August 24, 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 NEJM, visit the dedicated page on the MMS website: massmed.org/covid-19.

Public Health

Save the date: "COVID-19 and School Reopening" forum

This virtual forum will provide an opportunity for physicians of all specialties to hear from experts and ask questions. Forum sponsors include the Massachusetts Medical Society, the Massachusetts Academy of Family Physicians, and the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Registration and additional details will be available soon.

- Topic: COVID-19 and School Reopening
- Date: Wednesday, September 9
- Time: 7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Prioritizing equity: Political determinants of health
Dr. Aletha Maybank, Chief Health Equity Officer of the American Medical Association (AMA), explores the relationship between political determinants of health and health equity in this week’s installment of the AMA’s “Prioritizing Equity” YouTube series. Watch here »

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**Practice Management**

**CMS emergency blanket waivers for health care providers**

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is temporarily waiving the requirement that out-of-state practitioners retain licensure in the state in which they are providing services when they are licensed in another state. CMS will waive the physician or non-physician practitioner licensing requirement when the following conditions are met:

1. Must be enrolled in the Medicare program.
2. Must possess a valid license to practice in the state, which relates to his or her Medicare enrollment.
3. Is furnishing services – whether in person or via telehealth – in a state in which the emergency is occurring to contribute to relief efforts in his or her professional capacity.
4. Is not affirmatively excluded from practice in the state or any other state that is part of the 1135 emergency area.

In addition to the statutory limitations that apply to 1135-based licensure waivers, an 1135 waiver, when granted by CMS, does not have the effect of waiving state or local licensure requirements or any requirement specified by the state or a local government as a condition for waiving its licensure requirements. Those requirements would continue to apply unless waived by the state. Therefore, for the physician or non-physician practitioner to avail themself of the 1135 waiver under the conditions described above, the state also would have to waive its licensure requirements, either individually or categorically, for the type of practice for which the physician or non-physician practitioner is licensed in their home state.
For an updated list of CMS blanket waivers, please [click here](#). For an updated list of states modifying requirements for telehealth in response to COVID-19, please refer to the Federation of State Medical Boards' [telehealth updates](#).

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**Application deadline for Phase 2 General Distribution funding is August 28**

Applications are still open for Phase 2 General Distribution funding for Medicaid, Medicaid managed care, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), dental providers, and certain Medicare providers. All groups will have until Friday, August 28, 2020, to apply.

For further assistance with your application, please use the UnitedHealthcare Provider Relief hotline number: (866) 569-3522. To learn more about the CARES Act Provider Relief Fund, please consult the [resources here](#).

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**Tufts Health Plan webinar: Coronavirus updates for providers**

This webinar allows physicians to join an interactive training session with Tufts Health Plan’s Provider Education Team. Registration is required to participate.

- Date: Tuesday, August 25
- Time: 12:00 p.m.
- [Register »](#)

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**CMS COVID-19 "office hours" calls**

"Office hours" calls provide an opportunity for hospitals, health systems, and providers to ask questions of agency officials regarding CMS’ temporary actions that empower local hospitals and health care systems to:
• Increase hospital capacity
• Rapidly expand the health care workforce
• Put patients over paperwork
• Further promote telehealth in Medicare

Event details:

• Date: Tuesday, August 25
• Time: 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
• Attendee dial-in: (833) 614-0820
• Access passcode: 8579003
• Audio webcast link »

DOI and CHIA meeting on Thursday for providers: testing, telehealth, and prior authorization

The Division of Insurance (DOI) and the Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA) hosts regular meetings to offer providers an opportunity to raise questions and concerns related to Governor Baker's emergency order commercial insurance provisions. The next meeting will focus on testing, telehealth, and prior authorization, and will be recorded for later viewing. The DOI and CHIA, along with the Massachusetts Medical Society and the Massachusetts Hospital Association, sponsor these calls.

• Date: Thursday, August 27
• Time: 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EDT
• Meeting URL »
• Meeting ID: 290 289 5643
• Passcode: 501

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