

From the Office of the Dean

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a busy week working with University leadership and TUSDM leadership to try to manage the ongoing situation and to start to work on resumption of services. Many of the University level discussions have been centered on summer and fall programming and playing out best/worst case scenarios. Based on these scenarios the university is starting to focus on financial continuity. Each school/unit at the university will be asked to look at short term and long-term budget impacts. I will share these with our community as they are developed. I have included some key reminders/updates and a video message to our community this week.

4.8.20 Key Messages:**CLINICAL OPERATIONS**

Based on national and local guidelines I have decided to extend the date of our clinical closure to **May 8, 2020**.

We will continue to keep the clinics open for emergency care provided by a clinical continuity team.

Please refer to the emergency call guidelines that have been circulated to all students/residents and faculty.

Plan of action (as in the past).

- 1. Patient Cancellations-make sure that all your patients have been informed of our clinic schedules and that you have cancelled all patients up to May 8, 2020.**

Notification to patients.**Students/residents:**

1. Students and residents as primary care providers should call all patients that are scheduled during the time period (up to May 8, 2020) and use the attached script.
2. If patients are asking you any questions that you cannot answer during please consult with your PC/Program Directors.

Your patients might also receive e-mails/texts/phone calls about the closure from TUSDM. Updates will be posted to our main web-site page. <https://dental.tufts.edu>

2. Continuity of care-emergencies.

As of 4/8/20 200 patients have been seen in the emergency clinic. A record audit of the patients seen indicate that over 85% needed to be seen. Dr. McGarry, faculty, residents and staff have done an outstanding job running the emergency clinic. The phone system has received over 80 calls so far and has worked well due to the call center and faculty cooperation. This arrangement has reduced the burden on the hospital.

EXTERNAL CLINICAL ACTIVITIES

External rotations and externships etc will be cancelled up to May 8 2020. Our Academic Affairs Team/Dean Nehring/Dr. Yered will inform site directors of this change. Please contact them for any issues that arise. This

group is now starting to look at the impact of COVID-19 on these clinical activities during the remainder of May, and for April-September.

Clinic Re-opening.

Our leadership team will monitor the national and local environment/guidelines during this period and determine the type of opening/date of opening. We will communicate this to our community as soon as we can. We are still hoping to resume some clinical activities on May 11th, 2020.

ACADEMIC PLANS

1. Didactic programming (DMD/AG). In person classes have stopped and online/distance education will continue. Where possible activities to engage students/residents in clinical cases/care will start to be implemented
2. Preclinical Programming. Preclinical exercises have stopped. If guidelines regarding “stay at home”/numbers of people in gatherings are relaxed, we may be able to restart preclinical exercises PRIOR to May 8, 2020. Classes will continue to be modified as possible (consolidation, focus on key points etc). Time can be made up for lost exercises once we start up again by using “unscheduled” times-evenings, weekends, some “vacation” time over the summer/last week before winter break etc. Faculty and staff who have down time from these shutdowns right now will rally to help to make up lost time.
3. Clinical Programming. As clinical operations are closed, the Clinical Progress Committee and the Advanced Graduate Education Committee and PG program directors are developing ways to continue some aspects of clinical learning through case discussion, reviews etc. These will be communicated with the student groups in the coming weeks.

Deans Kasberg, Ramesh and Thompson continue to hear from Class Leadership groups to obtain student feedback and modifications will continue to be made based on this feedback.

Program Directors will meet with residents to obtain their feedback.

RESEARCH OPERATIONS

The University continues to release new guidelines for researchers. These will continue to be distributed by Dean Kugel and his team. Any plans for resumption of activities will also be shared when appropriate.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Dr. Pastan continues to guide yoga and drop in meditation via Zoom on Tuesdays and Thursdays. She is available for student meetings through Zoom; email her to set up an appointment christina.pastan@tufts.edu. You can also follow her @drpastanspeaceofmind on Instagram for connection and offerings of grounding and self-care.

The University has a resource pass that can help with questions you might have around “Public Health & Medical Issues FAQ” <https://coronavirus.tufts.edu/health-and-medical/>

If anyone has a concern about a COVID-19 Positive test/exposure please email-covid19@tufts.edu, or e-mail robert.kasberg@tufts.edu , Morton.Rosenberg@tufts.edu understanding

TRAVEL GUIDELINES

Please stay up to date with the University travel guidelines <https://announcements.tufts.edu/announcement/travel-guidance-related-covid-19-coronavirus> including the Local and National restrictions on travel.

We encourage you (faculty, staff, residents and students) not to travel at this time due to the changing circumstances. Please also note the “two-week” self-quarantine notification for anyone returning to MA. This is especially critical as it pertains to any resumption of programming.

Faculty/Staff

I know many faculty and staff are contributing to essential services at the school. As I see some of you at TUSDM I am grateful for the service you continue to provide. Faculty and staff also continue to contribute to our educational, clinical, research and operational in remote sites. I thank you all for your perseverance.

I recognize that many in clinical faculty leadership roles, and practice managers and billing staff members are working to recognize clinic revenue that has otherwise remained in credit accounts. It is important to recognize all available revenue at this time, particularly as the lack of ongoing patient care will impact the school's operating budget. I appreciate these many extra efforts being made by faculty, staff and residents.

In the coming months as we resume services many of us will be called upon to support our educational, clinical and research missions in ways that we cannot yet realize. Some of these efforts will require staggered schedules that might include work on weekends, new training and practice protocols and new screening process at our entrances. We will work with our partners in Human Resources as the plans are realized.

RESUMPTION OF SERVICES

The Following teams are meeting at TUSDM to start reviewing plans for resumption of services (FIGURE 1). (research will be under the guidance of the University). Many faculty, students, residents and staff will be asked to participate.

- Academic Continuity
 - DMD
 - AG
- Clinical continuity I-DMD
- Clinical continuity II-AG
- Operational Continuity
 - Facilities and Building
 - Supplies
 - Billing
- Health and Safety
 - Faculty, staff (clinical versus administrative), students, residents, patients

COVID-19 Preparedness Coordinating Groups/Resumption of services

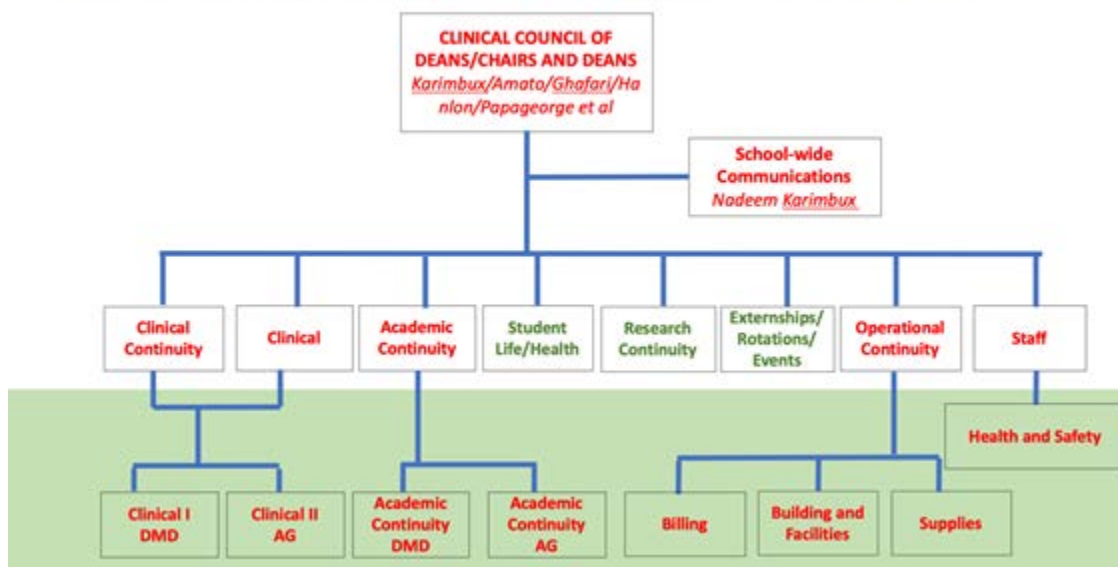


Figure 1. Preparedness and Resumption Teams

EXTERNAL ACTIONS/RESOURCES

1. The ADA has released guidelines for practitioners and we are developing our clinical protocols based on these guidelines.

Summary of ADA COVID-19 Interim Guidance

<https://www.ada.org/en/member-center/coronavirus-resource-toolkit-for-ada-members>

2. The Commission on Dental Accreditation released guidelines for dental/advanced graduate programs to manage the interruption caused to dental programs by the COVID-19 pandemic. (Post-CODA Meeting Guidance on Interruption of Education Related to COVID-19 for the Class of 2020 (April 3, 2020)).

Our team in Academic Affairs is working with Predoctoral Directors and Advanced Graduate Directors to address requirements and competencies that have been affected due to the preclinical/clinical closures.

3. Non-patient based exams are not being adopted by licensing bodies and the Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations has announced a Dental Licensure Objective Structured Examination (DLOSCE) that will be available for Dental Boards in 2020.

https://www.ada.org/~media/JCNDE/pdfs/dlosce_officialrelease_dr_leone_letter.pdf?la=en

Deans Video Message “We are Jumbo Strong, We are Boston Strong”.



I remain inspired by all of your contributions (faculty, staff, students and residents) during this unprecedented time.

Dean Karimbux

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