January 20, 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.

Public Health

Mass. DPH web resource: “I’m eligible for a vaccine. Where do I go?”

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has provided a resource for those in the Commonwealth who are currently eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccination and who need information on how to sign up and the location of vaccination sites. All sites require an appointment and proof of eligibility.

Read more

COVID-19 vaccine "depot" program for independent practices now underway

The Massachusetts COVID-19 Command Center and DPH, in collaboration with Mass General Brigham (MGB) and the Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS), has launched a
program to facilitate access to COVID-19 vaccine for independent practices prioritized under Phase 1 of the Commonwealth's Vaccine Distribution Plan. The program enables such practices to vaccinate their own prioritized health care workers or will provide direct vaccination to health care workers.

Learn more about the depot program

COVID-19 vaccination communication toolkit
Clinicians can use or adapt these ready-made materials to build confidence about COVID-19 vaccination among health care teams and staff.

Read more

Practice Management

Learn more about the Paycheck Protection Program
The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) provides loans to help businesses keep their workforce employed during the COVID-19 crisis. The U.S. Small Business Association (SBA) is currently offering:

- **First Draw PPP Loans** for first-time program participants
- **Second Draw PPP Loans** beginning January 13, 2021 for certain businesses that have previously received a PPP loan

The SBA also offers additional [coronavirus relief](#).

HHS announces Provider Relief Fund reporting update
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced that they will be amending the reporting timeline for the Provider Relief Fund Program (PRF) due to the recent passage of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act. PRF recipients are now able to submit required reporting on their use of these funds later than the original deadline, which was February 15. The new deadline has not yet been established.

However, starting January 15, PRF recipients may begin registering for gateway access to the Reporting Portal where they will ultimately submit their information. The Provider Relief Fund Reporting Portal is now open for registration only.

FAQ on Medicare fee-for-service billing

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released answers to additional Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on recent COVID-19-related waivers to help physicians, hospitals, and rural health clinics. The document includes information about:

- Payment for specimen collection for purposes of COVID-19 testing
- Hospital billing for remote services, including a decision tree guiding hospitals through their options for billing for telemedicine
- High throughput COVID-19 testing
- Medicare telehealth

BCBS MA updates COVID-19 vaccine administration codes and pharmaceutical treatment

For providers caring for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBS MA) patients, the linked document below charts the updated vaccine administration codes for COVID-19 and FDA-approved pharmaceutical treatment for COVID-19 infection.