February 10, 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.

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Practice Management

Using ventilator splitters during COVID-19 - Letter to health care providers

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a letter to health care providers on using ventilator splitters during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide up-to-date information concerning multiplexing ventilator tubing connectors, also known as ventilator splitters, in situations in which no alternatives for invasive ventilatory support are available. The letter to health care providers also includes important information about ventilator splitters. Read the full letter here.

February 11: DOI and CHIA meeting for providers

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 other topics, 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, February 11
- Time: 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. ET
- Meeting ID: 290 289 5643
- Passcode: 501

Join the meeting

CDC to host virtual national forum on COVID-19 vaccine

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is organizing a virtual National Forum on COVID-19 Vaccine for February 22 – 24. This forum will bring together practitioners from national, state, tribal, local and territorial levels who are engaged in vaccinating communities across the nation. The forum aims to promote the most effective strategies to build trust and confidence in COVID-19 vaccines, use data to optimize vaccine implementation, and provide participants with practical information for increasing vaccine access in communities nationwide, especially for persons at increased risk of COVID-19 disease and those who may face barriers to vaccination.

If interested in participating/viewing, please click here to register. The registration period is February 9-16. If you are unable to participate in the event but want to receive meeting recordings and materials when available, please visit the National Forum on COVID-19 Vaccine website to find event materials and session recordings after the forum.

COVID-19 vaccine administration and billing for Part B providers
During this webinar National Government Services (NGS) will review the coverage, coding, and billing guidelines for COVID-19 vaccine administration and billing.

- Date: February 16, 2021
- Time: 12:00 p.m - 1:00 p.m ET
- To register, click here.

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Experts discuss moral distress among physicians and nurses

Christy Rentmeester, the director and managing editor of the American Medical Association (AMA) Journal of Ethics, joins Helen Chapple, PhD, professor & ethics educator, College of Nursing, Creighton University; and Sarah Nelson, MD, assistant professor, neurosurgery & neurology, at Icahn SOM, Mount Sinai, in discussing moral distress among physicians and nurses during the pandemic, and how health care workers can respond equitably during the crisis. Watch here.

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Strategies for optimizing the supply of N95 respirators

This document offers a series of strategies or options to optimize supplies of disposable N95 filtering facepiece respirators in health care settings when there is limited supply. It does not address other aspects of pandemic planning; for those, health care facilities can refer to COVID-19 preparedness plans. The strategies are also listed in order of priority and preference here. Once personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies and availability return to normal, health care facilities should promptly resume conventional practices.

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