Dear EDSA partners and friends,

As you will be aware, the situation regarding COVID-19 has become more serious, with many countries introducing unprecedented measures to help suppress the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes the disease.

Professionalism does not end when we leave the clinic, and as such we call on dental students to lead by example, by adhering to the advice from their governments and the following advice the European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC 2020):

- Ensure the regular washing of hands with soap and water
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow or a tissue, throw it into a closed bin and wash your hands
- Ensure social distancing
- If you are symptomatic, self-isolate and avoid all close contact with others

Our primary concerns are for the safety of students, teachers, professionals and patients. Given the generation of potentially contaminated aerosols and the fact that regular personal protective equipment is insufficient in preventing infection (Meng et. al. 2020), we call on dental schools to suspend all clinical teaching if they have not done so already, and to move non-clinical teaching online to prevent large gatherings of students and ensure students receive as much of their education as possible.

These are unprecedented times, and we appreciate that some disruption to students cannot be avoided, but dental schools should ensure that no student is unfairly disadvantaged and that any changes to assessments and examinations are clearly communicated with adequate notice to students.

COVID-19 will have placed an additional burden on the mental health of dental students at an already stressful time. We call on universities to ensure adequate student support for students who may be struggling at this difficult time.

Finally, we advise that students keep up to date with the latest information from their governments, the World Health Organisation (WHO), European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC) and the CDC (US Centre for Disease Control). These are reliable sources for the latest information regarding the outbreak, which is important given the prevalence of misinformation online. If sharing information about COVID-19, please make sure that it comes from a trustworthy source.

President
Tin Crnić
president@edsaweb.org

General Secretary
Daniela Timuş
secretary@edsaweb.org

VP External Relations
Tanguy Pinedo-Tora
vpeexternal@edsaweb.org

Policy Officer
James Coughlan
policy_officer@edsaweb.org

Prevention Officer
Maria Mădălina Casapu
prevention_officer@edsaweb.org