

GEORGIA BOARD OF DENTISTRY
Emergency Conference Call
2 Peachtree St., N.W., 6th Floor
Atlanta, GA 30303
April 21, 2020
6:30 p.m.

The following Board members were present:

Dr. Greg Goggans, President

Dr. Tracy Gay, Vice-President

Dr. Richard Bennett

Ms. Becky Bynum

Dr. Michael Knight

Dr. Glenn Maron

Dr. Ami Patel

Mr. Mark Scheinfeld

Dr. Brent Stiehl

Dr. Debra Wilson

Staff present:

Tanja Battle, Executive Director

Max Changus, Assistant Attorney General

Kimberly Emm, Attorney

Brandi Howell, Business Support Analyst I

Open Session

Dr. Goggans established that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

The Board held discussion regarding Governor Kemp's Executive Order issued on 04/20/2020 regarding moving certain businesses to minimum operations. Dr. Goggans asked if the Board would like to take any action. He stated that the Executive Order states that dental practices may begin treating patients as soon as practicable in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines. Dr. Goggans stated that concerns have been raised because the Board's website states that failure to conform to CDC guidelines is unprofessional conduct. Dr. Maron stated that the Executive Order allows dental practices to resume elective procedures and the Board can recommend that dentists be allowed to go back to elective procedures, but to continue to follow those procedures laid out in CDC's interim proposal until further notice. Dr. Maron stated that the Executive Order is not stating "emergency only". He stated it is stating dentists can do elective procedures. However, until further clarification is received from the CDC, the Board does recommend from an infection control standpoint, offices continue to follow CDC recommendations for procedures that would be causing aerosol and a N95 mask or a face shield would be required for the safety of staff and patients. Discussion ensued. Mr. Changus commented that the Executive Order states that dentists and other health professionals may go back to practice following CDC guidelines. He stated that the Executive Order points to guidelines from the CDC which have not been modified. Dr. Patel commented that she thinks the Board should wait until it receives updated guidelines from the CDC as the Board's job is to protect the public.

Discussion was held regarding how the Board should respond to inquiries. Dr. Bennett commented that depending on where the office is located, it is difficult to have one blanket statement for the whole state. He stated that dentists must use professional judgement. He stated that the Executive Order allows the practitioner to move forward if he/she should choose under the CDC guidelines. He continued by stating that the Board's number one goal is to protect the citizens of this state. Dr. Goggans asked if any member would be against removing the notice that is currently on the website and replace it with a statement saying that practitioners should follow the Executive Order, along with the CDC guidelines as the Board's primary goal is to protect patients and the people of this state. Dr. Maron, Dr. Wilson and Dr. Gay

agreed. Dr. Bennett commented that individuals should really use his/her own professional judgment. He stated the onus should be on the dentist as ultimately it is his/her license. Dr. Goggans asked if there were any other thoughts. Ms. Bynum asked if there is a directive that can be given stating that aerosols are to be minimized. Dr. Goggans responded by stating that is covered under the CDC guidelines. Dr. Maron made a motion to remove the Board's previous statement on its website regarding unprofessional conduct. Dr. Gay seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

The Board discussed specific language for a new statement to add to its website. Ms. Battle stated that the previous statement did not need to be rescinded but a statement memorializing the Board's position in response to the Executive Order, could be posted. She suggested that staff draft an updated statement based on the Board's discussion. Dr. Bennett, Dr. Maron and Dr. Gay stated they would be available to assist. Ms. Battle stated that once the statement is ready for approval, she will forward to all members.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1(3), the Board declares that special circumstances exist warranting the holding of this meeting on less than 24 hours' notice, those circumstances being the COVID-19 pandemic.

With no further business, the Board meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting of the Georgia Board of Dentistry will be held via conference call on Friday, May 1, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. at the Department of Community Health's office located at 2 Peachtree Street, N.W., 6th Floor, Atlanta, GA 30303.

Minutes recorded by Brandi Howell, Business Support Analyst I
Minutes edited by Tanja D. Battle, Executive Director