

IHA COVID Resources and Advocacy

September 14, 2020

Iowa's senators urged to include rural emergency hospital proposal in upcoming legislation

Members of Congress are home doing in-district work, and they need to hear from Iowa hospital representatives about the need for long-term rural hospital support through IHA's [rural emergency hospital proposal](#) before they go back to Washington DC after Labor Day.

The American Hospital Association predicts half of US hospitals will have negative operating margins in the second half of 2020. Congress must act now to ensure long-term support of hospitals by including IHA's proposal in upcoming legislation.

When Congress returns in September, federal lawmakers will return to negotiate the next COVID-19 support package and appropriations bills for the next year. Both are appropriate pathways to include the rural emergency hospital proposal.

After reaching out to your representative, please share any responses with [Erin Cubit](#) at IHA.

CMS issues interim final rule about data collection and Medicare conditions of participation

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has issued an interim final rule that, among other provisions, makes collecting and reporting COVID-19 data a condition of participation for hospitals that participate in Medicare.

The rule, which is effective on publication in the Federal Register, will require hospitals to report daily data including elements such as the number of confirmed or suspected COVID-19 positive patients, intensive care unit beds occupied, and availability of supplies and equipment, such as ventilators and personal protective equipment. By making this data reporting a condition of participation, the penalty for a hospital's noncompliance potentially may be termination from the Medicare program if appropriate corrective action is not taken.

Besides the new requirement, the interim final rule directs surveyors to inspect nursing homes for adherence to new COVID-19 testing requirements, with penalties including sanctions and civil monetary penalties. The rule also implements new laboratory reporting requirements in accordance with the CARES Act. Failure to comply with these requirements could result in civil monetary penalties of \$1,000 a day for the first day and \$500 a day for each subsequent day.

CMS extends deadline to apply for area wage index reclassification

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has extended the deadline for hospitals to apply for reclassification of their Medicare area wage index for fiscal year 2022 until 15 days after the agency releases its inpatient prospective payment system final rule for FY 2021. The agency recently released [wage data](#) to help hospitals assess whether to seek reclassification of their Medicare area wage index for fiscal year 2022.

Gov. Reynolds signs new proclamation continuing state public health emergency

Gov. Kim Reynolds has signed a new proclamation continuing the public health disaster emergency for another 30 days. The proclamation extends public health mitigation measures in place for businesses and other establishments. The proclamation also extends many of the previously issued regulatory relief measures necessary to respond to this public health disaster, including those related to health care. The proclamation is now in effect until 11:59 pm Sunday, Sept. 20.

Iowa Board of Medicine recommends facemask use

After reviewing the considerable emerging evidence from clinical, laboratory and case reports, the Iowa Board of Medicine has joined the Center for Disease Control in recommending the use of masks in public areas as a means of preventing infected people with and without symptoms from spreading coronavirus to high-risk people. The Board of Medicine also encourages physicians and support staff to train the public on proper facemask. This includes children as they return to school. Masks do not replace physical distancing, especially for high-risk people who should take extra precautions in public spaces.

Emotional PPE Project offered for health care employees affected by COVID-19

Many health care providers have been overwhelmed with the unprecedented experience of providing care during the COVID-19 pandemic. The stressors associated with responding to the pandemic have a substantial impact on mental health and wellness, and many health care workers are not getting the help they need. Although employer resources are often available, there also exist widespread concerns that the stigma for reaching out for help could have career consequences.

[The Emotional PPE Project](#) allows for any worker in a health care-related field affected by the COVID-19 crisis to contact a volunteer licensed mental health practitioner. These experienced therapists provide free sessions. No insurance is required.

PYA helps hospitals ensure telehealth coding and revenue integrity compliance

PYA is a ServiShare COVID-19 resource partner that works with hospitals to ensure revenue integrity and compliance with changing rules and requirements governing telehealth. They also provide guidance on fair compensation for physicians providing telehealth services and documentation accuracy and completeness.

More information about PYA is available from its [website](#). Representatives from PYA hosted a webinar on May 28 to discuss the opportunities and challenges with telehealth reimbursement and regulatory compliance. The recording is available [HERE](#).

Next CEO update call

The next CEO update call will be in conjunction with the IHA Statewide All-District Virtual Meeting, scheduled from 1-2:30 pm, Wednesday, Sept. 23. Click [HERE](#) to register.

Educational opportunities

- **2-3 pm Tuesday, Sept. 1, Implementing a Successful Rural Telemedicine Program** – This webinar will examine the value and benefit of inpatient telemedicine programs, with an emphasis on its use in rural hospitals. The Access Physicians team will discuss specific subspecialties that can be provided through telemedicine to help hospitals retain patients, improve clinical outcomes and be financially successful. The presentation also will provide a road map to implementing those programs. Register [HERE](#).
- **10:30-11:30 am Wednesday, Sept. 9, Stress in a Pandemic: Care for Essential Health Care Staff** – The speaker will discuss the impact stress has on essential health care staff and how the devastating derecho windstorm adds to the stress of the COVID-19 pandemic. The speaker also will detail resources available to health care staff in Iowa through COVID Recovery Iowa. Register [HERE](#).
- **Noon-1 pm Wednesday, Sept. 16, Amplified Burnout Crisis for Physicians and clinicians: Exploring Solutions** – COVID-19 has brought unprecedented changes and challenges to the health care workforce. Before the pandemic, health care was already experiencing record rates of physician and clinician burnout. The burnout's effects can be disastrous for teams and patients. This webinar will outline what can be done to prevent it and how to leverage the pandemic to restore professionalism and resiliency and create stronger, more patient-centric organizations. Register [HERE](#).
- **2-3 pm Thursday, Sept. 17, Gratitude: The Path to Resilience, Well-being and Joy** – Gratitude isn't just a practice that makes one feel good. It can boost resilience, improve sleep, be a buffer against anxiety and depression, and reduce burnout in health care professionals. This webinar will explore meditation, journaling and expressive art practices designed to cultivate gratitude and boost resilience. Attendees also will learn how gratitude can enhance on-the-job effectiveness. Register [HERE](#).
- **8:30 am-12:30 pm Friday, Sept. 18, Iowa Society for Healthcare Engineering Virtual Conference** – The society's fall

conference provides education to promote quality patient care, optimize facilities for the COVID-19 environment and prepare for health care's future through improved engineering practices. Register [HERE](#).

Click here for the latest
COVID-19
Resources



IOWA HOSPITAL
ASSOCIATION

We care about Iowa's health



Iowa Hospital Association
100 E. Grand Ave., Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50309-1800

[Unsubscribe](#)

