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

Practice Management

AMA privacy principles

The American Medical Association (AMA) issued new privacy principles today supporting an individual's right to control, access, and delete personal data collected about them. Using the new privacy principles, the AMA will actively engage the administration, Congress, and industry stakeholders about the future direction of regulatory guardrails needed to restore public confidence in data privacy protections. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Providers must act by June 3 to receive additional relief fund general distribution payment

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is reminding eligible providers that they have until June 3, 2020, to accept the "terms and conditions" and submit their revenue information to support receiving an additional payment from the

Provider Relief Fund \$50 billion General Distribution. All providers who automatically received an additional General Distribution payment prior to 5:00 p.m., Friday, April 24, must provide HHS with an accounting of their annual revenues by submitting tax forms or financial statements. These providers must also agree to the program terms and conditions if they wish to keep the funds. Providers who have cases pending before the department for adjudication about eligibility for general distribution funding will not be impacted by this closure. All cases requiring individual adjudication will need to be received by HHS no later than June 3, 2020.

Visit hhs.gov/providerrelief for more information.

Medicare payment for COVID-19 diagnostic tests

Earlier this year, the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) took action to ensure America's patients, health care facilities, and clinical laboratories were prepared to respond to COVID-19. To increase testing, CMS developed two codes that laboratories can use to bill for certain COVID-19 lab tests, including serology tests. CMS has updated its guidance to include payment details for additional CPT codes created by the American Medical Association (AMA). There is no cost-sharing for Medicare patients. [Click here](#) to learn more.

MassHealth releases several COVID-19-related bulletins

MassHealth recently published several bulletins with additional guidance and flexibilities for providers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The [MassHealth COVID-19 Resource Page](#) has all of the information contained in these bulletins. Additionally, in recognition of COVID-19's impact, the [MassHealth Provider Access Improvement Grant Program \(PAIGP\)](#) application deadline has been extended to Thursday, June 4.

Practice cybersecurity while working from home

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many physicians are working from home, using their personal computers and mobile devices to help care for patients. Fortunately, technology can allow physicians and care teams to do much of what they could do at the medical office remotely. Telemedicine is a powerful tool that spans a continuum of technologies and offers new ways to deliver care. Here are some tips from the AMA to keep your work environment safe from cyber-threats that could disrupt your practice, the hospital, or negatively impact your patients' safety and well-being. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Upcoming Online Programs

Re-starting surgery in Massachusetts webinar (May 21)

The Massachusetts Chapter of the American College of Surgeons (ACS) will be host a one-hour webinar at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, May 21, featuring hospital leaders from around the state discussing their approach on the topic of "re-starting surgery in Massachusetts."

Topics to be covered:

- Patient pre-op testing and inpatient PPE and masking
- Provider screening and PPE
- Prioritization protocols (review state regulations)
- How to catch up with back log
- How to rebuild elective practice and reassure patients that it is safe to have surgery

To register and learn more, [click here](#).

Mindfulness and Compassion in Uncertain Times: Care for the Caregiver with Ron Siegel (May 21 & 28)

Profound changes in health care, PPE shortages, changing treatment guidelines, patients dying alone, sick colleagues and family members, long hours at work or home—no wonder so many health care workers feel overwhelmed and exhausted. How can you manage the intensity, especially when in the thick of it? How can you care for yourself when you get home?

This two-part, online program will be held on Thursday, May 21, and Thursday, May 28, from 1:00 p.m.—2:30 p.m. EDT. [When you register](#), you will be signed up for both parts.

There is a small registration fee of \$50 for this program. This program is limited to no more than 200 people.

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