



mlnconnects

Official CMS news from the Medicare Learning Network®

SPECIAL EDITION

Friday, April 17, 2020

News

- RHC & FQHC Flexibilities During COVID-19 Public Health Emergency
- CMS Increases Medicare Payment for High-Production Coronavirus Lab Tests
- CMS Implements CARES Act Hospital Payment and Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility Waivers
- COVID-19 Call: Audio Recording and Transcript

News

RHC & FQHC Flexibilities During COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

To support Rural Health Clinics (RHCs), Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), and their patients, Congress and CMS made changes to requirements and payments during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. See [MLN Matters Special Edition Article 20016](#) to learn about:

- New payment for telehealth services, including how to bill Medicare
- Expansion of virtual communication services
- Revision of home health agency shortage requirement for visiting nursing services
- Consent for care management and virtual communication services
- Accelerated/advance payments

CMS Increases Medicare Payment for High-Production Coronavirus Lab Tests

CMS announced that Medicare will nearly double payment for certain lab tests that use high-throughput technologies to rapidly diagnose large numbers of COVID-19 cases. This is another action the Trump Administration is taking to rapidly expand COVID-19 testing. Along with the March 30 announcement that Medicare will pay new specimen collection fees for COVID-19 testing, CMS's actions will expand capability to test more vulnerable populations, like nursing home patients, quickly and provide results faster. Medicare will pay laboratories for the tests at \$100 effective April 14, 2020, through the duration of the COVID-19 national emergency.

[Press Release](#)

CMS Implements CARES Act Hospital Payment and Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility Waivers

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act increases payment for Inpatient Prospective Payment System (IPPS) and long-term care hospital (LTCH) inpatient hospital care attributable to COVID-19. CMS provided guidance for IPPS hospitals and LTCHs on how to code claims to receive the higher payment.

The CARES Act also waives the requirement that Medicare Part A fee-for-service patients treated in inpatient rehabilitation facilities receive at least 15 hours of therapy per week.

COVID-19 Call: Audio Recording and Transcript

An [audio recording](#) and [transcript](#) are available for the [April 7](#) Medicare Learning Network call on 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updates. Learn about CMS waivers and COVID-19 response.

[Like the newsletter? Have suggestions? Please let us know!](#)

[Subscribe](#) to MLN Connects. Previous issues are available in the [archive](#).
This newsletter is current as of the issue date. View the complete [disclaimer](#).

Follow the MLN on [Twitter](#) #CMSMLN, and visit us on [YouTube](#).

The Medicare Learning Network®, MLN Connects®, and MLN Matters® are registered trademarks of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

