

# IHA COVID Resources and Advocacy

August 18, 2020

## The latest about COVID-19 from IHA

### **CMS administrator suggests rural hospitals won't be penalized for PPP loans**

CMS Administrator Seema Verma said the department will issue new guidance for rural hospitals that received Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans after hospitals raised concerns, they would be penalized for receiving the funds.

Some rural hospitals that received PPP loans became concerned that the funds may cause CMS to cut future Medicare payments after receiving inaccurate guidance from a Medicare administrative contractor. Yesterday, Verma [addressed](#) those concerns on Twitter:

"CMS does not intend for Paycheck Protection Program funds to impact Medicare payments to rural hospitals," Verma said. "More guidance will be out soon that'll explain how hospitals should report those funds on their Medicare Cost Reports."

### **COVID-19 testing framework for Iowa updated**

Health care providers can test patients as they deem appropriate for COVID-19 at reference or hospital laboratories. If health care providers choose to test a patient through a reference or hospital laboratory, there is no need to call IDPH for approval. The specimens should be sent to the reference or hospital laboratory, according to the laboratory's guidance. These laboratories typically charge patients for this testing; public health cannot cover the costs of these tests.

The State Hygienic Laboratory will continue to perform COVID-19 viral testing for:

- Adults over 60 years old with fever or respiratory symptoms and chronic medical conditions.
- Children and staff in child care homes and child care centers with fever or respiratory symptoms without alternative diagnoses.
- Health care workers, essential services personnel, first responders or critical infrastructure workers with fever or respiratory illness.
- Hospitalized patients with fever or respiratory illness for diagnosis or hospitalized patients before discharge to long-term care facilities or other nursing care facilities.
- Patients with fever or respiratory illness who lives in a congregate setting.
- Preschool/K12 students and staff with fever or respiratory symptoms without alternative diagnoses.
- Symptomatic people and asymptomatic close contacts of people who tested positive for COVID-19 using PCR viral testing. Close contact testing should not occur until at least 48 hours after the earliest exposure.
- University/college students and staff with fever or respiratory symptoms without alternative diagnosis.

If patients meet these testing criteria, send specimens to the State Hygienic Laboratory according to the [diagnostic PCR testing guidance](#). The cost of this testing is assigned to the public health system. Use appropriate infection control guidance when collecting specimens, which includes at a minimum, contact and droplet precautions with eye protection.

The State Hygienic Laboratory will perform COVID-19 serology (antibody) testing for:

- Health care workers, essential services personnel, first responders or critical infrastructure workers for whom knowledge of antibody production is needed.
- Patients suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 who have had symptoms for at least seven days or were exposed to someone with confirmed COVID-19 more than seven days in the past.
- Patients with an antibody response who wish to serve as convalescent plasma donors.

If patients meet these testing criteria, send specimens to the State Hygienic Laboratory according to [serologic antibody testing guidance](#). The cost of this testing is assigned to the public health system.

## SBA updates PPP loan forgiveness FAQs

The Small Business Administration (SBA) is providing [FAQs](#) to address borrower and lender questions about the forgiveness of Paycheck Protection Program loans, as provided for under section 1106 of the CARES Act, as amended by the Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act. Borrowers and lenders may rely on the [guidance provided in this document](#) as SBA's interpretation, in consultation with the Department of the Treasury, of the CARES Act, the Flexibility Act, and the Paycheck Protection Program Interim Final Rules.

## CEO update call

The next CEO update call is scheduled from **1-2 pm Wednesday, Aug. 26**. A registration link will be published in next week's newsletters.

## Educational opportunities

- **11:30 am-Noon Thursday, Aug. 13, Rethinking Virtual Care During COVID-19** – From supporting fewer than 5,000 visits annually pre-pandemic to more than 5,000 visits per day at the height of the COVID-19 surge, the Brigham Virtual Care team grew a boutique service to become an indispensable part of everyday care. In this webinar hosted by the Massachusetts Hospital Association, panelists will discuss their front-line experience in managing the rapid expansion of services to patients and providers. Additionally, learn how the team is rethinking telemedicine access in ambulatory, inpatient and global contexts. Register [HERE](#).
- **Noon-1 pm Thursday, Aug. 20, Leadership and Resiliency: Navigating Through and Beyond COVID-19 – Win When: The 21st Century Challenges of Health Equity** – From broken community partnerships to diminished funding, how do we overcome the 21st century challenges of health equity? This presentation motivates clinicians, researchers and health care leaders to explore the role, recognition and remediation of inequity in medicine. The presentation also teaches health care providers and biomedical researchers how to clinically confront the deadly "isms" that prevent quality care and public wellness. This session, and the entire series, is complimentary. Register [HERE](#).
- **9 am-5 pm Tuesday, Sept. 15, 14th Annual IHERF Swinging for Scholars and IHA All-district Meeting, Tournament Club of Iowa, Polk City, Iowa** – This year, IHA's primary fundraiser for the Iowa Hospital Education and Research Foundation Health Care Careers Scholarship Fund will include IHA's annual statewide district meeting in the morning, before golfing. ***The health and safety of our members, sponsors and staff are the utmost importance. IHA will continue to monitor conditions and will adjust plans as the situation dictates. On the golf course, we will comply with physical distancing and other guidelines in effect in September to ensure everyone's safety.*** The all-district meeting will include an overview of recent IHA board discussions about:
  - Advancing diversity in health care professions.
  - IHA through and beyond COVID-19.
  - Improving health equity.
  - Iowa's hospitals through and beyond COVID-19.

For more information or to register, click [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](#).

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