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June 29, 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.

Government Guidelines

MMS/MHA advocacy efforts leads to extension of prior authorization waiver

Carriers are required to continue the relaxed prior authorization procedures in response to the COVID-19 health emergency. The Division of Insurance (DOI) released [Bulletin 2020-21](#), which waives the prior authorization review or concurrent reviews for any scheduled surgeries and behavioral health or non-behavioral health admissions at acute care and mental health hospitals for a period lasting through September 30. This date was extended from June 30. Further, consistent with MMS advocacy, the DOI's guidance requires carriers to explore ways to streamline coding and billing policies to reduce administrative burdens.

Public Health

COVID-19 update for June 29: The physicians behind Brief19

The American Medical Association (AMA) talks to the physicians behind Brief19, a daily round-up of COVID-19 research and policy created by doctors for doctors. [Click here](#) for the latest edition.

Practice Management

Paycheck Protection Program loan information, updated FAQ

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

This [document](#) will be updated on a regular basis. Borrowers may rely on the guidance provided in this document as SBA's interpretation of the CARES Act and of the Paycheck Protection Program Interim Final Rules ("[PPP Interim Final Rules](#)"). The U.S. government will not challenge lender PPP actions that conform to this guidance, to the PPP Interim Final Rules, and any subsequent rulemaking in effect at the time.

Additional resources:

- [How to Calculate loan amounts \(06-26-20\)](#)
 - [Paycheck Protection Program loan information](#)
 - [Who can apply](#)
 - [Loan details and forgiveness](#)
 - [Lender forms and guidance](#)
 - [Additional program information](#)
 - [Other assistance](#)
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CARES Act Provider Relief Fund update

To be considered for the Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) distribution, providers must submit their gross revenues from patient care for CY 2017, 2018, or 2019 by July 20, 2020. Applications submitted after this deadline will not be considered. HHS is expected to distribute \$15 billion to eligible Medicaid/CHIP programs or Medicaid managed care plans. The payment to each provider will be at least 2 percent of reported gross revenue from patient care. The final amount each provider receives will be determined after the data is submitted. Before applying through the [Enhanced Provider Relief Fund Payment Attestation Portal](#), applicants should read the [Medical Provider Distribution Instructions](#) and download the [Medical Provider Distribution Application](#) form.

CMS issues special trends report on Health Insurance Exchange enrollment data during COVID-19

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) today released a trends report that provides data on the number of individuals who signed up for coverage on HealthCare.gov through a special enrollment period (SEP) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of the economic disruption that followed COVID-19 outbreaks, many consumers experienced life changes—particularly related to employment—that allowed them to enroll in health coverage through the exchange. Enrollment data for April and May of this year show that thousands of Americans who lost job-based coverage due to COVID-19 are successfully taking advantage of existing SEPs to enroll in coverage.

To view the trends report, [click here](#).

Payer update: Massachusetts health plans coverage policies (updated)

The Massachusetts Medical Society is working closely with health plan leadership, state officials, and partners within the health care system to address local needs resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak. Please find an [updated summary](#) of MA health plan coverage policies.

COVID-19 telehealth services for Part B providers webinar

Please join National Government Services (NGS) for this hour-long session to learn about telehealth services during COVID-19. NGS will provide updates and address your questions.

- Date: Wednesday, July 1, 2020
- Time: 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. EDT
- [Registration](#)

July 2 meeting for providers: DOI & CHIA on testing and telehealth

The Division of Insurance (DOI) and the Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA) hosts regular meetings offering 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 2
- Time: 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EDT
- [Meeting URL](#)
- Meeting ID: 290 289 5643
- Password: 501

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