

IHA COVID Resources and Advocacy

April 2, 2020

The latest about COVID-19 from IHA

Wellmark waives cost share for COVID-19 treatment

Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield [announced April 1](#) its waiving members' cost share for the treatment of COVID-19 (copay, coinsurance and deductible) when seeking care from an in-network provider Feb. 4 through at least June 16, 2020. This applies to all Wellmark fully insured and Medicare Supplement members. Wellmark will work with self-funded groups wanting to implement similar benefits for their members.

This is in addition to Wellmark's earlier COVID-19 announcement that included:

- Covering diagnostic tests for COVID-19.
- Increasing access to prescription medicines.
- Reimbursing providers for virtual visits.
- Using virtual visits.

DIA grants waivers for Iowa hospitals

In response to IHA's March 24 [letter](#), the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA) has granted two of the three waivers IHA requested. In [their response](#), DIA waived two provisions concerning acute-care inpatient bed limits in CAHs and the requirements of nurse aids. Based on the waivers, during the COVID-19 public health emergency, CAHs can maintain more than 25 acute-care inpatient beds, and nurse aids who've not been trained at an Iowa state-approved program do not need to pass a challenge examination.

The letter also states DIA will work with hospitals to ensure they receive expedited review of buildings that may be used to house patients. The State Fire Marshal's Office will be working with hospitals through the variance process if there are areas that fall short of life safety requirements, as long as adequate safety is maintained. Questions about the plan submittal process for these approvals, can be directed to Ljerka Vasiljevic at 515-322-2191.

If issues arise for your hospital in obtaining expedited review of new or additional buildings, please contact [Maureen Keehnle](#), [Kim Murphy](#) or [Abhay Nadipuram](#) at IHA.

IHA sends additional waiver request to DIA

IHA sent [another letter](#) today requesting additional waivers of rules governing hospitals in Chapter 51 of DIA's administrative rules. The requests include waivers for:

- Medical staff.
- Tuberculosis screenings for staff.
- Verbal orders.

Please contact [Maureen Keehnle](#), [Kim Murphy](#) or [Abhay Nadipuram](#) if you would like IHA to consider additional waivers.

Telehealth funding available

[Grants](#) are available for telehealth services from the following sources:

- US Dept of Agriculture and USDA Rural Development Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant - application due April 10 with a second window July 13
- US Dept of Health and Human Services Network Grant Program - application due May 1
- Federal Communications Commission COVID Telehealth Grant - application deadline not yet set.

Clinical ethics and crisis standards of care

AHA has created a [list of resources](#), tools and sample policies that hospital and clinical leaders may find helpful in planning to care for patients with limited resources or under crisis circumstances. Along with resources regarding clinical ethics and crisis standards of care, this compilation includes selected COVID-19-related protocols and educational tools.

Free COVID-19 intubation shields offered by Iowa manufacturer

Sky Factory in Fairfield is offering modified intubation shields to help protect staff during intubations of patients with COVID-19. Hospitals only will be charged for shipping. Email [Skye Witherspoon](#) for details.

FEMA offers federal procurement training sessions April 9

FEMA's Procurement Disaster Assistance Team is offering a webinar training program titled [COVID-19 Guidance: Procurements Under Grants During Periods of Emergency or Exigency](#). This one-hour training will help participants understand how to properly contract during emergency or exigent circumstances when using federal funds.

Topics include:

- Sole sourcing under emergency or exigency.
- Additional [procurement under grant requirements under emergency or exigency](#).
- Use of preexisting contracts during emergency or exigency.

FEMA Region 7 (Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska) training

10:30 am (CDT), April 9

Dial-in number: 888-270-9936

Access code: 101-7496

This online training is through Adobe Connect. If you have never used this platform, test your connection in advance [here](#).

There are only 500 slots allotted for this session. If you have questions, contact Christine Burkett at 515-725-9398 or christine.burkett@iowa.gov, or Tammy Grittmann at 515-725-9302 or tammy.grittmann@iowa.gov.

CEO update call

The next hospital CEO call is scheduled 1 pm Wednesday, April 8. Click [here](#) to register.

IHA COVID-19 resource webpage

Visit IHA's [coronavirus resource page](#) for current information about COVID-19.

Previous IHA Updates on COVID-19

[April 1 Update](#)

[March 31 Update](#)

[March 30 Update](#)

[March 27 Update](#)

[March 26 Update](#)

[March 25 Update](#)
[March 24 Update](#)
[March 23 Update](#)
[March 22 Update](#)
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