

IHA COVID Resources and Advocacy

September 14, 2020

FDA broadens emergency use authorization for remdesivir

The US Food and Drug Administration broadened the scope of the existing [emergency use authorization](#) for remdesivir to include treatment of hospitalized adult and pediatric patients with suspected or laboratory-confirmed COVID-19, irrespective of their severity of disease.

In [May](#), the FDA authorized remdesivir for the treatment of hospitalized adult and pediatric patients with severe COVID-19. The emergency use was limited to patients with low blood oxygen levels or needing oxygen therapy or more intensive breathing support such as a mechanical ventilator.

The FDA now has determined it is reasonable to believe remdesivir may be effective for the treatment of suspected or laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 in all hospitalized adult and pediatric patients. The agency's review also has concluded that the known and potential benefits of remdesivir outweigh the known and potential risks for these uses.

Important information about using remdesivir in treating COVID-19 is available in [fact sheets to health care providers and patients](#), which include dosing instructions, potential side effects and drug interactions. Possible side effects include increased levels of liver enzymes and infusion-related reactions, which may include low blood pressure, nausea, vomiting, sweating and shivering.

FEMA releases new policy for declarations

FEMA has released an interim policy to clarify eligible work under the Public Assistance Program as part of the response to COVID-19. [COVID-19 Pandemic: Work Eligible for Public Assistance](#) is applicable to eligible applicants only, and it is exclusive to emergency and major disaster declarations for the COVID-19 pandemic. This policy applies to work performed on or after Tuesday, Sept. 15.

The interim policy defines the framework, details and requirements for eligibility of work and costs under the Public Assistance Program to ensure consistent and appropriate implementation across all COVID-19 emergency and major disaster declarations. Only work associated with the performance of emergency protective measures specifically listed in this policy is eligible for public assistance in COVID-19-declared events.

Under the new policy, FEMA will help with emergency protective measures in response to COVID-19-declared events including:

- Communications to disseminate public information about health and safety measures, and to provide warnings about risks and hazards.
- Mass casualty management, including the storage of human remains and mass mortuary services needed to manage mass fatalities caused by COVID-19.
- Medical care according to the [COVID-19 Pandemic: Medical Care Costs Eligible for Public Assistance, Version 2 \(Interim\)](#) policy.
- Non-congregate medical sheltering according to [COVID-19-specific policy](#) or subsequent updates.
- Operation of emergency operations centers to direct and coordinate resources and response activities for COVID-19 declarations.

- Purchase and distribution of food according to [COVID-19-specific policy](#) or subsequent updates.
- Purchase and distribution of personal protective equipment directly related to the performance of otherwise eligible emergency work, or is provided to health care workers, patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection and first responders.

Assistance for other activities may be eligible when necessary to perform otherwise eligible emergency work listed in the policy. For example, the purchase and distribution of face masks, temperature screening, disinfecting in accordance with CDC guidance and temporary physical barriers.

FEMA may provide public assistance funding to applicants for eligible work under the COVID-19 declarations that also may be eligible for funding under another federal agency's authorities. Potential public assistance applicants may have the flexibility to determine which source of funding to use for their costs, subject to the purpose and eligibility requirements of each of the federal programs and funding sources.

For more assistance information, please see the [COVID-19 Resource Summary Report](#), which lists resources provided by the federal government since the start of the response to COVID-19 and is designed to help with recovery efforts.

IDPH to provide COVID-19 vaccine information

Upcoming COVID-19 vaccine information resources from IDPH include:

- **COVID-19 Vaccine Call Center** – IDPH's call center will use the existing Immunization Program phone number and include an option for health care providers to ask COVID-19 vaccine questions.
- **COVID-19 Vaccine Email** – The email will respond specifically to questions about COVID-19 vaccine.
- **COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions** – IDPH is preparing and will distribute COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions documents for providers and the public. FAQs for the public will be shared with 211 and will be the basis to respond to caller questions.

Click [HERE](#) to view IDPH's complete COVID-19 Vaccine Information Brief.

CMS releases additional FAQs about COVID-19 relief payments and the Medicare Cost Report

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released an [additional list of frequently asked questions \(FAQ\)](#) to Medicare providers about the Department of Health & Human Services' Provider Relief Fund and the Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program payments. The FAQs provide guidance to providers about how to report:

- Provider relief fund payments.
- Small Business Administration loan forgiveness amounts.
- Uninsured charges reimbursed through the uninsured program administered by Health Resources and Services Administration.

The FAQs also explain that provider relief-fund payments should not offset expenses on the Medicare cost report.

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

- **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](#).

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