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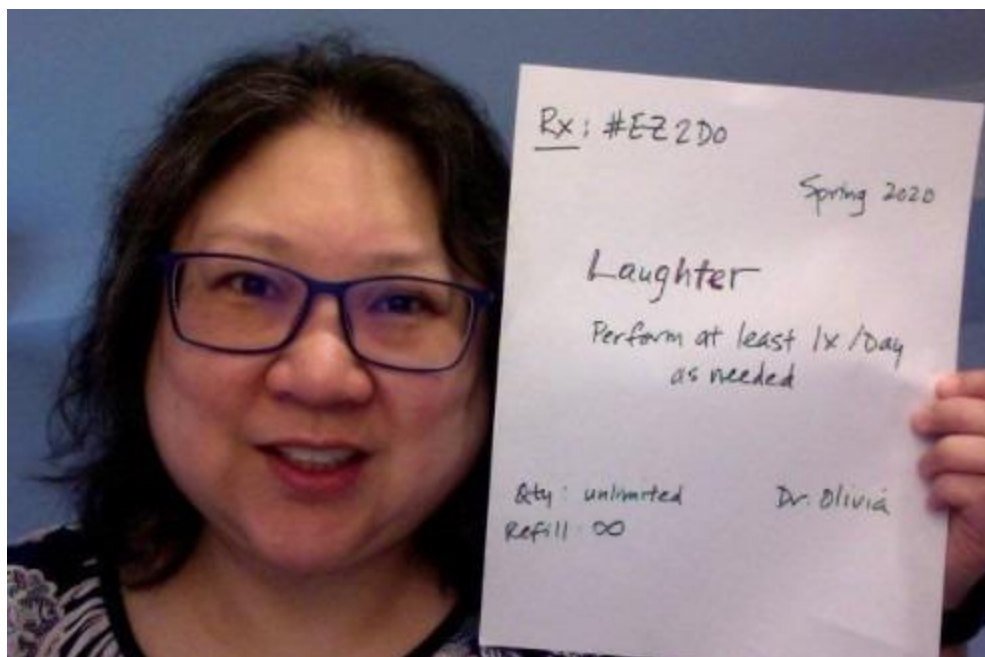
April 27, 2020

Dear reader: Please note that beginning this week, the Planning and Preparedness newsletter will be sent on Mondays and Wednesdays, unless there is urgent news or information that warrants sending immediately. We thank you for reading and suggest you follow the Massachusetts Medical Society on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#) and check our dedicated [COVID-19 resource page](#) frequently.

MMS Programs & Projects

MMS active on medical liability protection and volunteer matching

Because of your participation in our virtual forums and other COVID-19 programs, MMS leadership and staff have been able to voice your concerns and work with lawmakers to develop needed legislation. In this new video update, MMS President Dr. Maryanne Bombaugh addresses liability protection for health care providers, promoting volunteerism with the state's COVID-19 Command Center, and upcoming MMS events you won't want to miss. [Watch now »](#)



Olivia C. Liao, MD, prescribes a healthy dose of laughter

What are you grateful for? – Send your photo submission to the "MMS From the Heart" video project

As our frontline workers fight to contain coronavirus in Massachusetts and across America, it's important that we consider what—or who—we are grateful for. The MMS is developing a video and social media project to capture this moment in history and remember the goodwill during this period, despite the trying circumstances.

To participate, please submit a photograph by Friday, May 1, with a written message describing what you are grateful for or a message of hope, as shown above, to mmsfromtheheart@mms.org.

Public Health

NIH treatment guidelines and CDC clinical care guidance

A National Institutes of Health (NIH) panel of U.S. physicians, statisticians, and other experts developed COVID-19 [treatment guidelines](#). These guidelines, intended for health

care providers, are based on published and preliminary data and the clinical expertise of frontline clinicians. The guidelines will be updated as new reliable data emerges. The CDC [Clinical Care Guidance for Healthcare Professionals about Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) web page provides clinical care guidance for healthcare professionals about COVID-19, including for home care, ending home isolation, and by patient type.

Isolation and recovery sites for COVID-19 positive individuals experiencing homelessness

The Commonwealth's COVID-19 Command Center and MEMA have opened five state-operated isolation and recovery sites (Everett, Lexington, Northampton, Pittsfield, and Taunton) for people experiencing homelessness who test positive for COVID-19 and need a safe place to recover from the illness. Eligibility details and contact information for site intake coordinators in Boston and outside of Boston, as well as additional guidance about state action to address homelessness during the COVID-19 outbreak, can be [found here](#).

Practice Management

CARES Act Provider Relief Fund FAQs

Health and Humans Services (HHS) began distributing the remaining \$20 billion of the \$50 billion general distribution to Medicare providers to augment providers' allocations.

Medicare providers for whom HHS did not have adequate cost report data on file will need to submit their revenue information to the [general distribution portal](#) to be able to receive additional general distribution funds and agree to the [terms and conditions](#) for this additional distribution. Providers who received additional money automatically will still need to submit their revenue information so that it can be verified via the portal.

HHS has posted new Frequently Asked Questions regarding the second tranche of disbursement of the CARES Act Provider Relief Fund. [Click here](#) to read more.

The CARES Act Provider Relief Fund Payment [Attestation Portal](#) is now open. Providers who have been allocated a payment must sign an attestation confirming receipt of the funds and agree to the terms and conditions within 30 days of payment.

This [user guide](#) will help you navigate the HHS provider portal, and this [quick tutorial](#) outlines what you need to know to request or confirm additional relief funding.

CMS reevaluates Accelerated Payment Program and suspends Advance Payment Program

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that it is reevaluating the amounts that will be paid under its Accelerated Payment Program and suspending its Advance Payment Program to Part B suppliers, effective immediately. The agency made this announcement following the successful payment of over \$100 billion to health care providers and suppliers through these programs and considering the additional \$175 billion recently appropriated for health care provider relief payments.

For more information on the CARES Act Provider Relief Fund and how to apply, visit hhs.gov/providerrelief

For an updated fact sheet on the Accelerated and Advance Payment Programs, visit: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/Accelerated-and-Advanced-Payments-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

Telehealth clinical roles and responsibilities

Successful implementation of telehealth is a team effort. Your team will serve on the front line so it is important for them to know their role and responsibilities during implementation. Proper staff preparation ensures:

- Staff understand the importance of the program and is motivated to participate
- Staff understand their key responsibilities in achieving aligned success metrics
- New procedures are understood, correctly followed, and documented

- Staff is prepared to impart both the key benefits of and guidelines for using telehealth with patients

Use [this guide](#) as a resource to understand how different members of the care team may contribute to your telehealth program, and for suggestions on how to optimize their roles by ensuring physicians and staff are maximizing utilization of their licenses.

Keep in mind the entire care team can generate excitement with the patient and encourage engagement. For additional resources, download the AMA's [Telehealth Implementation Playbook](#).

Telehealth services covered by Medicare and included in CPT code set

[This table](#) reflects the currently available Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®) codes and HCPCS codes that can be used to report telehealth services through Medicare and/or private payers. Each year, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) establishes a comprehensive list of telehealth services, which are covered under the Medicare program. Effective March 1, 2020, CMS published additional services that will be covered as telehealth for the duration of the Public Health Crisis (PHC) caused by COVID-19. Within the CPT code set, Appendix P—CPT Codes That May Be Used for Synchronous Telemedicine Services is used to denote CPT codes that may also be provided via telehealth.

Updated Financial Resources Guide for Practices

Because of federal activities to bolster the financial health of medical practices, we are updating the Financial Resources Guide for Practices to reflect the recent changes to the Accelerated and Advance Payment Program, the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and the CARES Act Provider Relief Fund. The Massachusetts Medical Society will continue monitoring the needs of physicians and their practices as they change throughout the pandemic. Information about loans and financial assistance programs for physicians, medical students, and residents can be [found here](#).

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