

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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January 13, 2021 (ATLANTA) – The dental industry believes it is turning a corner and now has ample supplies of some PPE (Professional Protective Equipment) including surgical masks, respirators, and disposable gowns. Organization for Safety, Asepsis, and Prevention's (OSAP) distributor members have shared with both OSAP and the Dental Trade Alliance (DTA) that allocation limits, for these items, have been removed.

"As dental professionals continue to navigate the pandemic, it is a relief to know that practitioners and staff are no longer likely to be faced with limiting patient care because of a shortage of masks and gowns," shared Michelle Lee, OSAP Executive Director. She goes on to state, "This latest development means PPE optimization is no longer necessary, including the re-use of single-use surgical masks, respirators, and disposable gowns."

During the height of the pandemic, the industry did experience shortages of these critical PPE items in addition to gloves and surface disinfectant spray and wipes. While the shortage of surgical masks, N95 respirators, and gowns has abated, there remains a limited supply of disinfectant spray and wipes, primarily due to the combination of high demand and limited supply chain resources (spray bottles, nozzles, and non-woven material) and a continuing global shortage of Nitrile, which has greatly impacted the availability of Nitrile gloves and has stressed the supply chain.

Fred Freedman, Vice President of DTA stated, "the DTA remains in constant contact with its manufacturer and distribution members and thus we have established a PPE/Medical Device Supply Chain Working Group. Unfortunately, the demand for gloves and other products has at times exceeded the capacity of their manufacturing capabilities and the supply of raw materials."

OSAP and DTA recognize the importance of these critical PPE products to the continued safety of the practice, the staff, and the patients and continue to monitor on a regular basis, communicating with each other and the industry to ensure that factual information is communicated and that every dental visit ensures the safety of patients and practitioners.

About OSAP

The Organization for Safety, Asepsis and Prevention (OSAP) is the only dental membership association solely focused on infection prevention and patient safety education. Our members include: individual clinicians, group practices, educators, researchers, consultants, trainers, compliance directors, policymakers, and industry representatives who advocate for safe and infection-free delivery of oral healthcare. OSAP focuses on strategies to improve compliance with safe practices and on building a strong network of recognized infection control experts. OSAP offers an extensive online collection of resources, publications, FAQs, checklists, and toolkits that help dental professionals deliver the Safest Dental Visit™ for their patients. Plus, online and live courses help advance the level of knowledge and skill for every member of the dental team. For additional information, visit osap.org.

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