February 24, 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.

Practice Management

Pulse oximeter accuracy and limitations

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has caused an increase in the use of pulse oximeters. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a safety communication to inform health care providers and patients that pulse oximeters have limitations and a risk of inaccuracy under certain circumstances. The Pulse Oximeter Accuracy and Limitations: FDA Safety Communication provides:

- Important recommendations for patients and their caregivers on how to use pulse oximeters at home.
- Recommendations for health care providers on how to use pulse oximeters for better accuracy.
- Background on pulse oximeters and the FDA’s actions to evaluate factors that may affect pulse oximeter accuracy and performance.
Instructions for reporting problems with pulse oximeters to the FDA.

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**DOI and MassHealth listening sessions on telehealth provisions**

The Massachusetts Division of Insurance (DOI) and MassHealth are scheduling information sessions (see schedule below) to discuss the implementation of telehealth provisions in [Chapter 260 of the Acts of 2020](https://www.mass.gov/doc/act-2020-chapter-260.pdf) as enacted on January 1, 2021.

During these information sessions, DOI and MassHealth are interested in having conversations with physicians, consumers, insurance carriers, and other interested parties to hear thoughts about guidance that the Division of Insurance and MassHealth might provide through the issuing of bulletins, regulations, or other communications to allow for the implementation of the noted provisions.

The Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) will be actively engaged in each of these sessions, advocating on behalf of the physician community. If you have specifics consistent with the identified topic areas listed below, please contact Leda Anderson at Landerson@mms.org or Bissan Biary at BBiary@mms.org.

**DOI listening sessions schedule**

- **Friday, February 26, 10 a.m. - 11:30;** Planned topics: Carrier contracts with providers and telehealth technology

- **Friday, March 12, 10 a.m. - 11:30;** Planned topics: Definitions of primary care, chronic care, behavioral health care and “health care services appropriate to be provided through telehealth”

- **Wednesday, March 31, 10 a.m. - 11:30;** Planned topics: Reimbursement and billing

- **Wednesday, April 14, 10 a.m. - 11:30;** Planned topics: Utilization review for telehealth and telehealth standards to be added to managed care accreditation reviews
To join the Zoom meetings click here.

Meeting ID: 290 289 5643
Passcode: 501

Join via telephone:

- +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
- +1 646 518 9805 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 290 289 5643
Passcode: 501

Frequently asked questions to assist Medicare providers

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
- Hospital billing for remote services, including a decision tree guiding hospitals through their options for billing for telemedicine
- High throughput COVID-19 testing
- Medicare telehealth
- Home infusion services
- General billing requirements
- Scope of Practice
Medicare monoclonal antibody COVID-19 infusion program instruction

During the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE), Medicare will cover and pay for these infusions when furnished consistent with their respective emergency use authorizations (EUAs) the same way it covers and pays for COVID-19 vaccines. Health care providers administering the COVID-19 monoclonal antibody infusions will follow the same enrollment process as those administering the other COVID-19 vaccines. Click here to learn more about:

- Coding for Monoclonal Antibody COVID-19 Infusion
- Medicare Payment for Monoclonal COVID-19 Infusion
- Billing for Monoclonal Antibody COVID-19 Infusion Administration