Office of Corporate Compliance Newsletter

APRIL 26, 2021

COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY UPDATES

COVID-19 Vaccine Coverage Reminders
The COVID-19 vaccine is now available to all. Until COVID-19 is no longer declared a public health emergency, any employee who declines to be vaccinated for personal or religious reasons can be subject to discipline. Approved Exemptions The OIG released a message April 26th regarding vaccine exemptions titled, “Final Determination” of qualified religious conscientious objection. The policy states that employees requesting an exemption must provide written documentation of the religious objection. The Office’s review of each request will be handled on a case-by-case basis. The determination of whether an exemption is granted is at the director’s discretion. http://www.bsd.uchicago.edu/x63456.xml

Extension of the Medicare Pay Cut Suspension
On April 15th, President Biden signed H.R. 244 into law. The law will extend the 2% Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act (MACRA) payment adjustment for one year through December 2021. MACRA had previously suspended the 2% adjustment for 2020, but provided for its reinstatement for 2021. CMS will be working to clarify the impact of the law’s provisions. For any questions, please contact 877-860-1537 or bsdhca@bsd.uchicago.edu

CMS List of Telehealth Services Expired
CMS issued a notice April 20th that CMS’s list of acceptable telehealth services will expire on April 30th. This means, effective May 1st, the only acceptable services will be those selected in the Federal Register on April 17th. For a complete list, see https://www.cms.gov/telehealthwaiver.

COVID-19 Telehealth Round 2 Funding Open April 26th
The FCC announced April 26th that Round 2 applications related to COVID-19 telehealth services was opened. The FCC will accept Round 2 applications through May 6th at 12:00pm EDT. More information is available at www.fcc.gov/covid19/telehealth.

COVID-19 Vaccine & MAB Administration Billing Tips
Vaccinations may not be denied based on recipients’ coverage or network status. Any past impermissible fees charged to patients must be refunded. Office visits may not be charged if COVID-19 vaccination is the sole service. Immunizations to vaccinate an employee may not be sought from the patient, for example, if the COVID-19 vaccine is available through a government program.

Vaccine & MAB Administration Tip Sheets
For additional guidance, see the vaccine & MAB administration tip sheets linked below:
- Medicare or Medicaid
- Hospital
- Cruze
- HIPAA
- COVID-19

REGULATORY UPDATES

New Bill Proposed to Recognize Genetic Counselors
New bill introduced to Congress on April 15th which would authorize CMS to recognize Genetic Counselors as healthcare providers, which would increase reimbursement for Medicare beneficiaries. A new bill (H.R. 244) has been introduced to Congress which would authorize CMS to recognize Genetic Counselors as healthcare providers, which would increase reimbursement for Medicare beneficiaries. A previous bill (H.R. 1868) was introduced in Congress in January 2021 to authorize CMS to recognize Genetic Counselors as healthcare providers.

COVID-19 Extension of the Medicare Pay Cut Suspension
The COVID-19 extension of the Pay Cut Suspension is expected to be in effect through December 2021. MACs will be working to clarify the impact of the law’s provisions.

MACRA’s 2% stall persists: The OIG released a message April 26th regarding vaccine exemptions titled, “Final Determination” of qualified religious conscientious objection. The policy states that employees requesting an exemption must provide written documentation of the religious objection. The Office’s review of each request will be handled on a case-by-case basis. The determination of whether an exemption is granted is at the director’s discretion.

COVID-19 Public Health Emergency
The COVID-19 PHE which arises under 42 Code of Federal Regulations 70.2 was renewed on April 15th. Per CMS guidance, all pre-existing requirements remain in effect. For more information, please contact 877-860-1537 or bsdhca@bsd.uchicago.edu.

COVID-19 - Visitor Access
Visitors may not be denied based on recipients’ coverage or network status. Any past impermissible fees charged to patients must be refunded.

RESTRICTIONS ON EMPLOYMENT

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GUIDANCE DOCUMENT UPDATES

New IRS Guidance & Notice for CMS Administrators
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) guidance clarify the scope of the telephone or video contact requirement for Telehealth. Go to the CMS website for the updated guidance.

News Health & Human Services COVID-19 SHEET
Health & Human Services COVID-19 SHEET. Updates to the CMS COVID-19 website on April 22nd. The COVID-19 SHEET is available here.

Next CMS COVID-19 Office Hours Call
Next CMS COVID-19 Office Hours Call will be held April 27th at 10am Central Time. For more information, please contact 877-860-1537 or bsdhca@bsd.uchicago.edu.

For any issues or questions, please email us at training@bsd.uchicago.edu. Find more information and FAQ on the CMS COVID-19 SHEET.

EVALUATION UPDATES

Finding Fraud Awareness Training in New Absorb Platform
On April 13th, the learning Management System transitioned from Docts to Absorb. In Absorb, go to My Courses on your Dashboard and search for Fraud Awareness. For any issues or questions, please email us at training@bsd.uchicago.edu.

UPDATING ACCESS PASSES

Computer-Based Training for FY21 Fraud Awareness
In May, the training will transition to a new platform. Employees who used the old platform should have transferred to the new system in the spring. For any issues or questions, please email us at training@bsd.uchicago.edu.