

November 1, 2021

The Editor
The Comox Valley Record
407D 5th Street
Courtenay, BC
V9N 1J7

Dear Editor,

The British Columbia Dental Association (BCDA) would like to respond to the letter to the editor dated October 27, 2021 questioning the safety of dental offices. Please let us assure your readers that we understand people have fears and concerns around COVID-19.

BC's dentists and their teams are experts at infection control and have stringent COVID-19 protocols and procedures in place to keep everyone safe.

Dental clinics operate like mini-hospitals and follow strict infection prevention and control guidelines set by the College of Dental Surgeons of BC. This would include pre-screening and PPE as a standard practice for managing all patients – **all the time** to keep both **the patient and the practitioner** safe.

Vaccinations are an important part of preventing COVID-19, but they do not protect 100% against transmission.

We acknowledge that dental offices are unable to disclose the vaccination status of their staff due to privacy laws, however, the infection and exposure prevention protocols in place significantly reduce the risk of transmission from practitioner to patient. To date, BCDA knows of no transmissions of COVID-19 between dental professionals and patients in BC or across Canada, a testament to the procedures and policies our members and their staff have in place.

As health care providers, the first priority of dental professionals has always been patient safety. We hope these measures address the concerns raised and provide patients with confidence in BC's dental practices.

Regards,

The British Columbia Dental Association