

# CDA COVID-19 UPDATE



## A Message for CDA Stakeholders

Below is a snapshot of the Canadian Dental Association's (CDA) pandemic-related work for the week ending May 20, 2021. CDA's next update is slated for June 18, 2021.

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### **Fast Facts: Current COVID-19 Situational Report**

Dr. Aaron Burry, CDA's COVID-19 Team Lead and Deputy CEO - Professional Affairs, provides a video update on the COVID-19 pandemic to the Presidents and CEOs of CDA's Corporate Member provincial dental associations (PDAs).



*Video Length: 19 minutes. Recorded: May 18, 2021.*

### **Summary points:**

**Globally:** Over the last week, the total number of new COVID-19 cases across the globe grew at a rate of 2.9% compared to the previous week. A smaller case growth like this has not been seen since early April 2021.

**U.S.:** Trends in the United States are important as the relative trend is for Canada to follow a similar pattern approximately 4 weeks later. Since April 6, 2021, the number of COVID-19 cases in the U.S. continued to decline from a high of over 600,000 per week. By April 20, 2021, the country reached just over 500, 000 cases when Canada began its current peak in the rise of new cases. With vaccination rates increasing and COVID-19 cases on the decline, COVID-19-related stories reported by U.S. news media have also significantly declined.

**Canada:** News stories about COVID-19 remain a focus in Canada due to the progression of the country's vaccination process. Current data shows that Canadians' willingness to get vaccinated is high. Canada is also starting to trend in the right direction in terms of case growth. However, the challenge remains in that every province or territory's situation varies.

### **On the horizon:**

- More Canadians will start enjoying the outdoors over the next 2-8 weeks. However, vigilance is still required to avoid contracting the virus and spreading it to others, regardless of having been vaccinated against COVID-19.
- Canada may notice the return of indoor activities with limited restrictions in a more cautious way over the next 12-18 months. This is based on learnings from other countries.
- Despite a potential end to the current pandemic on the horizon, COVID-19 is likely to shift to an endemic disease (circulating throughout the world), which means that Canada may continue to see cyclical outbreaks.
- A concern is achieving a high proportion of vaccination across Canada which becomes progressively more difficult over time. As case rates continue to decline, some individuals may perceive the risk of COVID-19 as being low. As a result, these individuals may choose not to get vaccinated. Getting vaccinated is the only way to avoid outbreak patterns being repeated.

### **Important reminders for the dental profession:**

- It is important for dentists and their staff to maintain discussions with patients about the importance of getting vaccinated. As a reminder, CDA has developed a resource package for Corporate Members to help dentists address vaccine hesitancy with individuals. The package includes office posters, suggested talking points on a range of COVID-19 vaccine related topics, digital/printable factsheets - all of which are good conversation starters. Corporate Members are encouraged to promote the package of materials to their member dentists, as deemed appropriate.
- Dental office staff must remain hyper vigilant in their personal lives, when presenting to the office for work, and when in non-clinical/common areas inside the office. Corporate Members are also encouraged to continue promoting the "Being Vigilant Inside and Outside the Op!" poster series and talking points to member dentists, as deemed appropriate.

- Dental offices should continue to be aware of local trends. Keep up with screening protocols and/or adapt screening questions as the local situation evolves.
- To date, dentistry has demonstrated that dental offices can offer care safely and that infection prevention and control practices are effective, allowing oral health care provision during the pandemic. Continue to keep up the good work, but don't let your guard down.



A preview of one poster in CDA's *Be Vigilant Inside and Outside the Op!* series. Colours and text may vary as Corporate Member provincial dental associations may have adapted the materials for use by their member dentists. Dentists should be encouraged to use the posters and to discuss the importance of being vigilant with their staff.



A preview of one of the new posters included in CDA's resource package called *Sleeve Up: Addressing COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy*. Colours and text may vary as PDAs may adapt the materials for use by their member dentists.

## CDA Advocacy and Federal Government Announcements

**New! CDA's Participation in *Days on the Hill*:** As part of ongoing engagement with Members of Parliament, Senators, and senior government officials, CDA organizes and participates in the annual *Days on the Hill* events in Ottawa. The events include a series of meetings between these government representatives and dentistry's leadership and advocacy committee volunteers.

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, CDA's Advocacy Committee held virtual meetings between May 10-14, 2021. In advance of these meetings, CDA prepared speaking points and [leave-behind material addressing the following topics](#):

1. Access to quality oral health care for all Canadians;
2. Continued access to personal protective equipment (PPE);
3. Indigenous children's oral health;
4. Extended health care benefits for businesses; and
5. Capital cost allowances to enhance workplace safety and patient care areas.

Overall, these virtual meetings allowed for fruitful and meaningful exchanges between key federal government decision makers and CDA on the topics listed above, as well as other timely topics including national standards for long-term care, and the recently debated NDP Private member's bill on dental care.

CDA is encouraged by the heightened level of engagement on behalf of federal elected officials and their staff with respect to our proposals, and we will be following up with several key decision makers in the coming weeks and months.

**Update: Budget 2021 – Small Business Tax Provisions:** In addition to extending COVID-19-related support measures, such as the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy ([CEWS](#)), the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy ([CERS](#)), and the Canada Emergency Business Account ([CEBA](#)), the recent budget also included provisions allowing for the immediate expensing of some capital costs incurred by some small businesses. This responds to a recommendation made by CDA in its pre-budget submission.

The current proposal does have some drawbacks, particularly relating to the provisions not being retroactive to the start of the pandemic, the categories of expenses covered, and whether the business is incorporated. CDA is currently reaching out to federal officials to encourage them to amend the proposal to better support dental offices that have made these important investments.

**Update: NDP Motion M-62 on Dental Care:** The first hour of debate on motion M-62 (Federal Dental Care Plan) took place on May 4, 2021. Introduced by NDP MP Jack Harris (St. John's East, NL) on February 2, 2021, it states:

*That, in the opinion of the House, the government should establish a federal dental care plan as soon as possible for Canadian families earning less than \$90,000 per year who are not covered by a dental care plan, as an interim measure toward the inclusion of full dental care in Canada's healthcare system.*

As opposed to a Private Members' Bill, which proposes the creation of a new law, a Motion simply expresses "the opinion of the House" and is not binding on the government.

The House will hold a second hour of debate (currently anticipated in late June) prior to a vote being held on the motion. The motion is similar in language to a defeated motion put forward by the NDP in February 2020, which saw the Green Party support the NDP, while the Liberals, Conservatives, and Bloc Québécois all opposed the motion. Because of this, we expect that this motion will also be defeated.

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## **Bruxism**

**New! Bruxism page added to CDA Website:** Over the last few months, CDA has received several media inquiries regarding the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on individuals' oral health, in particular regarding more people grinding or cracking their teeth compared to pre-pandemic times.

CDA has heard anecdotal comments and understands the stress that many Canadians are feeling. However, there is no scientific evidence to support claims that more Canadians are grinding their teeth at a higher rate.

CDA has added a [Bruxism](#) page to its website to help educate and create additional awareness about the condition and how to prevent it. The webpage includes the following sections:

- [Risks](#)
- [Signs and Symptoms](#)
- [Causes](#)
- [Diagnosis and Treatment Options](#)
- [Tips to Prevent Bruxism](#)

The Bruxism webpage is actively being promoted on CDA's social media channels.



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## Knowledge and Information Broker:

[CDA Oasis](#) is CDA's primary channel of communication for delivering urgent information to the dental community during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following discussions have been recorded since CDA's last COVID-19 update. Be sure to check these out:

- [Dentists Vaccinators: How Did the First Shifts Go?](#)  
Dr. Joel Antel and Dr. Bruce Yaholnitsky share their experiences to date, administering COVID-19 vaccines in Winnipeg and Calgary. **(April 28, 2021)**
- [Managing COVID-19 In Alberta's Public Health Dental Clinics:](#)  
Dr. Heidi Rabie shares her experience of managing the COVID-19 pandemic in a public health environment. She highlights the impact the pandemic has had on dental practice in the short term and looks ahead to some of the questions that have been raised regarding the care of vulnerable populations. **(May 17, 2021)**

This week's **CDA Oasis Bulletin** collated relevant and timely "[news that you can use](#)" related to COVID-19.

**New!** **CDA Essentials, Issue 2** is available [online](#). Here are some of the edition's highlights pertaining to the pandemic:

- President's Column, [Lessons Learned from the Pandemic](#)
- [Your COVID-19 Questions Answered](#)
- [Let's Talk About Vaccine Hesitancy](#)



*Click image to access CDA Essentials, Issue 2, 2021*

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## **CDA Help Desk:**

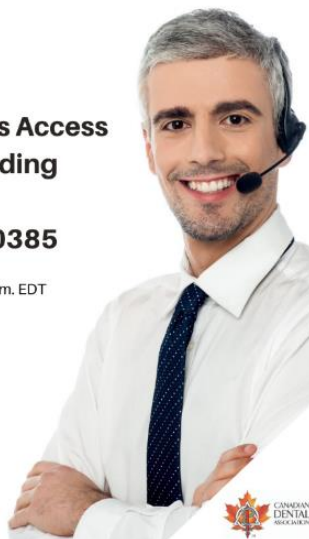
CDA's Help Desk continues to assist dentists and dental office employees on how to navigate and access federal government support programs.

For assistance on how to navigate these support programs for Canadians and businesses, please call **1-866-232-0385, M-F, 7:30 A.M. – 8:00 p.m. EDT.**

**Helping Dentists Access  
Federal Funding**

**1-866-232-0385**

M-F 7:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. EDT



## Mental Health and Wellness:

Mental health is more than the absence of a mental health condition or illness: it is a positive sense of well-being, or the capacity to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face. Check out this tip sheet for [10 things you can do right now to reduce anxiety, stress, worry related to COVID-19](#)

**Members' Assistance Program (MAP):** Individuals can access mental health and wellness support by calling CDSPI's Members' Assistance Program (MAP) at **1.844.578.4040** or visiting [www.workhealthlife.com](http://www.workhealthlife.com). MAP provides a variety of resources to help individuals deal with life's challenges. It is a confidential counselling, referral and information service for individuals who are dealing with mental health challenges or need advice on topics such as physical fitness, nutrition or parenting. MAP services and resources are offered through Shepell, Canada's largest provider of Employee and Family Assistance Programs.

**Getting help:** The Canadian Mental Health Association indicates that some people worry about asking for help because there can be stigma around mental health problems. They may believe that asking for help means admitting that something is wrong. Some people worry about how others might see them. Asking for help means that you want to make changes or take steps towards your new health goals. We should celebrate the courage it takes to speak up and make changes. Getting help is part of recovery. Learn more about [getting help](#).



Free counselling, referral and information service for dentists, dental office employees, and their families.

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*The CDA COVID-19 Response Team works diligently on a range of fronts to help minimize and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the dental profession. CDA is working to address scientific, clinical, economic and business-related matters*



*impacting dentistry, including efforts to increase awareness about the mental health and wellness of dentists, their families and dental office employees during these challenging times. CDA will communicate regular updates as new information becomes available.*



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