



ADVISORY

The South African Dental Association Newsletter
Informing Oral Healthcare Professionals

Bulletin



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Dear SADAríte

Welcome to our Advisory Bulletin containing all the information which is important in one communication.

CLINICAL SUPPORT SERVICES

EMERGENCY FLOW CHART

SADA is pleased to inform members that the newly updated Dental Emergency Flow Chart is available in digital format on the SADA website for access by members at no cost. Developed with the assistance of the Emergency Medicine departments at UP and Wits, the chart provides a flow diagram on how dentists may handle medical emergencies in the dental setting in a simplified and easy-to-understand manner.

Members may either print the chart to their size requirements or display it digitally wherever they wish to. The flow chart is exclusively available to members.

Once logged in as a SADA Member, please proceed to the **CLINICAL & LEGAL** Main Menu item, under the **Clinical Resources** widget, click on the button **Guidelines and Documents**, then **Emergency Dental Flow Chart**

PATIENT PAMPHLETS AND DOWNLOADABLE ACTIVITIES

SADA has made available a series of patient information leaflets on a variety of dental conditions available on its website in a digital format. These pamphlets may be printed and displayed as an information source in practices for patients to refer to for a basic understanding of the dental diagnosis or what certain procedures will entail. The pamphlets may be accessed [here](#) and [here](#).

Oral Health activities including Tooth Fairy or Tooth Mouse certificates are available for download [here](#).

D-Calc™ USER MANUAL

The most recent version of the D-Calc™ Practice Profitability Simulator has been made available for purchase by members and non-members alike on the SADA website. Once the tool is purchased, a licence key will be provided to the member to access the tool and members may be able to download the newly developed D-Calc™ User Manual in PDF, Flipbook, or video format. The manual will act as a guideline document for members to refer to on how to operate the tool and to explain what the various terms used therein mean. Members may purchase the D-Calc™ on the SADA home page by clicking on “read more” until the D-Calc™ tab and following the on-screen prompts thereafter.

USING LASER TECHNOLOGY AS AN ADJUNCT TO PROCEDURES

Members are reminded that irrespective of whether they make use of laser technology as an adjunct to their procedures such as endodontic treatment, gingivectomies, etc., or not, patients or schemes should not be billed for the use of the laser with the use of additional codes such as 9099. The use of the laser is merely a supplementary aid to ensure the elimination of intracanal bacteria in the case of endodontic treatment or less bleeding and quicker healing in the case of a gingivectomy, but one must bear in mind that the result achieved is the same, irrespective of whether the laser has been utilized or not. If practitioners bill private fees, they are then entitled to incorporate an added appropriate cost related to the technology used in their primary procedure codes. The same principle applies to whether members make use of digital or analogue impressions – members may not bill an additional code if a digital scan is taken.

DISCOVERY UPDATES

Certain members have raised their concerns regarding the rejection of claims by Discovery for infection control for an oral hygienist employee subsequent to the same claim being processed for the main treating practitioner on the same day. SADA has raised the matter with Discovery, who have recognized the problem and are working on a solution. They have requested that in the interim, members submit a separate claim for the oral hygienist employee to secure payment.

Furthermore, SADA has queried Discovery as to the removal of Vitality points received for dental check-ups for children (2-13 years old) and teens (14-17 years old). We have been informed that these Discovery members will now be rewarded with Vitality miles as opposed to points, which may be redeemed in the Vitality Mall. Teens will have access to the same Vitality mall as adults.

MEDIPOS MEDICAL SCHEME

Medipos medical scheme has informed providers that due to the South African Post office paying the contributions due to Medipos in terms of the court order, suspended benefits of members with outstanding contributions have been lifted and backdated to 1 October 2022. All claims with a service date from 1 October 2022 will be processed and paid as per the rules of the schemes and providers are therefore encouraged to submit claims within 4 months from the date of service.

SADA YOUTUBE CHANNEL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Members are reminded about the wide array of useful information that may be gathered on the SADA YouTube channel ranging from videos on oral health tips, World Oral Health Day media interviews, recordings of selected webinars, and much more. Members are encouraged to visit the channel at <https://www.youtube.com/c/SouthAfricanDentalAssociation> and subscribe for regular updates.

SADA may also be accessed on various other social media platforms under the following handles:

Facebook Page (Public): <https://www.facebook.com/sadentalassoc/>

Facebook Page (Professional): <https://www.facebook.com/groups/sadentalassociation/>

Facebook – (YDC): <https://www.facebook.com/youngdentistscouncil/>

Instagram (Public): <https://www.instagram.com/southafricandentalassociation/>

Twitter (Public): <https://twitter.com/SADentalAssoc>

YouTube (Public): <http://www.youtube.com/c/SouthAfricanDentalAssociation>

LinkedIn (Public): <https://www.linkedin.com/company/17952246>

TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@sadentalassociation>

LEGAL & CORPORATE SERVICES

LOAD-SHEDDING AND DENTAL PRACTICES

We are entering into a phase when load shedding will almost certainly be going to be around for several years. Dental practitioners are already feeling the effects of time disruptions and are concerned about how to deal with their employees during these difficult times.

A good place to start is with current labour law which is complex and the penalties for getting it wrong is serious.

Unlike most other businesses which has undergone significant changes since COVID-19 by adopting remote or hybrid working arrangements. In a dental practice, due to the nature of the work performed, it is not always possible for employees to work remotely as they are required to be present to attend to patients seeking service.

Must you pay for time lost during power cuts?

Some practitioners may be under the impression that if employees are not working during load shedding, the 'no work, no pay' principle will apply. This is not correct.

In terms of labour legislation, the concept of paying for agreed output or performance does not apply. The need to pay and be available to work does not arise from actual work being performed but rather from simply tendering service.

If practitioners expect their employees to be at work at specific times and days and employees are present, dentists must pay them for that time irrespective of whether they can perform their duties. The fact that work cannot take place for reasons outside the control of the business, does not affect the employer-employee contract. If your employee is available and ready to work, then that employee is to be paid.

In these circumstances, and to the extent that there is scheduled load shedding, employers can consider adjusting working hours or introducing procedures that apply to interruptions of production to minimize the effects of load shedding and loss of working time.

What are the available options?

If employers require employees to take their paid meal interval or lunch during load shedding. However, since load shedding is becoming longer the Basic Conditions of Employment Act ("BCEA") dealing with meal intervals provides that an employer must pay employees for any lunch break above 75 minutes unless the employee lives on the premises. With a longer duration of load shedding, this put the employers at another dead end.

It is also possible for employers to use the load-shedding periods to conduct working activities that may not require electricity, such as employee training or staff meetings, putting new processes in place, removing old and redundant files, etc. However, there is only so much training and staff meeting time, and file management a dental practice needs to have.

Some practitioners may be asking if due to load shedding, employees may be required to work after their normal hours of work to make up the lost time. The BCEA, provides that any work performed after normal hours to catch up on production will be regarded as overtime and will be subject to additional, overtime pay.

However, employers and employees can agree to changes in working hours or shift structures to reduce the financial losses caused by load shedding. This will also depend on whether patients are willing to come in during these times.

The BCEA does not provide for compulsory overtime but one can argue that operational requirements due to load shedding may warrant an extension of working hours. The practitioner may also regulate that some staff comes to work late and finish later in the day. This must be subject to discussion and employees must agree to this.

It is also possible for the employer and employee to agree in an employment contract that remuneration will be suspended during load shedding. Employees have to agree to these terms, if they do not, then employers cannot unilaterally change them.

It is also not possible for practitioners to introduce 'short time' (reduced working hours) as most load shedding is unplanned with Eskom only announcing the implementation of different levels at very short notice to allow for planning. This can prove to be disruptive to a dental practice if the planned load shedding does not happen on a particular day, one could be left with minimum staff or even key staff.

It may be possible for the employer and employee to agree in the employment contract that payment or remuneration will be suspended during load shedding. The difficulty with this is that the employees will have to agree to such terms (or changes to their contracts of employment). If they do not, these changes cannot be implemented unilaterally.

Speak to your employees

The best way to get around the present load-shedding challenges is to negotiate an agreement with employees to adjust working hours and conditions, short time, meal intervals, etc., to minimize the impact of load-shedding for everyone's benefit. Remember that any alteration to their working conditions requires their consent to make these changes legally acceptable. It is not in their interests to refuse a reasonable proposal as you can still go down the retrenchment route (see below).

What happens if you cannot agree?

If employees refuse changes to working hours, shift structures or short time or other measures to relieve the burden of load shedding on the practice, the employer may be forced to implement retrenchment procedures in terms of the Labour Relations Act. The employer would have to follow certain steps due to show due to operational requirements of the practice as a result of load shedding, the employer needs to retrench a given number of employees.

The difficulty with this approach is it is time-consuming, the requirements for successful retrenchment are complicated and strictly enforced, and if it goes to the Labour Court, it could be costly and take further time.

Misconduct

Loadshedding may also bring other challenges of misconduct such as late coming. Employers should consider these exceptional circumstances exist and manage them through counselling on how load shedding affects their travelling, traffic, and daily life. The employees should also consider the additional travel time or less time in normal working hours to complete tasks.

Loadshedding is becoming a regular feature in our lives and employers must be cautious about contravening labour legislation where they are under pressure to keep their practices open. Some flexibility may be required, using the load-shedding time for staff training and meetings.

SADA GAZETTE BULLETIN - September 2022

This bulletin overviews new relevant legislation published in the government gazette affecting the dental profession up to the end of September 2022.

[To access Bulletins click here](#)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PLEASE DIARIZE NOW TO ATTEND - TAKING PLACE IN CAPE TOWN



DENTAL & ORAL HEALTH CONGRESS AND EXHIBITION

25-27 AUGUST 2023 | CTICC, Cape Town

Kind Regards

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SADA MEMBER QUICK LINKS

- Join SADA
- Join DP
- Member's section
- Events

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Please whitelist any email arriving from an @sada.co.za address within your system and allow PDF attachments to your emails from SADA to prevent the email communication from being blocked or landing in your Junkmail folder.
All communications with SADA should be directed to info@sada.co.za and include your HPCSA Registration number
E&OE

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