



APRIL 15th 2020

COVID19 situation in Israel

To begin with we wish all our colleagues and their loved ones as well as all global inhabitants good health!

We find ourselves in "interesting" and very frightening times. As we follow the world news, we see that most countries follow similar steps to curtail the Covid19 pandemic.

Here in Israel the Ministry of Health officially shut down all clinics, public and private, except for emergency treatment, on March 12. Schools and other educational institutions, including day care for young children and seniors were also closed, some prior to the closure of dental clinic closure.

In the weeks leading to this closure those hygienists working in the public sector complained bitterly about lack of supplies for proper protection both of themselves and their patients. Many of us felt it irresponsible to continue working as we were. To that end the IDHA wrote a position paper to the Ministry of Health asking for clear instructions on how to carry on and strongly suggesting a shut down of dental hygiene services till the end of the crisis. The IDA followed suite shortly thereafter.

Most hygienists were sent on unpaid leave, thus making them eligible to collect unemployment. Those who are self-employed or have passed retirement age have other government options available to them. Since the government offices were inundated with requests the system often was unresponsive raising much anxiety and many questions.

As the IDHA kept in touch with representative of the Ministry of Health, our lawyer, and accountant daily, we were able to assist and decimate all the information available to help our fellow hygienists.

As of March 25th, we are on lockdown. We have many WhatsApp groups and an official Facebook page to share our worries, anxieties, and tips on how to cope and keep our children busy at home, and maintain our sanity. There is much wisdom, humor and camaraderie. As the Passover/Easter holiday is behind us, and we approach the Ramadan holiday, there is hope of decreasing numbers of infected people. We are cautiously beginning to look for solutions to make returning to work safe and productive.

We all pray for better days and look forward to a new and better tomorrow.