To: Dr. Erika Paterson

From: Christina Hruby

Date: June 19, 2020

Subject: Proposal for reducing gathering in common areas at Clinique Parodontologie CTH

**Introduction**

Since March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in social distancing measures and restrictions on public gatherings. The provincial government of Quebec instructed dental offices to close on March 16, 2020 as part of a general closure of all non-essential businesses. As of June 1, 2020, dental clinics have been permitted to re-open under the condition that protective measures, established by the Ordre of Dentists’ of Quebec, are strictly followed.

In order to continue practicing and avoid fines of $6000 or more, dental offices must provide appropriate personal protective equipment for staff, install plexiglass barriers at reception desks, acquire air exchangers for all operatories, screen and provide masks for all visitors, and reduce gathering in order to maintain a distance of two metres between all individuals.

**Statement of Problem**

Clinique Parodontologie CTH, a large dental practice with twelve operatories, serves an average of one hundred and fifty patients per day. Patients, who are sedated for surgeries, are accompanied by chaperones who wait while procedures are performed. As a result, a high volume of visitors is overwhelming the waiting room and corridors of the clinic. With a staff of over thirty employees, the lunchroom is also unable to provide acceptable personal distancing as ordered by the provincial government and dental regulatory associations. Staff members are forced to leave the building for lunch, which will be impractical on rainy days and during the winter months. Inadvertent gathering is becoming a problem.

**Proposed Solution**

Potential solutions to the gathering issues at Clinique Parodontologie CTH include:

* adjusting the schedule to alleviate waiting times
* staggering starting times to offset simultaneous arrivals and departures
* altered lunch hours to reduce midday crowding
* creating a one-way direction in hall ways to avoid the crossing of paths
* obtaining administrative approval for the use of the rear door as a second entrance and the lobby as a second waiting room.

It is my intention to provide a solution that will sustain the patient turnover rate without noticeably affecting profitability.

**Scope**

To identify the sources of problematic gathering and the feasibility of the proposed solutions I plan to pursue seven areas of inquiry:

1. During what times of the day is gathering an issue in the waiting room?
2. Approximately how many patients arrive with a chaperone per day?
3. How long are chaperones waiting for patients?
4. Will the altering of office hours be amenable to all employees?
5. Will the use of the rear door or the lobby violate building regulations?
6. What are the costs for signage in corridors indicating direction of foot-traffic?
7. What other issues are contributing to waiting times for patients?

**Methods**

My primary source of data will be surveys, that will be completed by receptionists, to identify specific times when the waiting room capacity is surpassed, the number of chaperones visiting the clinic, as well as average wait times. I also plan on conducting interviews that with various staff members at Clinique Parodontologie CTH, specifically: receptionists, dental assistants, and dental hygienists. The goal of the interviews is to obtain more detailed information about gathering issues and insight into other possible solutions.

**My Qualifications**

More than twenty years of work experience in the dental field in the positions of receptionist, assistant, and hygienist has provided me with extensive understanding of scheduling issues. Since I am currently an employee at Clinique Parodontologie CTH, I have a unique opportunity to implement and evaluate proposed solutions on an ongoing basis. I also maintain excellent working relationships with my colleagues and expect candid information and feedback from data collection methods.

**Conclusion**

Clearly, immediate action is required to reduce unauthorized gathering in common areas of Clinique Parodontologie CTH. If social distancing regulations are not upheld, fines or forced closure may occur. By addressing the areas of inquiry listed earlier, I can identify the contributing factors and determine the feasibility of my proposed solutions. With your approval I will begin research at once.