

PROVIDER NEWSLETTER

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Links to additional articles:

Pharmacy Department

Pharmacy Corner:

<https://tinyurl.com/y8djavon>

The current PHC Formularies on our website:

<http://www.partnershiphp.org/Providers/Pharmacy/Pages/Formularies.aspx>

Current P&T Formulary updates and changes

<http://www.partnershiphp.org/Providers/Pharmacy/Pages/PT-Formulary-Changes.aspx>

Compliance Department:

HIPAA: Protecting Member/Patient Information

<https://tinyurl.com/w3a6kpe>

Member Services Department:

Member Rights & Responsibilities

<http://www.partnershiphp.org/Providers/Medi-Cal/Pages/Rights-and-Responsibility.aspx>

Health Services Department:

PHC Case Management Services

<https://tinyurl.com/yasffzse>

Claims Department

Claims Corner

<https://tinyurl.com/ybe6vn74>

Important Provider Notices:

<http://www.partnershiphp.org/Providers/Claims/Pages/Important-Provider-Notices-Medi-Cal.aspx>

Quality Department:

Quality Corner:

<https://tinyurl.com/y9v383nj>

Information Technology Department:

Online Security and COVID-19

<https://tinyurl.com/ydxlacqc>

Provider Relations Department

Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

<https://tinyurl.com/qq6vwlw>

Credentialing Provider Rights & Responsibilities

<https://tinyurl.com/wxwbqsd>

PCP Access & Availability Standards

<https://tinyurl.com/rpnryrc>

Interpretation Services

<https://tinyurl.com/tropeda>

From the Desk of CEO Liz Gibboney

First and foremost, I'd like to say "Thank You" to all our providers and their staff who have been working on the frontlines of the COVID-19 crisis. Many of you are working in high risk environments and at times sacrificing time at home with your loved ones. PHC is grateful for the work you are doing to keep our members and the communities we serve be healthy.

Many businesses have had to adapt to state and local regulations in response to the COVID-19 epidemic. None is truer for PHC and for many of you. Over 90 percent of our staff has been deployed to work from home, while this has been a large task, our main objective is to continue to assist our members and support our providers. Some of you have had to modify your hours of operations, started or increased telehealth services, and worked with smaller staffs. You have adapted to the situation while providing high quality care to your patients. This is a stressful time and we want to reassure you that PHC is here to help.

PHC's response to COVID-19 to help providers:

- Grants to providers using available QIP funds
- Paying Medicare rates for COVID lab tests
- Early distribution of Intergovernmental Transfer funding
- Extra payments to SNFs for patient safety improvements
- Bulk purchase of blood pressure cuffs, oximeters and thermometers for home monitoring

We encourage you to visit our Providers webpage (www.partnershiphp.org), where we continue to add new Provider Bulletins related to topics such as billing and telehealth. This page also includes COVID-19 resources such as information from ACEs Aware. We are committed to keeping you informed of relevant updates at the state and local level as well as updates within PHC during this crisis.

PHC is here for you, if you have any questions about billing or other questions please call us at (800) 863-4155 or (707) 863-4100.

Thank you,



Safely Increasing Outpatient Healthcare Services

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a dramatic decrease of in-person visits with health care providers, for several reasons.

Why are in-person visits decreased? First, the California State emergency order to stay at home except for essential services led to consideration of which health care services could be provided virtually, and which could be postponed. Second, fear of infection has led many patients to avoid going to health care delivery settings for fear of contracting COVID from other, infected individuals. Third, health care professionals (especially those with underlying medical conditions that place them at risk of serious complications of COVID infection) are hesitant to provide non-emergency services which would place them at risk of contracting the infection. Fourth, a nation-wide shortage of masks and personal protective equipment (PPE) has been alleviated (with prioritization of inpatient and SNF facilities) if outpatient care is done virtually, where such equipment is not needed.

How to re-open? Within the PHC counties, hospitals have sufficient capacity and cases are stable enough that public health departments are following the new [California Resilience Roadmap](#) to gradually allow higher priority and lower risk activities to resume, but with a number of procedural and structural modifications to minimize risk of COVID transmission. In this context, a number of guidelines/checklists of factors to consider for increasing outpatient health care services have been developed (click on links for details) by [PHC](#), the [California Medical Association](#), the [American Medical Association](#), and the [Centers for Disease Control](#).

These guidelines are nuanced, depending on the characteristics of the provider practice, the COVID transmission pattern in the community, the availability of rapid testing in the community, and the availability of PPE needed for the particular practice setting. Oral surgeon practices, for example, that generate substantial aerosol in the course of their daily work, will have different requirements than dermatology practices.

Health care offices planning to re-open services or expand current limited hours are sometimes reporting challenges obtaining the PPE needed to safely provide expanded services. Local county health departments and medical societies are working to understand the scope of this issue and looking for solutions based on community partnerships and relationships.

The PPE that offices *do* have available can be extended. One option is decontamination. The State of California, in cooperation with federal partners, is offering [Battelle Critical Care Decontamination Systems](#) as a solution to the N95 shortages impacting California, which will be available to all practices, free of charge. There are also several do-it-yourself options including prolonged storage of masks before re-wearing and gentle warming to 170 degrees in a dry oven for 30 minutes. The CDC has additional [optimization strategies](#) which may be helpful.

We know all of you are in the midst of enormous operational changes as you navigate these resources and balance conflicting priorities. On behalf of PHC, you have our appreciation for diving into these challenges to meet your local needs.

COVID-19 and Telehealth

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, DHCS, state regulators, and PHC are encouraging video visits when medically appropriate. Partnership HealthPlan of California (PHC) providers must take steps to allow PHC members to obtain health care via telehealth when medically appropriate to do so as provided below.

Unless otherwise agreed to by PHC and a provider, PHC will reimburse providers at the same rate, whether a service is provided in-person or through telehealth, if the service is the same regardless of the modality of delivery, as determined by the provider's description of the service on the claim.

The Medi-Cal benefits or services being provided by the provider must be clinically appropriate based upon evidence-based medicine and/or best practices to be delivered via telehealth, subject to oral or written consent by the PHC member.

Some circumstances that limit the ability to provide services face-to-face and warrant telehealth services include the patient being quarantined at home or under guidelines of "stay at home" orders. If the patient lives remotely and does not have access to the internet or if the internet does not support HIPAA compliance, etc., services provided telephonically are acceptable.

To review information on billing for Telephonic or Video visits, please visit the Provider Relations page on our website at www.partnershiphp.org.

Helpful Resources:

DHCS APL on COVID-19 Telehealth

<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Documents/COVID-19/APL-20-004-Emergency-Guidance-1135-Waiver.pdf>

<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/Documents/MMCDAPLsandPolicyLetters/APL2019/APL19-009COVID-19.pdf>

Telehealth Other Virtual Telephonic Communications – Updated March 24, 2020

<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Documents/COVID-19/>

[Telehealth_Other_Virtual_Telephonic_Communications_V3.0.pdf](#)

CMS COVID-19 FAQs for State Medicaid and CHIP Agencies

<https://www.medicaid.gov/state-resource-center/downloads/covid-19-faqs.pdf>

PHC Telehealth Services MCUP3113: <http://www.partnershiphp.org/Providers/Policies/Documents/Utilization%20Management/MCUP3113.docx>

Department of Health Care Services COVID-19 Medi-Cal Services and Telehealth Notice: http://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/newsroom/newsroom_30375.asp

For additional guidance on Telehealth applications please visit the Health and Human Services webpage at <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/emergency-preparedness/notification-enforcement-discretion-telehealth/index.html>

COVID-19 Test Billing Information

http://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/newsroom/newsroom_30339.asp

http://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/newsroom/newsroom_30339_27.asp

CLAIMS MAILING ADDRESS

Attn: Claims Department
P.O. Box 1368
Suisun City, CA 94585-1368

UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT

Questions about UM Authorizations
(800) 863-4144

PHC CARE COORDINATION

Asthma, Diabetes, ESRD
(800) 809-1350

Provider Newsletter

Contact Us: (707) 863-4100 www.partnershiphp.org

The PHC Provider Newsletter and all linked articles are available online at
<http://www.partnershiphp.org/Providers/Medi-Cal/Pages/default.aspx>

For the most current P&T Formulary updates and changes,
please see PHC's P&T Formulary Changes Webpage. Updates from P&T are posted on PHC's web site quarterly in the P&T Formulary Changes webpage.

Please visit the Provider section of our website at <http://www.partnershiphp.org> to view **PHC's Medi-Cal Provider Manual** including all Policies, Procedures and Guidelines.

PHC Utilization Management (UM) Criteria and Policies

are available online by accessing the PHC Medi-Cal Provider Manual.

The Provider Manual can be found by visiting the Providers section of our website at <http://www.partnershiphp.org>.

UM Criteria is located under the Health Services category (Section 5) within the Provider Manual. Staff are available to assist you with UM related questions or inquiries during business hours, 8:00am through 5:00pm, Monday through Friday. Calls received after business hours will be returned on the next business day.



Partnership HealthPlan of California
4665 Business Center Dr.
Fairfield, CA 94534