

Weekly Medical Directors Briefing

July 27-31, 2020

“When we have nations, institutions and advocates working on this collective response, we do see remarkable impact.”

-- Bill Gates at 2020 COVID-19 Conference

Brief COVID-19 Updates

There are several timely updates that we know would be of interest to primary care clinicians. Please forward on to your staff.

Surge of Cases Nation-wide Leads to Testing Delays

Public testing sites sponsored by the State in several counties have found long delays in results for the lowest risk groups, as the state announced [criteria for prioritizing testing](#). OptumServe and Verily sites sponsored by the counties are affected. County health lab and local hospital lab turnaround (including Kaiser) is faster, but capacity is limited. Home testing is being rolled out by Lab Corps and soon Quest will join them. We will include more information on this in the next update.

Although point of care RNA testing (Abbott and others) is less sensitive than PCR-based testing, but some public health experts feel that a less sensitive point of care test that turns around results quickly, is better on a population level for screening than a more accurate PCR test with results available in 10-14 days.

All COVID tests are covered by PHC when done by any lab provider with a Medi-Cal provider number, up to 2 tests per day, for both diagnosis and screening.

Remdesivir Shortage Leads to Narrower Treatment Criteria

On a call with one of our local health officers, we understand that Remdesivir treatment is now being delivered to those who are inpatient requiring low-flow supplemental oxygen, as these patients have the most likely benefit for the treatment. Patients not requiring oxygen and those on high flow oxygen or intubated are less likely to benefit and are not being prioritized. A five-day treatment regimen has become standard for most patients.

Eye Protection Recommended in Health Care Settings with Moderate Community Transmission

The CDC recommends that eye protection be worn in health care settings where patients with unknown or positive COVID status are being cared for. The eye protection should not have gaps between the skin and should not rest on the protective covering around the face, meaning eyeglasses are not sufficient (see [CDC recommendation](#) for details). We understand that CDPH is considering making this recommendation into a requirement in California.

Familial Autosomal Recessive Mutations Associated with Higher Risk of Severe Disease in Younger Patients

In a [study](#) that gives insight into the pathogenesis of COVID-19, a case series of 4 young male patients with severe COVID-19, were found to have a previously undiagnosed immune deficiency: a relatively rare putative loss-of-function variants of X-chromosomal TLR7 were identified that were associated with impaired type I and II interferon responses.

Obesity an Independent Risk factor for Severe COVID-19

A [report](#) from the American College of Physicians noted that Obesity is associated with an increased risk for intubation and death in COVID-19 patients under age 65, but not for those over aged 65.

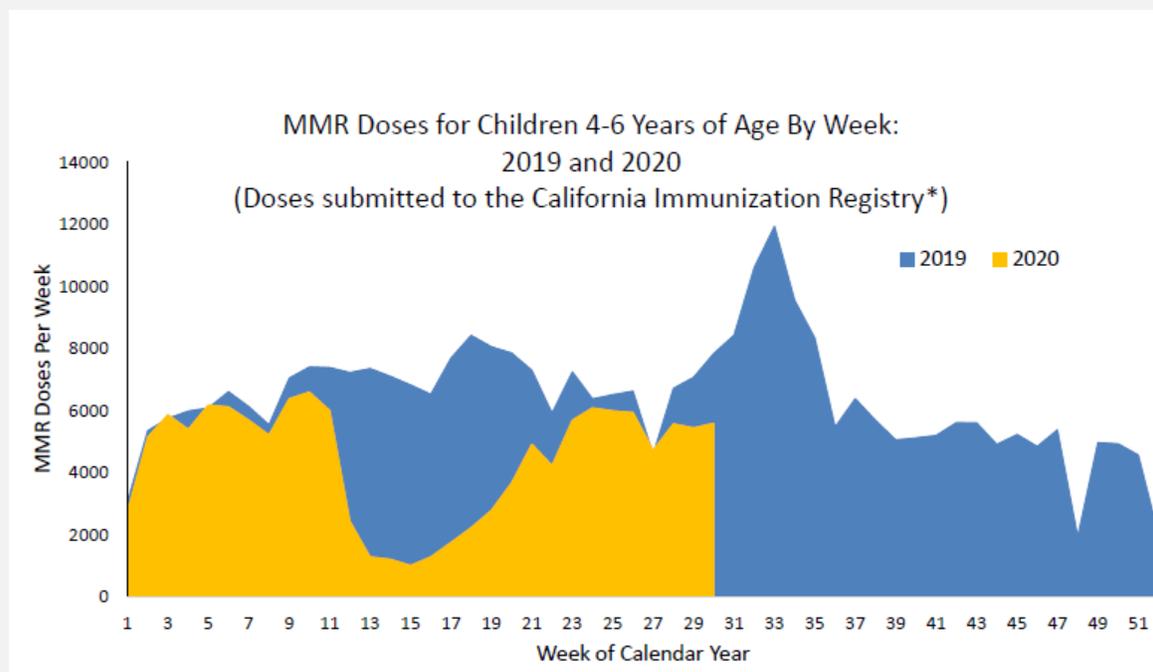
“Broken Heart Syndrome” Increased During COVID-19

An [observational analysis](#) of patients *without* COVID-19, receiving echocardiograms at the Cleveland Clinic, found an increased percentage with stress cardiomyopathy (also known as takotsubo syndrome or broken heart syndrome). The rate ratio before COVID-19 was 1.5 to 1.8%, while the rate ratio during the lockdown rose to 4.6%.

Stress cardiomyopathy is a physical manifestation of sustained psychological stress. This study shows the degree of population stress that the response to the pandemic is having on the community.

Childhood Immunization Rate Rebounding (Somewhat)

The graphic below, from the California Immunization Registry, shows that the rate of immunization for MMR (a proxy for overall childhood immunization activity in young children) has mostly rebounded in California in the past month. Overall, though, there is a remaining backlog. Without in-person school in many parts of the state, the usual August bump in immunization rates may not occur this year. Next week, PHC will be starting a state-mandated phone outreach campaign to children under age 2 to remind them of the importance of vaccination and well-child visits.



This Week's News

CARES Act Provider Relief Fund

The Provider Relief Funds supports American families, workers, and heroic healthcare providers in the battle against the COVID-19 outbreak. The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) is distributing \$175 billion to hospitals and healthcare providers on the front lines of the coronavirus response.

For more information, please visit the [HHS's website](#).

Don't Wait Vaccination Campaign

Immunization rates in California have dropped precipitously during the COVID-19 pandemic, raising alarm bells for the health and safety of our children, patients and families.

The California Immunization Coalition has a campaign to remind parents and adults, **"Don't Wait Vaccinate."**

For more information and a campaign kit, please refer to the [California Immunization Coalition's webpage](#).

Any questions or comments: info@immunizeca.org.

Oxygen Saturation Monitors, BP Monitors, and Thermometers – Free for PHC Members

In response to COVID-19, PHC has obtained a limited supply of blood pressure monitors, oxygen saturation monitors, and thermometers to be given at no cost to PHC members who are patients of Federally Qualified Health Centers, Rural Health Clinics, and Indian Health Services (IHS). PHC would like your help in getting these supplies distributed to our members and your patients that would benefit from this medical equipment.

These supplies will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Interested providers will need to complete the DME Request Form on our [website](#). Complete the form and submit to request@partnershiphp.org or fax to 707-420-7855.

Providers will be expected to connect with the selected PHC members to ensure the member can use the equipment properly.

Reminder: PHC's Wellness and Recovery Program Goes Live!

The Wellness and Recovery Program launched in Humboldt, Lassen, Mendocino, Modoc, Shasta, Siskiyou, and Solano counties on July 1, 2020.*

Medi-Cal beneficiaries in the seven counties can be screened and connected to a treatment provider by calling Beacon Health Options at (855) 765-9703.

For more information about Wellness and Recovery services, [click here](#).

*Expanded SUD services are available in Napa, Marin, and Yolo counties, and are administered by the counties. A more limited benefit is administered by the remaining four counties – Del Norte, Lake, Sonoma, and Trinity.

PHC Educational Opportunities and Events

Accelerated Learning Education Programs

CME/CE credits available

We acknowledge that the COVID-19 response is changing how health centers and practices approach their daily work and QIP efforts. Wishing to be mindful of the situation, we solicited feedback regarding your ability to participate in the upcoming scheduled webinars. The information received back indicates that most would like the webinars to continue as planned. We want to continue to provide education and resources to help practices on the PCP QIP measures, and will maintain the currently scheduled webinars:

Cervical and Breast Cancer Screening (CCS & BCS)

Date: Tuesday, August 25, 2020

Time: Noon – 1 p.m.

[Sign-Up Now](#)

Well-Child Visits in the First 15 Months of Life (W15)

Date: Tuesday, September 22, 2020

Time: Noon – 1 p.m.

[Sign-Up Now](#)

Childhood Immunization Measures (CIS10, IMA2)

Date: Tuesday, October 06, 2020

Time: Noon – 1 p.m.

[Sign-Up Now](#)

Recommended Educational Opportunities Outside of PHC

On-Demand Webinars by ECHO

All available trainings are available on-demand and free of cost:

- [Leveraging Telehealth and Remote Monitoring to Support Patients with Diabetes](#)
- [Diabetes Patient Needs in the Time of COVID-19](#)
- [Continuous Glucose Monitoring \(CGM\) & Beyond A1c Targets in the Time of COVID-19](#)
- [Platforms to Support Remote Diabetes Monitoring in your Practice in the Time of COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19 & Sick Day Management for People with Diabetes](#)
- [Identifying High-Risk Diabetes Patients for COVID-19 Triage](#)
- [Insulin Dosing & Therapeutic Inertia in the Time of COVID-19](#)
- [DPP-4 Inhibitor, GLP-1 Receptor Agonist, & SGLT Inhibitor Therapies](#)
- [Tackling Therapeutic Inertia: American Diabetes Association Standard of Care Updates](#)

Diabetes and Pregnancy in the Time of COVID-19

This webinar will address the urgent needs of patients with type 1 and type 2 diabetes who require complex diabetes treatment in the primary care setting in the time of COVID-19 by empowering and increasing the capacity of primary care providers (PCPs) and clinics to safely and effectively manage underserved patients who do not have access to routine specialty care. Led by a nationally/internationally renowned faculty team of diabetes experts (many of whom contribute to/co-author national guideline recommendations), this curriculum will spotlight various aspects of diabetes management for patients at high-risk for poor outcomes during the time of COVID-19.

Date: Wednesday, August 5, 2020

Time: 9 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

[Sign-Up Now](#)

Workplace Outbreak Investigation, Contact Tracing and Testing: Intersection Between Occupational & Public

This session will explore considerations for performing COVID-19 outbreak investigations, SARS-CoV-2 contact tracing, serum testing, and infection screening. The panelists will provide unique perspectives on the opportunities and challenges with conducting these important public health functions and how they apply today in the workplace. Hear from leaders that are doing it and the experiences, frustrations, and successes they have had.

Date: Wednesday, August 5, 2020

Time: 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

[Sign-Up Now](#)

Sharpening Our Vision for Compassionate Care in the Face of Serious Illness

The Coalition for Compassionate Care of California has moved its excellent annual conference to a virtual format. PHC is sponsoring continuing medical education credit for this event. The content has been concentrated down to two half days of nationally recognized speakers, with an optional virtual poster session in the evening between events. Full details will be posted in the next week or so.

Date: August 24-25, 2020

Time: 8 a.m. – Noon

[Sign-Up Now](#)

2020 State of the Art Conference for Substance Use Disorder

CME/MOC credits available

CSAM State of the Art brings together national experts to share frontiers of research, treatments, and policies in the field of Addiction Medicine. This year we do so under the overarching theme of **Frontiers of Access to Care**. Due to the pandemic, our conference will be entirely virtual, and for the first time will span across four weeks. Leading up to the plenaries, half-day workshops will be offered in primary care for individuals with addiction; implementation of treatment in correctional health; motivational interviewing, and addiction psychiatry. The CSAM Addiction Medicine Board Exam Preparation Workshop will be offered August 28th and 29th, and then

be posted on the Education Center. Poster presentations will be available on demand.

Dates: August 28 – September 25, 2020

[Sign-Up Now](#)