



Dear Legislator,

Dentistry has always provided a vital service for the residents of Pennsylvania. In this difficult time, the dentists/constituents of Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Susquehanna, Wayne, Columbia, Wyoming, and Carbon counties are significantly impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. Currently, we are treating the emergent needs of our patients in order to reduce the burden on local hospital emergency departments; and because many of us have donated our personal inventory of PPE to local hospitals we are working with limited supplies. As the mitigation process continues and our offices are closed to routine care, the number of emergent patients is growing and creating further strain on the amount of available provisions.

A member of our dental society's executive committee recently asked Congressman Cartwright for help in procuring PPE for his oral surgery practice. As we are sure you are aware, dentists and dental specialists are considered first responders in the fight against Coronavirus. Our local and district dental societies represent nearly 500 dentists in Northeastern Pennsylvania, as well as the thousands of dental personnel we employ. This letter is our plea for help to re-establish our ability to see all of the patients who need dental care and recommendations for procuring PPE for our safety.

As was mentioned, most dentists have and will continue to contribute whatever they can to those on the front line, hospitals, or those in need, so any government directive to do so is not only unnecessary, but misdirected when it comes to us.

As we continue with this critical health care service and when we begin to return to work, we must keep office staff, assistants, patients and doctors safe. As you know, the Pennsylvania Department of Health has recommended the use of the following appropriate PPE (disposable surgical gowns, gloves, level 3 masks, N95 masks, and face shields). These supplies are in high demand and we are having difficulty acquiring them through traditional means. At this time, we are following the recommended process, asking our local Emergency Management Agencies for these vital supplies from PEMA as soon as possible.

We greatly appreciate your help and we look forward to working with you to safely bring critically needed dental healthcare to the individuals of our great state.

Sincerely,

Dentists of Third District of the Pennsylvania Dental Association