* Zoom conference – review privacy settings and protection against zoom hacking , waive of HIPPA privacy regulations during crisis
* Create a 3 step plan to who and when your team is returning to work.
* Be logical not emotional
* Review the financial reality and projected revenue based on patient’s demand but also at practice real capacity under new regulations , and safety of staff and patient’s
* Phase I:
  + Skeleton staff
  + Limited Procedures
  + Hygiene?
* Phase II:
  + Re- assess demand
  + Extend schedule – Possible staggering of team and hours
* Phase III:
  + Full team
  + Marketing
  + Restructuring
  + Being prepared to better and more efficient than before crisis- Use all learner as a new way of being and a new way of operating

**4 – Preparing the Practice to Receive Patients:**

* Reception Area – Administrative Space
  + - Remove all magazines and reading materials
    - Remove coffee station – place in a private area with disposables
    - Set up disinfection station in a place near the entrance of practice.
      * Some offices have op to set up station on hallway before entering the practice if appropriate
    - Create a Welcoming sign -to be visible either at the door or at disinfection station so patients can read when they enter.
    - A sign with disinfection protocols and a copy of patient screening form (both framed)
    - Disinfection Station : Sanitizer, tissues, thermometer, \*patient’s kit
    - Install Plexi-glass at reception counter
    - Place tape on floor to indicate proper spacing
    - Add an additional garbage can with cover – for disposables
    - De-clutter any additional items as needed
    - Remove chairs from reception – leave 2 chairs on each side (patient and companion)
    - Use keyboard protectors and clean or change out
    - Assign personal headset for phone usage to eliminate touching phone with hands and cross contamination
    - If you have more than one person working at the desk- Practice 6 feet distancing when possible
    - Stock and use CaviWipes
    - Schedule disinfection of surfaces: counters, doorknobs, chairs.
    - Consider Installing Air Purification System in Reception and Administration Space
* Patient Check-In Protocols
  + - Welcome to the office
    - Greet at disinfection station
    - Temperature check with -infra-laser thermometer
    - Confirm Patient Screening Form has been completed online.
    - Hand patient the kit \*see Patient Kit below for items included
* Patient Kit (in a closed bag) Suggestions:
  + - Pen
    - Booties
    - Surgical Cap
    - Mask
    - Gloves
    - Disposable gown
    - Traveler size tissue pack
    - A copy of patient screening form (unless is completed online)
    - Credit card authorization form
    - Travel sized Purell or equivalent
    - Garment bag if applicable
    - Safety glasses
    - Hygiene- patient package
    - Menu- Pedo: fluoride flavor, toys, sticker choices
* Bathroom
  + - Door is locked or taped
    - Bathroom gets disinfected after each use
    - Place seal on door to indicate just disinfected
    - Provide pump anti-bacterial soap and hand sanitizer

**5.- Treatment Room Protocols**

* Team protocol in the treatment room:
  + - Wash hands in front of patient
    - Place goggles and mask- Double mask option
    - Long sleeves and/or disposable gowns
    - Remove mask only after leaving the room
* Treatment room set up:
  + - Place barriers, including full plastic cover for chair
    - Plastic covers for any keyboards,
    - Consider using tape instead of bib-chains that can get highly infected
* Procedure set-up
  + - Basic set up is pre-packaged ahead of time @ assembly station:
      * All disposables
      * Instruments
      * Air& water syringes
      * Suction tips
      * Water cup
      * Bib
      * Safety glasses
      * Necessary Materials
      * Anesthesia
      * Bur blocks
      * Disposable Dappen-Dishes and brushes
      * Smaller etch syringes
      * Individual uses of fluoride, composite
      * Polishing paste
      * Consider installing an air purifier at each treatment room or larger unit for open floor
      * Consider purchasing an extra-oral suction unit for high aerosol procedures
      * Consider looking into Ozone/ water purification system
* Treatment Room Break-Down
  + - Follow standards of disinfection as usual- spray surfaces and let air-dry
    - In addition: wipe every knob, door handle, counter surface, cabinet faces, monitors, keyboards.
    - Transfer all infected materials and instruments to sterilization area.
    - Replace gloves with utility gloves
    - Dispose of all aerosol exposed PPE such as: mask, and gowns
    - Alternatively: double mask and dispense the external mask
    - As per ADA there is no specific demand to how frequently to change a N-95 mask or gown. Make judgement based on professional judgment results as to necessity. See page 15 on ADA tool-kit

**6.- Sterilization**

* Sterilization Protocol:
  + - Follow standard sterilization protocol
    - Ultrasonic cleaner (?) Make sure cover is sealed tight or
    - Soak instruments with a disinfectant
    - Rinse under running water and pack
    - Autoclave- Spore test done more frequently
    - Impressions are sprayed and disinfected
* Consider creating an assembly station to have all materials and instruments pre-set outside the treatment room e.g. Surgical Room setup pack- Blue Autoclavable wrap

**7.-Staff Protocol**

* All Staff-upon arrival go to disinfection station
  + Use Hand sanitizer
  + Temperature Check/ symptoms check
  + Log in stats on Daily Screening Log
  + Remove External Clothing and shoes -place in a disposable bag
  + Place PPE on (scrubs, gown, mask, gloves, shoes etc.)
* Front Desk:
  + Masks
  + Disposable Gowns are optional
  + Gloves- during patient transaction (credit card, handling forms, etc.)
  + Face Shields if no Plexi-glass is available
* Clinical Staff
  + All proper PPEs as mentioned above
    - Disposable gown or long sleeve scrubs button to the neck
    - Surgical cap
    - Face shield or proper eye protection

8.**Other Recommendations:**

* + - Watch Covid-19 infection control protocols webinar
    - Order an infrared thermometer
    - Look into Extra-Oral Suction Unit– at least one, for aerosol generating procedures
    - Air purification units to be installed in each treatment room and reception/front desk area rated for size of rooms.
    - Ozone Generator – consider use of for overnight disinfection of entire office/rated for size
    - UV lighting- use eye protective glasses during usage
    - Have patients rinse with an antimicrobial rinse : examples-Hydrogen peroxide diluted solution, ECO balance, Ozone water etc
    - Conduct a laser pocket disinfect prior of treatment
    - UV light disinfection technology