March 22, 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.

Advocacy

MMS urges state to include physician practices in vaccine distribution

The Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) continued its advocacy to improve equity in vaccine distribution in a letter to the Secretary of Health and Human Services requesting increased physician involvement in vaccine distribution. The letter also implores continued vigilance regarding emerging public health data with respect to advancing the state’s reopening.

Public Health

Standing together against racism and violence
In the wake of reportedly racially motivated attacks on members of the Asian-American and Pacific Islander (APPI) community in Atlanta and a rise in prejudicial behavior toward the AAPI community since the onset of the pandemic, the Massachusetts Medical Society in a statement last week continued to condemn all acts of hate and racism and reaffirmed the MMS' commitment to antiracism. To read the statement, click here.

Practice Management

FDA authorizes revisions to fact sheets to address SARS-CoV-2 variants for monoclonal antibody products

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorized revised fact sheets for health care providers to include additional information on susceptibility of SARS-CoV-2 variants to each of the monoclonal antibody (mAb) therapies that are available through an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for the treatment of COVID-19. FDA is providing this information to equip health care providers with the most current data so they can make informed decisions and provide appropriate care to patients with COVID-19. Health care providers should review the fact sheets for details regarding specific variants and potential resistance that may make the authorized mAb therapies less effective.

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 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 stakeholders 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**

- 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:

- (646)-558-8656 (ET)
- (646)-518-9805 (ET)