

# IHA COVID Resources and Advocacy

April 23, 2020

## The latest about COVID-19 from IHA

### HHS asks hospitals to provide information for targeted distributions

Hospital site administrators should have received [a letter](#) from the US Department of Health and Human Services with instructions for hospitals to receive financial support from the Provider Relief Fund established in the CARES Act. By **2:59 am Friday, April 24**, each facility with a Medicare tax identification number should submit to TeleTracking's authentication portal:

- National Provider Identifier.
- The number of admissions with a positive diagnosis for COVID-19 from Jan. 1-April 10, 2020.
- The number of intensive care unit beds as of April 10, 2020.

This data will guide the decision-making for targeted relief fund payments and is a prerequisite to payment, but it is not a guarantee of eligibility for any amount.

Access to the TeleTracking portal is by email invitation only. Please refer to the email sent to your site administrator by the Department of Health and Human Services. If you have questions about the authentication or registration process, call TeleTracking's technical support team at 877-570-6903.

### Additional relief fund details released

Today, the Department of Health and Human Services released details about additional allocations from the Provider Relief fund outlined in the CARES Act. In the next rollout, the agency highlight four groups receiving allocations:

- \$20 billion is allocated for general distribution and based on eligible providers' 2018 net patient revenue. This is on top of the \$30 billion distributed two weeks ago.
- \$10 billion is allocated for rural providers and based on operating expenses.
- \$10 billion is allocated for areas with high incidence of COVID-19.
- \$400 million is allocated for Indian Health Services.

On a call this afternoon, HHS indicated that these funds will be distributed on a rolling basis and should start this week. For more information, see the agency's [press release](#). IHA will continue to follow these developments and provide updates.

### IHCA, LeadingAge Iowa recommend testing guidance for hospital-to-nursing-facility transfers

On April 13, IDPH released interim guidance for new admissions or return of residents to long-term care facilities. The guidance says, "the Iowa State Hygienic Laboratory will accept specimens for patients being discharged from a hospital to a nursing facility, but test results should not delay timing and completion of an otherwise clinically appropriate discharge."

Although a negative test does not eliminate the need for isolation precautions, a confirmed positive COVID-19 test does have important implications for cohorting and staffing to reduce the risk of transmission to residents with unknown status and healthy, asymptomatic residents. Therefore, the Iowa Health Care Association and LeadingAge Iowa recommend that long-term care

providers request COVID-19 testing of patients discharged from hospitals and transferred to nursing facilities.

### **CMS issues additional blanket waivers**

On Tuesday, April 21, CMS issued additional blanket waivers for:

- Care for patients in long-term care hospitals, temporary expansion locations of rural health clinics and federally qualified health centers
- Staffing and training modifications in intermediate care facilities for those with intellectual disabilities.
- Substitute billing arrangements (locum tenens).

The new blanket waivers are part of the [evolving document of blanket waivers](#) that CMS issued approximately a month ago. Although CMS does not mark which blanket waivers are "new" in the document, the new blanket waivers can be found on pages 5-7, 16, 17 and 18.

### **Pharmacy board considering compliance extension**

The Iowa Board of Pharmacy's delayed-compliance committee will consider USP Chapter facility compliance-extension requests for providers granted a delay from last December's enforcement date if their delay expires within 90 days. The board expects that licensees will attempt to comply with their granted delay but acknowledges that pandemic circumstances may affect labor and financial resources. Requests for extensions should be emailed to [Christie Carlson](#), who will handle submission for consideration. Licensees may continue to send requests after the pandemic resolution, if needed.

### **CEO update call**

The next hospital CEO call is scheduled for 1 pm Wednesday, April 29. Click [here](#) to register.

### **CMS launches new toolkit to help states navigate COVID-19 health workforce challenges**

CMS has released a [new toolkit](#) to help state and local health care decision makers maximize workforce flexibilities when confronting COVID-19 in their communities. The toolkit provides helpful information on funding flexibilities, liability protections and workforce training. For example, state and local communities can access the toolkit to see how and where workforce waivers can be applied based on information from other areas. The toolkit also provides best practices, so health care decision makers have a go-to resource for what's been implemented and how it's working. The toolkit includes an assistance center, information exchange of case studies and additional peer-to-peer communications.

### **NIH publishes COVID-19 treatment guidelines**

The National Institutes of Health has published extensive [treatment guidelines](#) for COVID-19. These Treatment Guidelines have been developed to inform clinicians how to care for patients with COVID-19. Because clinical information about the optimal management of COVID-19 is evolving quickly, these Guidelines will be updated frequently as published data and other authoritative information becomes available. The guidelines are based on scientific evidence and expert opinion. Treatment recommendations include ratings for the strength of the recommendation and the quality of the evidence that supports the recommendation.

### **Free webinar opportunities**

- 9-10:30 am Thursday, April 23, ***SBA Funding Options for Physicians and Other Providers Under the CARES Act***. The Small Business Administration (SBA) loan program available under the CARES Act plugs into an existing infrastructure. This webinar will help participants understand the eligibility criteria, including SBA affiliation rules applicable to SBA assistance, requirements imposed on receipt of funds under these programs and the consequences of providing false, misleading or fraudulent information in an application. Register [here](#).
- 10-11 am Thursday, April 23, ***Furloughs, Layoffs and a Grab Bag of Evolving COVID-19 Employment Issues***. JoEllen Whitney, a senior shareholder with the Davis Brown Law Firm, will focus on recent legal issues with paid leave, job service and the effect of full and partial layoffs. She also will provide updates on issues under the CARES Act and job service

including communication strategies for health care employees. Register [here](#).

- 9-10:30 am Tuesday, April 28, **Latest Stark Law Updates, Including Recent CMS Waivers**. This webinar will cover the Physician Self-Referral Law (the Stark Law), including the latest developments, as well as discuss the status of proposed regulatory reforms and the recent CMS waivers associated with COVID-19. Register [here](#).
- Noon-1 pm Wednesday, April 29, **Inspiration Speakers Series: Kevin Kush**. Kush has been involved in coaching and teaching for more than 30 years. He spent 21 of those years working with at-risk youth at Boys Town in Omaha, Nebraska. As a head football coach, he compiled a remarkable record of 164 wins and just 58 losses with 13 of those teams finishing in the top 10. Kush was featured on ABC World News Tonight as their Person of the Week. Register [here](#).
- 1:30-3 pm Thursday, April 30, **HRSA Telehealth Learning Series: Telehealth in the Time of COVID-19**. Provided by the Health Resources and Services Administration. Register [here](#).

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