

## **Covid-19 Update # 13**

With the recent surge of COVID cases in Anchorage, we would like to remind everyone that we are still adhering to State Health Mandates and Municipality of Anchorage recommendations to screen patients, social distancing, and mask-wearing. For the protection of our staff, their families, and our compromised and elderly patients, we will need to postpone your care following any COVID symptoms, travel, exposure to large groups, and any exposure to symptomatic or COVID positive individuals. For our Critical Infrastructure, Pilots, Healthcare Workers, Emergencies, etc., we will be screening and may schedule you at the end of the day to minimize exposure to other patients. Please let us know if you have any concerns regarding your health or care, and we will be happy to discuss them with you. For our patients at higher risk, let us know, and we will strive to arrange a morning appointment when fewer people have been in the office.

We are adding extra days of hygiene appointments, but we are still catching up on those that missed appointments and are very busy. Please call soon if you want to be sure to be seen by the end of the year; we are already booking well into November.

We have made it through the worst part of the shutdown, but it looks like we will not return to full capacity for quite a while. As the payroll stimulus programs and loan deferments have run out and the additional loans we had to take out become due, we will have to look very hard at all aspects of the business. PPE is becoming more available, but the prices are continuing to climb. One area we have some control over is which insurances we are preferred providers, some reimburse better than others, and we will be trying to negotiate fair reimbursement for the additional costs of operating in a COVID-19 world. Unfortunately, we will probably no longer be preferred providers for a few. However, we will still accept all insurances, and we believe we provide high-quality care at a reasonable price. We will strive to provide information as soon as possible if we have to go that route, and feel free to confirm our preferred provider status for specific insurance with the front desk when confirming your appointment.

As a reminder, you are responsible for paying the final balance of work done regardless of what your insurance decides to pay. We try our best to estimate your amount due, but we cannot control what the insurance companies ultimately pay. Every insurance company and plan is different, and we can't guarantee your insurance will pay a certain amount. Some insurance companies seem to be making arbitrary rules to avoid covering certain procedures. We often resubmit claims to fight for payment on your behalf, but sometimes you or your company HR department may need to be involved in helping move the process along.

We apologize for any inconvenience; we may have to cancel on short notice if one of our staff or providers screens with a high temperature or symptoms. We also understand you may have to cancel if you are not feeling well, and we will not be charging a late cancel fee if you are having symptoms and call us ahead of time. Please call us as soon as possible if you cannot make your appointment as we have lots of patients waiting to get in. If you do not show for your appointment, you will be charged a no show/broken appointment fee.

Lastly, if you are curious what Dr. Belfiglio has been up to on the weekend, you can check out his rescue of a caribou on the Denali Highway earlier this month when he was out camping. Just search Alaska Caribou Rescue on YouTube.

Stay safe,  
Dr. Ben Belfiglio and Dr. Debbie Wrigley

**Some of the things we are doing to reduce the risk of Covid-19 Transmission:**

- Installing new special air filters in the hygiene rooms.
- Adding additional new disinfectants that kill viruses for up to a week between applications and fogging disinfectants that get in hard to reach places.
- Screening Patients and taking temperatures.
- Screening Staff and taking temperatures.
- Changing gowns between every patient when we do an aerosolizing procedure.
- Running HEPA air filters in every operatory and the front desk area.
- Limiting the number of patients waiting in the lobby.
- Frequent wipe downs of doors, the lobby, and bathrooms.
- Wearing Level 3, KN95, and N95 masks.

**Office Information:**

Please call before coming into the Boniface Dental Center, and wear a mask or face covering when entering the building to avoid exposure to our staff and others in the lobby. Hand sanitizer will be available in the lobby. You can use your elbow to press the handicap opener if you prefer to avoid touching the door handles, but we are frequently wiping them down. We will be screening everyone with screening questions both over the phone and in-person and taking temperatures before coming into the office. We are also screening ourselves to ensure we do not come to the office with COVID symptoms or a fever.