

Friday, 20 March 2020

Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Sent by email

Dear Mr Jenrick,

Expanded Retail Discount 2020/2021: Coronavirus Response

We were very concerned to read the [guidance](#) produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in relation to the Business Rates Discount.

We note from paragraph 16 that medical services, including dentists, have been excluded.

Dentistry is all but impossible during this time. Inevitably the number of patients attending for dental care has declined considerably as the public is told to limit social contact and restrict use of public transport.

Further, most dental work involves aerosol generating procedures. For example, a dental drill, with the use of water, will result in a small mist of fine spray, which will include droplets of the patient's saliva. These droplets hang in the air and can be breathed by the dental team and other patients; leading to a possible transmission of COVID-19. For these reasons, the UK governments have all advised the dental industry against any aerosol based procedures wherever possible.

This severely limits the amount of dental work that is possible and will decimate the income of dental practices.

There is some rates relief for NHS dental practices and there may be some protection of income from government sources. But private dentistry makes up more than half of the sector (in terms of money spent) with approximately 5,500 practices, and this part of the industry will suffer enormously. This will likely lead to loss of skilled and qualified jobs, such as dental nurses, hygienists and therapists, as well as to hardship for dentists. We therefore ask the department urgently to reconsider the exclusion of dental practices from this business rates retail discount.

Yours sincerely



Dave Cottam
Chair, General Dental Practice Committee
British Dental Association

cc: Jo Churchill MP, DHSC, Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP, HMT