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April 9, 2020

The MMS will continue to monitor developments related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and the response by state and federal agencies. For current information, including updates from the NEJM, visit the dedicated page on the MMS website: massmed.org/covid-19.

As a reminder, physicians may continue to email questions to the MMS for assistance. For information on developments related to the COVID-19 response and resources available from the state and federal agencies, send questions to dph@mms.org. For assistance with practice management and sustainability, telemedicine, and payer relations, send questions to pprc@mms.org.

Public Health

Massachusetts Attorney General issues advisory on risk of COVID-19 to those who smoke or vape

In an advisory issued on Thursday, April 9, 2020, Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey and Massachusetts General Hospital warned that those who smoke or vape may be at higher risk of being infected by COVID-19. You can read and download the [advisory here](#).

Practice Management

Paycheck protection program loans: Frequently Asked Questions

The Small Business Administration (SBA), in consultation with the Department of the Treasury, intends to provide additional guidance to address borrower and lender questions concerning the Paycheck Protection Program, established by section 1102 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). To learn more:

- [Paycheck Protection Program Loans Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)
- [Paycheck Protection Program Borrower Application Form](#)
- [Paycheck Protection Program Information Sheet](#)
- [View the Interim Final Rule](#)
- [Massachusetts SBA District Office](#)

The MMS will continue to investigate and advocate for additional financial sustainability resources for physicians and their practices. For questions about financial sustainability and practice management, please contact pprc@mms.org.

Government Guidelines

Board of Registration in Medicine policies on self-prescribing, CME requirements

In response to Governor Baker's declaration of a state of emergency in Massachusetts (Executive Order [No. 591](#)), the Board of Registration in Medicine issued two new interim policies on April 2, 2020. Policy 2020-02, Interim Policy on Prescribing, states physicians in Massachusetts may, when necessary, self-prescribe. In addition, for the duration of this state of emergency, physicians may prescribe to a member of their own immediate family. Policy 2020-03, Interim Policy on Continuing Medical Education Requirement, states for the duration of this state of emergency and until December 31, 2020, the continuing medical education (CME) requirement for physicians is suspended. Any physician with a CME requirement whose license is due for renewal on April 2, 2020 through and including Dec. 31, 2020 will not be required to complete any CME requirement. Both policies can be [found here](#).

Governor issues Executive Orders: IMGs, flexibility for nursing grads and insurance coverage

Today Governor Baker issued an [Executive Order](#) directing the Board of Registration in Medicine (BORIM) to immediately adopt a policy to expedite the licensure of physicians who are International Medical school Graduates (IMG) and who are currently practicing under a limited license. The policy makes eligible for expedited licensure all IMG physicians with two years of residency training approved by ACGME, OAO, or an accredited Canadian program. The order further directs BORIM to issue guidance to carry out this directive.

An [executive order was also issued](#) allowing recent graduates of nursing schools, or students in the final semester of nursing or practical nursing programs, to practice nursing under the supervision of a licensed health care provider or licensed health care facility, after verification of the education and credentials of the nurse.

The Governor issued an [executive order](#) requiring insurance carriers to provide coverage for all medically required costs of COVID-19 treatment, without charges to patients, at both in-network and out-of-network hospitals. This coverage extends to care provided at field hospitals that the state has created in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Reimbursement will occur at contracted rates, if available; otherwise, reimbursement will be set at 135% of the Medicare rate in the provider's geographic region.

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