



**ADEE Executive Committee statement concerning Covid-19 Pandemic
Issued Thursday 19th March 2020.**

The ADEE Executive, like all of our member institutions and their faculty, have been closely monitoring and responding to the Covid-19 outbreak at a local, national and indeed European level. We wanted to take a moment to reach out to our members.

From the outset the main message we want to share is that at times of rapid change and response, the need for a collaborative and consensus-making stakeholder approach has never been more relevant. As members of the healthcare team we join the collective effort to contain the spread of the virus worldwide with this collaborative ethos.

As educators of healthcare professionals our members' services and activities are dramatically impacted at both an academic and clinical level. In managing our response to the current situation it is therefore paramount that institutions:

- ensure the safety of students, patients and staff at all times and that risk assessments prioritise this perspective, due to the high risk of nosocomial infection in the dental setting;
- engage with and follow local government and public health institution's instructions, guidelines and regulations;
- be prepared to provide psychological support to our students, for they are more likely to be affected by disease-associated fear and pressure;
- ensure that decisions are based on the best available scientifically validated information and on current clinical practice and infection control protocols;
- engage with local regulators or their equivalent so as to ensure protocols are developed that ensure as far as possible that students are not disadvantaged with regard to graduation and entry to professional practice. (It is acknowledged that we are in uncharted territory and as such flexibility, understanding and clear communication between students, academia, the profession and the regulators will be a key to success at a national and European level);
- make all their scientific capital and clinical resources available to national and global efforts to overcome the current and unfolding challenges placed by this epidemiological ordeal.

From the conversations we are having with our members we know that many if not all are already engaged in the above. For the most part, it appears all but a few universities have at this stage closed their doors to face to face teaching and moved to a virtual classroom environment. Of course moving online brings with it new challenges and stresses for staff and students and we ask you to be mindful of student and staff well-being in developing and evolving your support mechanisms.



Also from the conversations we are having with members, the vast majority of clinical activity has now been reduced to emergencies only. This of course has an impact on students as they worry about achieving clinical competence. Many institutions are now beginning to engage in discussion on how to manage exams, and on the assessment of clinical competence. This is a stressful time for staff and students alike and we encourage clear and concise communication throughout. We must ensure that however this situation evolves, no individual student should be penalised or disadvantaged. We encourage students to be patient with their academic institutions as they are managing many difficult and competing challenges depending on which stage of the pandemic their country is in.

Please also be mindful of your Erasmus and foreign national students. This is a time of concern for us all and even more so for those who are far from their loved ones. Again clear, consistent and concise communication and support is an imperative to ensure they are supported and not excluded.

With all the above in mind we invite our members to share experiences and strategies with us so that our wider community can learn with you as we respond to this global crisis. Over the coming days a dedicated COVID-19 resources page will be added to our website. We are also creating a discussion forum dedicated to COVID 19 and invite you to submit ideas, solutions, best practice resources and questions on specific topics with the community.

We will also be issuing a brief survey to Federation of European Heads and Dental Dean's (FEHDD) in order to assess their current situations, concerns and needs at an institutional level.

Over the coming weeks we will also email summary briefings about educational practices used with regard to academic tools, resources, approaches, and also clinical and other guidelines.

For now, we wish you, your faculty, students, patients and wider communities health and safety.