



### ***Thoughts from the Field***

Texas Dentists vs. COVID

The initial Governor-mandated “lockdown” in Texas began in March 2020 and restricted dentists to only being able to treat serious dental emergencies - no routine care. The Texas Dental Association and DenPAC, its political action committee, worked tirelessly to inform and educate the state’s officials that dentistry is an essential healthcare service and that Texas’ dentists were already well-trained in infection control protocols and in compliance with CDC and OSHA guidelines.

Those lobbying efforts resulted in Texas dentists being able to resume providing routine care 2 weeks before the general “lockdown” was lifted. In order to address patients’ routine dental issues, while eliminating or greatly reducing the aerosol emissions usually related to restorative procedures, SDF (silver diamine fluoride), G.I. (glass ionomer) materials, and ATR (atraumatic restorative treatments) were utilized to control caries, dental sensitivity, and provide interim restorations.

These conservative techniques, which can be provided without the need for local anesthesia, have been a win-win for both patients and dentists. Kudos to organized dentistry for its role in advocating for dentistry.

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