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July 20, 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.

Practice Management

Provider Relief Fund: Deadline to apply is July 20, 2020

On June 9, 2020, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced the distribution of fifteen billion dollars from the Provider Relief Fund to eligible providers who (1) participate in their state's Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and (2) have not received a payment from the Provider Relief Fund General Distribution. Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) released a [Provider Relief Fund: Medicaid and CHIP fact sheet](#) earlier this week. We encourage more physicians to apply for funding ahead of the July 20 deadline.

CMS new FAQ

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released 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
- High Throughput COVID-19 Testing
- Medicare Telehealth
- Home Infusion Services
- Cost Reporting
- General Billing Requirements

Please download the [latest FAQ](#).

CMS office hour calls held from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesdays

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) hosts office hour calls to provide an opportunity for hospitals, health systems, and providers to ask questions of agency officials regarding CMS's temporary actions that empower local hospitals and health care systems to increase hospital capacity, rapidly expand the health care workforce, put patients over paperwork, and further promote telehealth in Medicare.

This week's Office Hours:

Tuesday, July 21, 5 p.m. – 6 p.m. EDT

Toll-free attendee dial-in: 833-614-0820; access passcode: 7477995

Audio webcast can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

BCBS update: Resuming provider audits and claim reviews

On April 8, 2020, BCBSMA notified physicians that the following activities will be paused for 60 days or until the end of the public health emergency, whichever came first. Effective immediately BCBS will resume these activities:

- Retrospective provider audits for:
 - Professional providers
 - Inpatient and outpatient facilities
- Prepayment reviews for forensic claims
- Any other claim recovery activities

Questions? Call Network Management and Credentialing Services at 1-800-316-BLUE (2583).

5 steps physicians can take to prioritize Black patients' well-being

Data on racial and ethnic patterns of the pandemic paints an alarming picture. Biases and discriminatory practices in health care contribute to stark inequities, but physicians and other health care professionals can help make a change to better reach and care for Black patients. The American Medical Association (AMA) provides insight on the subject in a recent article that can be [found here](#).

COVID-19 Medicare Part B advanced payment, repayment and recoupment process webinars

If you requested and received accelerated or advanced payments from Medicare due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, this learning session is for you. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) expanded the accelerated and advance payment program for financial hardship relief during the COVID-19 public health emergency. Accelerated or advanced payments need to be repaid to the Medicare Trust Fund. During this webinar, National Government Services (NGS) will review the repayment and recoupment process.

- Date: Thursday, August 13
- Time: 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. EDT

- [Register](#)
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DOI & CHIA meeting for providers: testing and telehealth

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 and telehealth and will be recorded for later viewing.

- Date: Thursday, July 23
- Time: 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. EDT
- [Meeting URL](#)
- Meeting ID: 290 289 5643
- Passcode: 501

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860 Winter Street, Waltham Woods Corporate Center, Waltham, MA 02451-1411
781-893-4610 | 781-893-3800 | Member Information Hotline: 800-322-2303 x7311

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