

# Treatment Management of Patients Placed under Mandatory Quarantine and Requiring Emergency Dental Treatment, in the Context of COVID-19 Prevention

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**Abstract:** ***Introduction:** On 11/03/2020, the World Health Organization declared a pandemic situation, in connection with the accelerated and rapid spread of cases of sick people from COVID-19-an infectious, severe disease caused by a virus called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), which is a new strain of Coronavirus. On 13/03/2020, at the proposal of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria, the National Assembly adopted a Decision to declare a state of emergency. This Decision of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria introduced a number of restrictions in order to protect the life and health of citizens, which led to changes in the normal way of life of people. These circumstances and the regulatory changes imposed a new approach in medical examinations, research, treatment and hospitalization of citizens in the Republic of Bulgaria, as an equal member of the EU. **Review:** As a result of the pandemic situation and in compliance with the orders of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Bulgaria and the instructions of the Regional Health Inspectorates a number of anti-epidemic measures were introduced for emergency dental care of citizens placed under mandatory quarantine. **Conclusion:** Properly prepared and comprehensive anti-epidemic measures, the active work of the Supervisory Authority and personal responsibility and responsibility to society of the physicians, dentist and the whole population are the only way to successfully cope with not only the COVID-19 pandemic situation and any pandemic diseases in future.*

**Keywords:** COVID-19, SARS-CoV-2, dental treatment, regulations, anti-epidemic measures

## 1. Introduction

On 11/03/2020, the World Health Organization declared a pandemic situation, in connection with the accelerated and rapid spread of cases of sick people from COVID-19-an infectious, severe disease caused by a virus called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), which is a new strain of Coronavirus. It has never been discovered in humans before the month of December 2019 and was the first coronavirus that caused a pandemic.

As COVID-19 appearance among the Bulgarian citizens and its rapid spread among the population of the Republic of Bulgaria, it was necessary urgent actions to be taken by the the government in order to limit the spread of the disease and prevent the citizens.

On 13/03/2020, at the proposal of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria, the National Assembly adopted a Decision to declare a state of emergency, which was based on Art. 84, item 12 of the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria and in connection with the growing COVID-19 pandemic [1-5].

This Decision of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria introduced a number of restrictions in order to protect the life and health of citizens, which led to changes in the normal way of life of people [6].

The Minister of Health (leading, competent authority for dealing with the emergency situation), as implementation of the Decision of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria, issued orders for implementation by all state and

municipal institutions, border areas in order to control the crisis situation and guarantee the national security of the state [7].

Pursuant to the provisions of Article 63 of the Law on Health /33/, the Council of Ministers declared with Decision No. 325 of May 14, 2020, an emergency epidemic situation in the country, with the aim of protecting the lives and health of Bulgarian citizens from an epidemic spread of an infectious disease such as COVID-19 [8, 9].

In this regard, a series of orders have been issued by the Minister of Health of the Republic of Bulgaria, with the aim of guaranteeing the right of access to medical services and activities and quality treatment for all citizens, including those who were diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus. According to the provisions of Art. 61, para. 1, para. 2, para. 3 para. 4 of the Law on Health, part of the anti-epidemic measures, contain mandatory isolation of those sick with COVID-19 and contact persons, as well as a ban on entry into the Republic of Bulgaria or entry subject to compliance with the requirements of the Minister of Health: COVID-19 Vaccination Certificate and a negative PCR test, and also in the absence of these documents, the person is placed under mandatory quarantine [10].

These circumstances and the regulatory changes imposed a new approach in medical examinations, research, treatment and hospitalization of citizens in the Republic of Bulgaria, as an equal member of the EU. At the same time the distant examination and digital treatment approaches are preferred by the physicians and dentist as they reduce the physical

contact with the patients and the number of visits [11,12,13,14,15,16].

At the national, regional and municipal levels, the National Operational Headquarters, the Regional Operational Headquarters and the Municipal Operational Action Plan for dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic have been established, respectively, where the situation is periodically discussed and actions are planned, in response to the fight against the epidemic wave [5,17].

Special teams have been appointed and equipped to the Emergency Medical Service, with the aim of hospitalizing patients with COVID-19, as well as mobile laboratories for various types of tests.

## 2. Aim

The aim of the current report is to introduce to the regulation in Republic of Bulgaria for treatment management of patients placed under mandatory quarantine, requiring the provision of emergency dental treatment, in the context of COVID 19 prevention.

## 3. Review

Given the provisions of Art. 2 item 1 of the Law on Health, the protection of citizens' health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being is a national priority and is guaranteed by the state through the application of principles such as equality in the use of health services [8] and the provisions of Art. 52, para. 1 of the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, regarding the right to health insurance, affordable medical care, free use of medical care, it is also necessary to ensure citizen's access to dental medical care, especially in cases of emergency, including persons sick with COVID-19 or contacts of sick people, placed under mandatory quarantine, with a prescription from regional health inspectorates.

The main aspect of emergency dental care from citizens placed under mandatory quarantine and compliance with the orders of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Bulgaria and the instructions of the Regional Health Inspectorates for the introduced anti-epidemic measures are the following [17]:

- 1) The signal of emergency dental treatment need can be received by phone 112 to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria or directly from the sick / contact / placed under quarantine to the dentist.
- 2) The dentist may contact the specialized and equipped ambulances at the Center for Emergency Medical Assistance for assistance in quarantined person transportation from his current address. Transportation can also be carried out by personal transport by the person in need of emergency dental treatment.
- 3) The Regional Health Inspectorate, which corresponds to the person's current address and his general practitioner must be immediately notified by the duty telephones and/or by e-mail about the need for emergency dental care and up-to-date information on the person's state of health must be requested.

- 4) The dentist, who has to examine and undertake a treatment plan for the quarantined patient, must create an organization for different flows: entry and exit, in order to prevent the infectious patient from coming into contact with other patients-healthy people.
- 5) The dentist and his team must have appropriate protective equipment: clothing/coveralls, double mask, double gloves, safety glasses, safety hat, and provided disinfectant.
- 6) The patient or the infected person, must wear protective equipment or be provided by the dentist's office: a double mask /which is removed during the examination/, gloves, socks.
- 7) After examination and treatment of the patient, the dentist and his team must strictly secure the departure of the patient from the office to the transport vehicle.
- 8) The dentist and his team immediately change/dispose of the protective equipment in special bags for this purpose; ventilation of the office and complete disinfection of the office.
- 9) A mandatory condition is the dentist to work with disposable instruments if it is possible, or if not their separate sterilization, at the end of the patient's treatment.
- 10) For each activity carried out with patients under quarantine, the dental doctor keeps documentation and informs the general practitioner of the patient and the Regional Health Inspectorates associated with patient's current address, in order to coordinate actions and limit the risks.
- 11) In an accessible place where the dental practice takes place, it is necessary to be posted up-to-date orders and instructions of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Bulgaria, in order to familiarize the citizens with their right of access to dental care.

## 4. Discussion

Compliance with the anti-epidemic measures introduced by the Minister of Health of the Republic of Bulgaria to fight against COVID-19, by state, municipal institutions, medical and health facilities, citizens and non-governmental organizations is strictly mandatory, requiring a high degree of personal responsibility and responsibility to society. Their strict observance is a guarantor of overcoming the pandemic and guaranteeing the life and health of citizens, as well as their right to access all social, health, cultural and other services and participation in public life.

In the event of non-compliance with the above-mentioned measures by citizens and legal entities, medical and health facilities and other institutions, administrative and punitive measures are taken, according to the Law on Administrative Violations and Penalties and the Criminal Code [18,19].

## 5. Conclusion

Properly prepared and comprehensive anti-epidemic measures, the active work of the Supervisory Authority and personal responsibility and responsibility to society of the physicians, dentist and the whole population are the only way to successfully cope with not only the COVID-19 pandemic situation and any pandemic diseases in future.

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