

Hero Practice Services

A Framework for Responsible Operations



*A Framework for Responsible
Operations*

Nothing herein constitutes legal advice or other
formal direction or guidance of any kind.

About Hero Practice Services

- Hero Practice Services is a healthcare support organization. With 11 dental offices in Colorado and 35 dental offices nationwide; and 15 vision offices in Colorado and 25 vision offices nationwide, we see hundreds of thousands of children in Colorado each year—and more than 800,000 children nationwide yearly.
- We believe our patients are “The Boss”—we exist to serve them.
- We live in what we call a “Virtuous Cycle”—governing our business from seeing a child to delivering high-quality, compassionate care safely to billing and payment—all the way to our goal of opening more offices to meet the needs of more children.

In this challenging time, we believe it is our duty to support the entire healthcare system—keeping our patients out of the ER and helping other providers do the same.



Our Mission and Values



Our Mission:

To be the leading provider of high-quality and compassionate dental, vision, and orthodontic services to children in underserved communities.

Our Core Values—IMPACT:

- INTEGRITY
- MISSION DRIVEN
- PATIENT FIRST
- ACCOUNTABILITY
- COMPASSION
- TEAMWORK

A Note from Our CEO

At Hero, we aren't just "visitors" in the communities we serve. We hire from our practice communities, engage with other service providers, government officials, committees, businesses and more. We do this because we *care* about the communities we serve. In times where we have gone into brand-new locations, we have found great need for compassionate and high-quality dental, vision and orthodontic services for children on Medicaid. We believe—and have believed since our founding in 2004, that Hero is here to provide care to underserved children—without ever letting them feel "underserved" in our office.

During this difficult time, our duty to our communities is even greater—our duty today is to support the overall healthcare system, do our part in flattening the curve, keep children and their caregivers out of the emergency department, and support the more than 1,000 teammates we employ in communities in 7 states across the U.S.

In addition to flattening the curve, we believe it is our responsibility to be ahead of the curve, setting the tone and developing plans based on available guidance. Since the beginning of this crisis, we have worked to build bridges across organizations and stakeholders, sourced PPE, and developed operational guidance for today—and through the duration of COVID-19.

It is also important to us that we support other healthcare providers in "flattening the learning curve" throughout this crisis. Sharing our lessons learned, sourced information, and planned approach is a way we can support the many healthcare professionals seeking to begin the reopening process in our "new normal" of care delivery.

By working together, we can make it through this crisis—creating safer healthcare environments for our patients and their caregivers—safely reopening to serve our communities.

Josh



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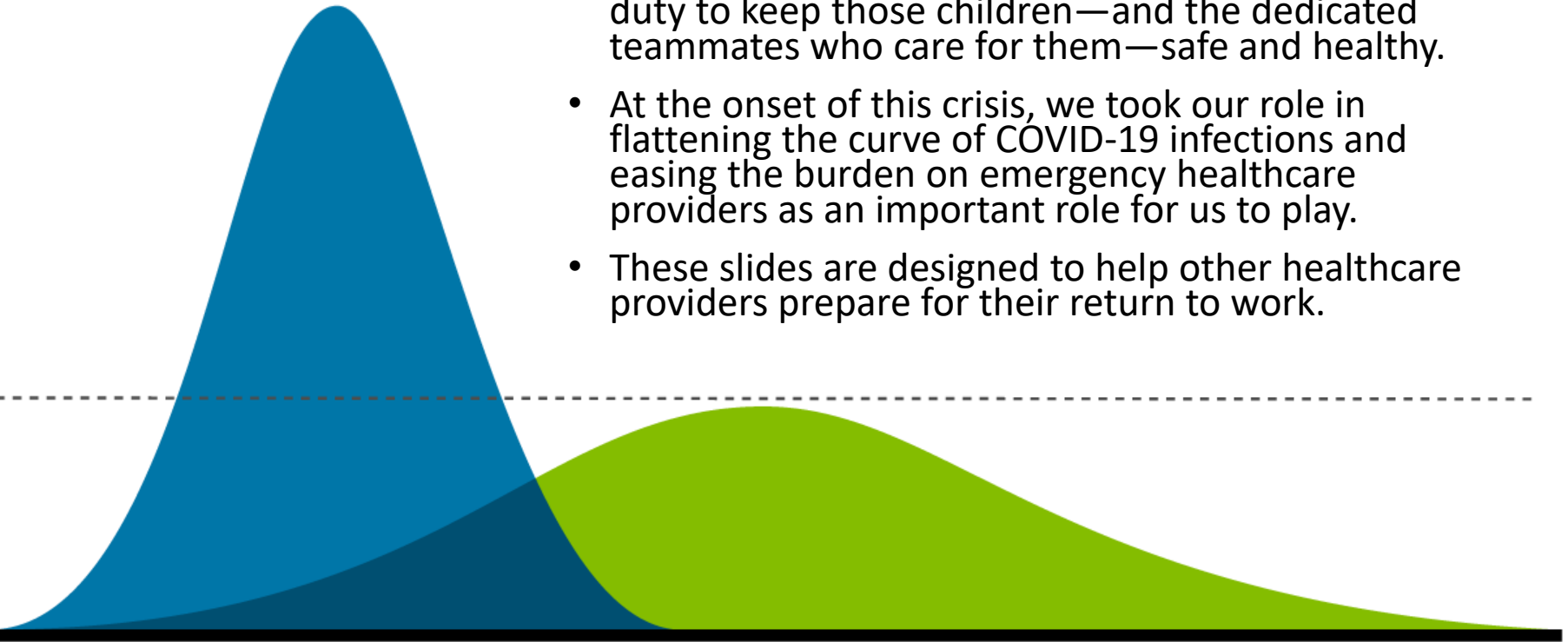
Timeline of Pandemic

- March 6: Remote working plans initially developed
- March 9: First COVID-19 talking points for patients created; communication and data collected and analyzed
- March 12: COVID19@HeroDVO.com email created
- March 12: Provider and Practice Leader Webinar Series; Q&A document created
- March 14: Crisis team mobilized
- March 16: Cadence of daily emails created
- March 16: Announcement of cessation of non-emergent dental and orthodontic services made
- March 17: Last day of non-emergent dental and orthodontic services
- March 18: KCK, South Denver, Denver hibernated
- March 18: Announcement of cessation of vision services made
- March 19: Citadel hibernated
- March 19: Last day of vision services
- March 20: Remote team/practice support center / ~200 teammates across the country
- March 20: Online glasses reordering available
- March 20: Team furloughs put in place (900+ or 80% of all teammates)
- March 20: Academy Kids Circle, Pueblo, Optimism, Adventure Loveland, DC 1, DC 2, Essex hibernated
- March 20: Colorado and California further define dental emergencies
- March 26: Baltimore Pratt Street hibernated
- March 30: Twin Lakes, Landover, PDG South hibernated
- April 1: First telehealth visit in Kansas, currently offered in 6 states
- April 14: Urgent Hub launches
- May 1: Offices in Colorado Springs, Oklahoma begin slowly reopening according to social distancing and PPE protocols

Section 1: Emergency Operations and Beyond

Flattening the Curve in Healthcare

- As a provider of care for children in underserved communities across the country, we take as our duty to keep those children—and the dedicated teammates who care for them—safe and healthy.
- At the onset of this crisis, we took our role in flattening the curve of COVID-19 infections and easing the burden on emergency healthcare providers as an important role for us to play.
- These slides are designed to help other healthcare providers prepare for their return to work.



Extraordinary Times Call for Emergency Measures

- The moment you realize you are "in a crisis," it is important to:
 - Stand up a crisis team with clear roles and communications responsibilities.
 - Develop an easy, transparent ways for teammates to communicate questions, comments, information (email, meeting cadence).
 - Begin broadly sourcing information with which to make decisions.
- Times like this require a vast amount of information to be gathered and interpreted. Currently, Hero is actively monitoring and digesting information from:
 - Other countries to understand what's coming our way
 - State dental boards and associations in 7 states
 - State optometric governing bodies in 5 states
 - 7 state governments; 40+ county and city governments; state, city and county health departments
 - National governing bodies including, ADA, AAO, AOA, ADSO, NADP, and more
 - CDC, OSHA and other federal guidance
- We've also sought out and developed partnerships across diverse constituencies *and* with those who could be considered "competitors" during more traditional times. Moments like this require setting aside differences to come to the best possible answers.



You might consider

What guidance are you monitoring and with whom are you partnering to effectively manage through this crisis and build reopening guidance?

Start With 'Why': Communicating With Your Team About COVID-19

- From the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, Hero has implemented the following mechanisms to ensure teammates have the support and information they need to process the impacts of this crisis on Hero and themselves.
- Due to a 97% overnight reduction in revenue with no funding available to us from outside sources, we were forced to furlough 85+% of our teammates across the country. Through this time, we have engaged with our teams through a variety of communication mechanisms, including:
 - Dedicated email box for teammates to send questions, concerns and information (and a team engaged to respond).
 - Daily calls and Q&A with field and corporate leadership—clinical, operational and corporate support
 - Nightly email from the CEO—important updates, leadership topics, encouragement.
 - All-teammate town halls with live and pre-sent Q&A open to furloughed and unfurloughed teammates.
 - Real-time updated FAQ document available to all teammates, including state-by-state research on unemployment resources and stay-at-home guidance.
 - Nightly calls with crisis management team to ensure alignment on operational, clinical, financial and specific programmatic details.
 - Support and engagement tools, including EAP, video leadership book clubs, 'Heroes Helping Heroes' Facebook group, 'You've Made an IMPACT' recognition cards to teammates' homes, Intouch teammate communication hotline, and more.

You might consider
What communication mechanisms you can use to engage and support your team through this crisis—they are scared, answering their questions is important to supporting them and ensuring they *will* return when able.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Teammate Safety

- As a provider of dental/orthodontic *and* vision care, we have given significant care to the types of PPE and safety measures to protect teammates with varying levels of risk/exposure.
- Dental providers are among the most at-risk of exposure when providing specific, aerosol-producing procedures, and require significantly enhanced PPE to protect their safety during this time.
- Vision teammates, and reception/front desk staff are less at-risk due to the nature of their work, but still require additional PPE—more than they have ever needed before.
- You will need to consider the end-to-end process for your teammates—how and when to use PPE.
- [Click here for a checklist for PPE processes.](#)



Processes That Support Health and Safety

- From the first phone call, your teams must work in a coordinated way to ensure patients understand how to protect their safety and your teammates' safety is maintained.
 - Phone triage and scripting
 - COVID-19 risk assessment
 - Emergent condition assessment
 - Possible use of telehealth as an additional option
 - Reminder to bring a mask to their appointment for all attending the appointment
 - At time of scheduling, reminder, and confirmation
 - Intake processes of ALL who enter practice (this includes patient caregivers, vendors, deliveries, etc.)
 - COVID-19 risk assessment, including a temperature reading
 - If needed, patients and caregivers should be provided a Level 1 mask
 - PPE, cleaning and social distancing
 - All teammates should be trained and instructed to follow strict PPE guidelines based on CDC, ADA, AOA, AAO, and OSHA guidance.
 - Strict cleaning processes and procedures of clinical—and nonclinical areas.
 - Physical distancing processes should be enacted to ensure rooms are dormant for at least 1 hour between patients when aerosols are produced—Dental and orthodontics only
 - Click here for checklists to help you develop these processes:
 - [Phone triage and scripting](#), [Intake process](#), [Cleaning and social distancing](#), [PPE](#)



Section 2: Preparing for the Long Term

Reopening Objectives

As you begin planning for the long-term, ensure your plans support the following objectives:

- **Safety:** Align care delivery plan with state and local guidance, governing body recommendations.
- **Teammate Engagement:** Re-engage teammates, ensure trust and reduce anxieties about returning to work through a phased approach.
- **Patient Care:** Create and communicate a consistent and safe environment for patients, reduce anxiety related to coming to your office.

Phased Approach

In this moment, there will not be a return to “business as usual”—consider developing a phased approach, advancing to the next phase as guidelines and your operational capabilities permit.

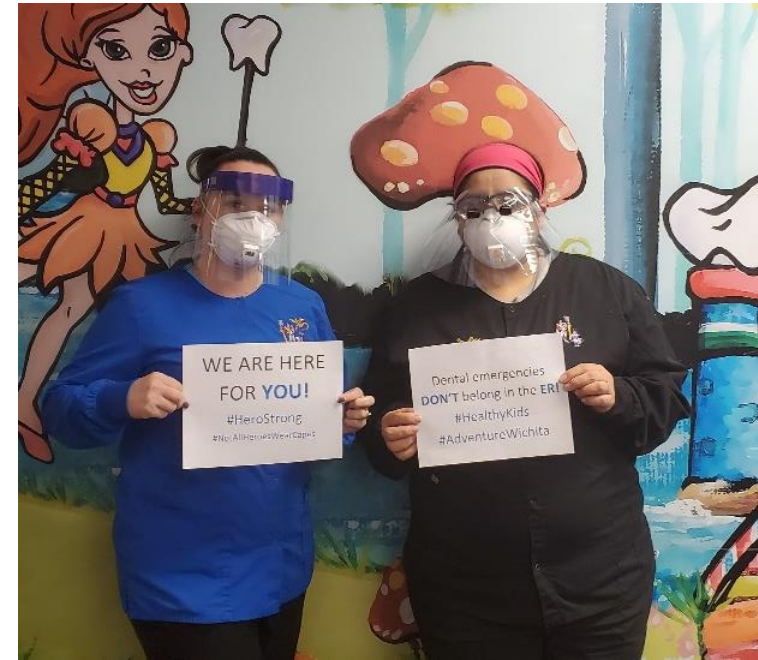
- Phase 1: Care delivered with extreme social distancing.
 - Extreme limitations on scheduling and limited overlap; varied limitations on scope of care based on local/state guidance
 - Emphasis on show rates and confirming appointments
 - Extended hours, 6- or 7-day schedules; red/blue teams rotating
- Phase 2: Elective/preventive care with social distancing, additional engineering controls.
 - Shorter turn times between patient visits
 - Extended hours, possibly moving to 6-day schedules
 - Emphasis on show rates and confirming appointments
- Phase 3: Elective/preventive care with fewer restrictions as directed by governing body guidance.

You might consider

Don't assume that reopening means going back to the way things were pre-COVID-19. Based on your practice's ability to comply with current guidance, what will your “phased” approach be?

Red Team/Blue Team Operations

- These teams are scheduled for multi-day shifts (i.e., Monday-Wednesday, Thursday-Saturday). These teams operate separately from one another—with providers, assistants, leadership, etc.
- These teams work extended hours on their scheduled days, but work a limited number of days per week.
- This allows for fewer teammates and patients to be in the practice at one time, mitigating the risk and exposure within the office.



Monitoring and Supporting Teammate Health and Well-being

Remember: Your teammates may be nervous about returning to work. Their concerns **must** be taken seriously. Maintaining communications and leadership through this time and beyond is essential.

- Screening, Cleaning and ‘Teaming’
 - Teammates and patients should continue to be screened until guidance changes—this includes *anyone* entering your practice.
 - Additional cleaning and disinfection will be required for the foreseeable future—create accountability and checklists around this.
 - Teamwork is more important than ever before—a solid team will help your practice teams trust one another and hold each other accountable to the standards in place.
- Training
 - Before welcoming any teammates back to the practice, ensure they have been trained on all of your new processes. Consider holding video/web meetings in advance, combined with training the morning they return to work. Reiterate that these are not optional—flawless adherence is required.
- Plan Ahead: [Download this checklist to address your COVID-19 Exposure Response](#)

Educating Our Patients and Caregivers

71% of Americans are uncomfortable with visiting their dentists during COVID-19 for non time-sensitive procedures.

- Teammates aren't the only people in your office. Consider their concerns and communicate before, during and after the appointment so they understand their safety—and your teammates' safety—is a priority.
- Provide clear direction on what you are doing—and what they should do to keep themselves safe:
 - Appointment confirmations are a **must**—this allows you to educate them on your safety precautions and have the patient's space ready for them because you know they're coming.
 - Mask wearing—remind patients and anyone accompanying the patient to bring a cloth or medical mask to their appointment. If the patient presents without a face covering, be sure to have supplies on hand
 - Physical distancing—be sure to create adequate space between patients from intake and waiting rooms. This may require advanced communication related to the number of people who can accompany a patient.
 - Frequent hand washing and hand sanitizing—it is okay to ask patients to use hand sanitizer or wash their hands with anti-microbial soap upon completion of their intake.

You might consider

- Additional scripting
- Social media posts
- Signage in your office

Help your patients understand the steps you—and they—need to take to be healthy.

Embrace Telehealth

- Telehealth, long viewed as impractical in dental, orthodontics and vision, has become an important component of how we screen patients, respond to their concerns and preserve valuable PPE.
- As the crisis unfolded, Hero was on the front lines with our payers and partners evaluating telehealth for dentistry and setting up fee structures for these services.

You might consider

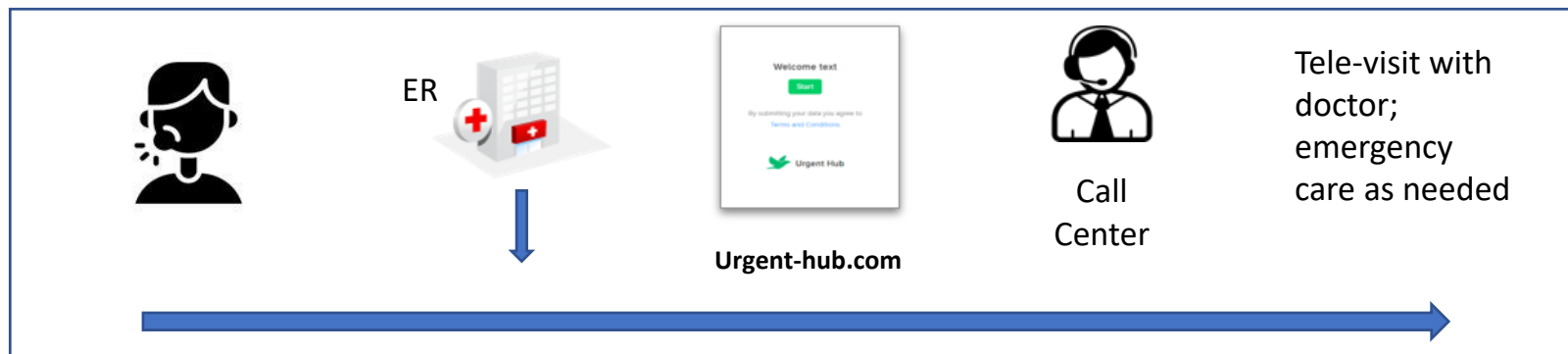
How can you use telehealth now—and as the COVID-19 crisis eases?

There is value in being available to answer questions and address patient concerns, helping them avoid visits to the emergency department now and in the future.

Urgent Hub

According to the ADA, every 14 seconds a patient presents to the ER for dental-related emergencies.

Urgent Hub is a partnership between dental providers, including Hero, and Greyfinch, an Orthodontic patient management system, aimed at unburdening the emergency medical systems during periods of crisis for emergency services that do not necessitate a visit to the ER.



For providers interested in signing up as Urgent Hubs, more information is available at urgent-hub.com. Benefits include:

- Map Listing
- COVID-19 Screening
- Urgent Needs Questionnaire
- Appointment Scheduling
- Telehealth

Stay Safe, Be Healthy!

For questions and additional information, contact
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Hero Practice Services

Making an Impact in Healthcare



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