February 3, 2021

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.

Practice Management

New variants of the virus that causes COVID-19

The emerging variants the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are closely monitoring have mutations in the virus genome that alter the characteristics and cause the virus to act differently in ways that are significant to public health (e.g., causes more severe disease, spreads more easily between humans, requires different treatments, changes the effectiveness of current vaccines). It is important to understand that genetic mutations are expected, and some variants can spread and become predominant while others subside. Click here to learn more about the new variants of the virus that causes COVID-19.

Feb. 11: DOI and CHIA meeting for providers
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 COVID-19 commercial insurance provisions. The next meeting will focus on telehealth, prior authorization, and other topics, and will be recorded for later viewing. The DOI and CHIA, along with the Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) and the Massachusetts Health & Hospital Association (MHA), sponsor these calls.

- Date: Thursday, February 11
- Time: 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. ET
- Meeting ID: 290 289 5643
- Passcode: 501

NGS Medicare COVID-19 vaccine administration and billing for Part B providers

During this webinar National Government Services (NGS) will review the coverage, coding, and billing guidelines for COVID-19 vaccine administration and billing.

Date: Feb 5, 2021
Time: 10:00 a.m ET - 11:00 a.m ET
To register, click here.

COVID-19: What physicians need to know webinar series by the AMA

The American Medical Association (AMA) recently hosted the fifth webinar in the "COVID-19: What physicians need to know" series, to discuss COVID-19 vaccine safety and delivery. View a recording of the webinar, featuring Food and Drug Adminstration (FDA) director Peter Marks, MD, PhD.
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts telehealth and telephonic codes billing reminder

Consistent with the CPT definition of the telephonic codes 98966-98968 and 99441-99443 and with certain telehealth codes, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts will not reimburse for these services when a related evaluation and management (E/M) service has been provided:

- Within the previous seven days, or
- When it leads to an E/M service or procedure within the next 24 hours

Blue Cross will begin enforcing the CPT code descriptions on April 1, 2021.

- Do not report these codes if the service is related to the E/M service provided within the timeframes outlined in the code definition.
- Report these codes if the service is not related to an E/M service provided within the timeframes outlined in the code definition.

For billing information, please refer to the code descriptions and examples here.
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