

MARCH 16, 2020

## COVID-19 and the Pacific Dental Conference

The BC Dental Association (BCDA) and the Pacific Dental Conference (PDC) are very sorry to hear that four conference attendees have been confirmed as COVID-19 cases. The BCDA consulted with agencies of the Provincial Health Services Authority on February 24, a week prior to the conference. All parties were aware when the PDC was scheduled. For example, Dr. David Patrick from the BC Centre for Disease Control spoke about COVID-19 at a course hosted by the College of Dental Surgeons of BC (CDSBC) at the conference, informed in part by BCDA patient management information. At no time was the PDC asked by any public health representatives to halt the conference.

As the pandemic evolved, BCDA collaborated with various public agencies to minimize exposure of patients and dental staff to COVID-19. BCDA has respected all the policy information received from public health leaders to date. As of today, we will join our members and close our offices so our staff may self-isolate until Sunday, March 22. The CDSBC has also issued a notice today *strongly recommending* that all elective and non-essential dental services should be suspended.

The sequence of public health communications over the last few weeks speaks volumes to the rapidly changing information and health policy surrounding containment of COVID-19.

Dr. James Singer, President  
BC Dental Association