November 18, 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.

Public Health

Vaccine distribution and safety overview

Dr. Cliff McDonald, Acting Chief Medical Officer of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), shared the latest scientific information and what everyone should know about protecting themselves and others in a new partner call. Dr. Nancy Messonnier, Dr. Amanda Cohn, and Dr. Tom Shimabukuro, all of the CDC's Vaccine Task Force, were also present to speak on vaccine distribution and safety. Watch now »

FDA authorizes first COVID-19 test for self-testing at home

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued an emergency use authorization (EUA) for the first COVID-19 diagnostic test for self-testing at home with rapid results. The Lucira COVID-19 All-In-One Test Kit is a molecular (real-time loop mediated amplification reaction) single-use test that is intended to detect the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. Read more »
Psychological first aid educational webinar

The online webinar, "Psychological First Aid: Healthy Recovery Now and in the Aftermath of the COVID-19 Public Health Crisis," is available here.

The coronavirus pandemic has impacted physicians and other first responders physically and emotionally. The daily occurrence of very sick and contagious patients, sheltering behind critically required PPE, the necessity to quarantine from family and friends after working long shifts, and the lack of time to mourn exact a toll. The continuing trauma of this pandemic on mental health can be eased by Psychological First Aid in response to experiencing and living in this demanding time on the front lines.

The webinar is sponsored by the Massachusetts Medical Society (and its Committees on Mental Health and Substance Use and Preparedness) and the Massachusetts Psychiatric Society.

Accreditation and Credit Information
The Massachusetts Medical Society is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

AMA Credit Designation Statement
The Massachusetts Medical Society designates this internet enduring material for a maximum of 1.25 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

This activity meets the criteria for the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine for risk management study.

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:

- Drugs & vaccines under Part B
- Payment for specimen collection for purposes of COVID-19 testing
- High-throughput COVID-19 testing
- Medicare telehealth
- Scope of practice
- Chronic care management services

New pandemic casualty: Cybercrime

The American Medical Association (AMA) discussed emerging cyber threats and what hospitals and physicians can do to protect themselves during the COVID-19 pandemic. Watch the video here.

The AMA has also developed tips on protecting your computer network from cyberattacks to keep patient records and data safe. Download and share with your staff and IT:

- Technology considerations for the rest of 2020
- How to improve your cybersecurity practices
- Cybersecurity checklist for office computers
- Protect your practice and your patients from cybersecurity threats
- Infographic: Cybersecurity in health care
- Working from home during COVID-19 pandemic

DOI and CHIA meeting for providers: telehealth, prior authorization, provider directory regulations
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 provider directory regulations, 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, November 19
- Time: 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. ET
- Meeting ID: 290 289 5643
- Passcode: 501
- Meeting URL »