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CDC Call on PPE Strategies

CDC will host a Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity (COCA) call that will focus on PPE optimization strategies. The call will take place tomorrow, Wednesday, March 25, 2020, from 2:00–3:00 p.m. (Eastern Time). Presenters will discuss strategies for healthcare facilities to optimize PPE supplies such as eye protection, isolation gowns, facemasks, and N95 respirators. Advanced registration is not required. Due to the high demand, we encourage participants to also consider viewing the call on [Facebook Live](#). If you are unable to attend, the call will be available for viewing on [COCA's Facebook page](#) a few hours after the live event ends. If you have questions or would like to learn more about the [COCA Call](#), email coca@cdc.gov.

In addition, we have been notified that today's COCA call, Underlying Medical Conditions and People at Higher Risk for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), is postponed to March 27, 2020.

AL Hospital Admissions Guidance

AHCA/NCAL has updated our [interim guidance](#) regarding accepting hospital discharges during COVID-19 pandemic to include assisted living communities. It is important to note that the decision-making and guidance will likely change as the prevalence of COVID-19 varies in communities and hospital surge increases in the community.

COVID-19 HUD Update

The Office of Healthcare Programs for the Federal Housing Administration has put together a [questions and answers document](#) for external stakeholders around COVID-19. This document addresses questions such as whether the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) Office of Healthcare Programs is cancelling or postponing inspections or other site visits in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case at a HUD-insured facility and what steps Owners and Operators should take to protect residents, staff, and the community. HUD knows long term care providers are looking for supplemental Q&As, and they are working on it daily.

Template Letter to Health Plans and Accountable Care Organizations Requesting Relief

As AHCA previously reported, health plans have [announced](#), and CMS is allowing Medicare Advantage plans [flexibilities](#) to offer, relief to patients and providers specific to COVID-19-related services. However, due to the extraordinary efforts SNF providers are taking to care for all residents, AHCA is providing a [template letter](#) to ask Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) for further relief from administrative burdens including all prior authorizations, all pre- and post-payment reviews, excessive documentation requests, and payment delays.

Similarly, AHCA is providing a [template letter](#) to use with Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) to request a reduction in documentation requests, loosening of utilization management strategies and effective communication and partnership on COVID-19 patients. To use the letters, download the document(s) and include the MCO's or ACO's name and SNF's contact information where indicated, and send the letter to the provider or contract representative at the MCO or ACO.

Possible Extension of Medicare Cost Report Due Date

With the considerable burden posed by COVID-19, SNFs have been exploring as many possible ways to reduce administrative burden and free up staff. A key question has been whether CMS would extend cost report due dates.

Today, at least one Local Administrative Contractor (MAC) posted information indicating CMS has the authority to extend cost reporting due dates (42 CFR § 413.24 (f) (2) (ii)).

Specifically, the MAC noted that CMS will delay the filing deadline of Fiscal Year End (FYE) December 31, 2019 cost reports due at the end of May due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The filing deadline for the following cost reports are now June 30, 2020:

- FYE October 31, 2019 due by March 31, 2020
- FYE November 30, 2019 due by April 30, 2020

The filing deadline for FYE December 31, 2019 is now July 31, 2020.

Suggested Action Steps:

1. Check your MAC Provider Information webpage for similar information;
or
2. If none is posted, contact your MAC and ask about the dates, above.
MAC often do not follow the same procedures and post differing information.

View a [map of MAC coverage by states](#).

Email COVID19@ahca.org for additional questions, or visit ahcancal.org/coronavirus for more information.

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