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IHA COVID Resources and Advocacy

December 10, 2020

The latest about COVID-19 from IHA

Urge Iowa's members of Congress to allocate needed COVID-19 funds

Leaders from the Senate, House and Administration continue to negotiate a third COVID-19 spending package. Yesterday, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell introduced the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES/S. 3548), but the Senate legislative language does not reflect a bipartisan agreement. IHA appreciates the legislation includes funding and provisions, such as funding to reimburse hospitals for COVID-19 expenses, elimination of the Medicare sequester through December 2020 and delaying the Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital cuts by two years. IHA believes additional areas should be included in the package.

[Contact your senators and representative NOW](#) and urge them to allocate \$100 billion to frontline health care personnel and providers and direct the federal agencies to infuse funds immediately so providers can afford to take the necessary steps to combat COVID-19.

Besides what is already included in the legislation, please urge your members of Congress to provide funding for:

- Developing reciprocal medical licensures in states.
- Establishing supplemental advanced payments to acute care and critical access hospitals.
- Fully waiving long-term care hospital regulations, including the site-neutral policy, that impede hospitals' abilities to increase the capacity of the health care system without penalty.
- Offering low-interest loans to health care organizations.

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

Norris updates Iowa's congressional delegation

IHA President/CEO Kirk Norris updated Iowa's congressional delegation today about the work IHA and Iowa hospitals are doing in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. During the call, Norris said IHA is working closely with the state and is involved with the State Emergency Operations Center. He also stressed the need for funding from the federal government as hospitals are or soon will be experiencing negative cash flow because of the outbreak. Norris emphasized that steps are needed to stem its spread. He also discussed with the delegation concerns with supplies, personal protective equipment and preparedness if there is a surge.

Personal protective equipment resources

Harbor Freight donating personal protective equipment to hospitals: Harbor Freight is donating N95 masks, face shields and nitrile gloves to hospitals. Facilities can request equipment at <https://hf.tools/ppe-request>. The public also can email

hospitalhelp@harborfreight.com to identify a hospital that might be in need. After the donation has been granted, Harbor Freight will email the hospital a voucher to pick up the supplies from a local store.

Mask supplier: Project Graphics now is manufacturing N95 and surgical masks. Visit their [medical personal protective equipment page](#) to order.

CDC provides checklist to optimize N95 respirator supplies: [Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of N95 Respirators](#) offers a series of strategies or options for how health care facilities can optimize supplies of disposable N95 filtering facepiece respirators. This checklist is intended to help health care facilities prioritize the implementation of the strategies following the prioritization used in the concept of surge capacity.

AHA's Pollack appears on Face the Nation

American Hospital Association President and CEO Rick Pollack joined [Face the Nation](#) Sunday to discuss how hospitals and medical staff are battling the coronavirus.

FDA releases guidance to mitigate ventilator supply disruptions

The FDA has published additional information focused on mitigating disruptions to or shortages in the ventilator supply chain.

First, the agency released [updated guidance](#) to provide flexibility around and expand the availability of ventilators and other respiratory devices to treat patients during the public health emergency. The FDA also released a [letter](#) to health care providers to supplement the updated guidance and provide recommendations directed at providers. Because of the urgency of this issue, the guidance was issued without public comment and will remain in effect only for the duration of the public health emergency.

Relief for those participating in quality reporting programs in response to COVID-19

Today, CMS announced it is granting exceptions from reporting requirements and extensions for clinicians and providers participating in Medicare quality reporting programs with respect to upcoming measure reporting and data submission for those programs. The action comes as part of the Trump Administration's response to COVID-19. See the press release [here](#).

HRSA provides guidance on 340B audits

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is moving toward conducting 340B Program-covered entity audits remotely (virtually) for the next several months while they assess and monitor the impact on covered entities. If a covered entity has specific questions about an audit after they have been engaged, please [email](#) the Bizzell Group (the 340B audit contractor) and they will coordinate with HRSA based on the specifics of the request. HRSA will continue to evaluate the situation and provide updates accordingly.

The AHA strongly recommends and has asked the Trump Administration to suspend audits during the COVID-19 emergency. Please share with AHA any concerns you have regarding 340B audits scheduled during the COVID-19 emergency. AHA will continue to communicate with HRSA's 340B leadership. Please email [Molly Collins Offner](#), AHA director of policy, or [Aimee Kuhlman](#), AHA senior association director of federal relations.

CDC implements new diagnosis code

The CDC's National Center for Health Statistics is implementing a new diagnosis code, [U07.1, COVID-19](#), into the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision, Clinical Modification (ICD-10-CM), effective April 1, 2020. The ICD-10 MS-DRG Grouper assigns each case into an MS-DRG based on the reported diagnosis and procedure codes and demographic information (age, sex, and discharge status).

CEO update calls

1 pm Wednesdays are our regular calls with hospital CEOs. [Click here](#) to register for the March 25 call.

IHA COVID-19 resource webpage now includes hospital best practices

At members' suggestions, IHA's [coronavirus resource page](#) now includes information from hospitals about their best practices for responding to COVID-19.

Previous IHA Updates on COVID-19

[March 22 Update](#)

[March 20 Update](#)

[March 19 Update](#)

[March 18 Update](#)

[March 17 Update](#)



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