



## CMS Snapshot

### May 14-21, 2020

Delivered to you by the Partner Relations Group in the Office of Communications

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, May 14 through 2pm Thursday, May 21, 2020.

#### News Releases

\*May 14- [HHS To Award \\$5 Million for Health Services Research Related to COVID-19](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), announced a new funding opportunity announcement (FOA) that will award \$5 million in fiscal year 2020 to support novel, high-impact studies that evaluate the responsiveness of health care delivery systems, health care professionals, and the overall U.S. health care system to the COVID-19 pandemic.

\*May 14- [Trump Administration Announces Call for Nominations for Nursing Home Commission](#). As a part of President Trump's plan to Open Up America Again, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is announcing a call for nominations for the new contractor-led Coronavirus Commission on Safety and Quality in Nursing Homes to help inform immediate and future responses to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) within these facilities. This independent Commission's work will build on the Administration's long history of decisive actions to protect nursing home residents.

\*May 15- [Trump Administration Announces Framework and Leadership for 'Operation Warp Speed'](#). On Friday, the Trump Administration announced the appointment of Moncef Slaoui as chief advisor and General Gustave F. Perna as chief operating officer of Operation Warp Speed (OWS), the administration's national program to accelerate the development, manufacturing, and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics (medical countermeasures).

\*May 15- [Secretary Azar Statement on National Hospital Week](#). May 10 through 16, 2020, marks National Hospital Week. HHS Secretary Alex Azar issued the following statement recognizing the contributions of hospitals and their frontline workers.

\*May 15- [CMS News Alert May 15, 2020](#)- As part of the ongoing White House Task Force efforts taken in response to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), following is a summary of recent Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) actions. To keep up with the important Task

Force work being done in response to COVID-19, click here [www.coronavirus.gov](http://www.coronavirus.gov). For information specific to CMS, please visit the [CMS News Room](#) and [Current Emergencies Website](#). CMS updates these resources on an ongoing basis throughout the day; the information below is current as of May 15, 2020 at 12:00 p.m. ET.

\*May 18- [Secretary Alex Azar Statement on National EMS Week](#). May 17–23, 2020, is the 46<sup>th</sup> annual celebration of National EMS Week, recognizing Emergency Medical Services personnel, such as emergency medical technicians and paramedics. HHS Secretary Alex Azar issued the following statement.

\*May 18- [HHS Delivers Funding to Expand Testing Capacity for States, Territories, Tribes](#). The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is delivering \$11 billion in new funding to support testing for COVID-19. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will provide \$10.25 billion to states, territories, and local jurisdictions through CDC's existing Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Diseases (ELC) cooperative agreement. The Indian Health Service (IHS) will provide \$750 million to IHS, tribal, and urban Indian Health programs to expand testing capacity and testing-related activities. A detailed allocation and distribution methodology will be announced for the IHS funds in the coming days.

\*May 18- [Trump Administration Issues Guidance to Ensure States Have a Plan in Place to Safely Reopen Nursing Homes](#). Today, under the leadership of President Trump, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced new guidance for state and local officials to ensure the safe reopening of nursing homes across the country. The guidance released today is part of President Trump's *Guidelines for Opening Up America Again*. It details critical steps nursing homes and communities should take prior to relaxing restrictions implemented to prevent the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), including rigorous infection prevention and control, adequate testing, and surveillance.

\*May 19- [HHS, Industry Partners Expand U.S.-Based Pharmaceutical Manufacturing for COVID-19 Response](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will work with a team of private industry partners led by Phlow Corporation of Richmond, Virginia, to expand pharmaceutical manufacturing in the United States for use in producing medicines needed during the COVID-19 response and future public health emergencies.

\*May 19- [U.S. Statement on Taiwan's Participation at the World Health Assembly](#). The United States is deeply disappointed by the World Health Organization (WHO) decision to exclude Taiwan from the World Health Assembly (WHA). The United States and Taiwan have more than 20 years of robust public health and biomedical research cooperation, addressing topics as wide-ranging as the SARS outbreak response and regional trainings for Zika diagnostic tools, burn medicine, cancer research, and dengue vaccine research. This cooperation has extended to the COVID-19 pandemic, during which we have exchanged transparent, accurate and timely information.

\*May 19- [CMS News Alert May 19, 2020](#). As part of the ongoing White House Task Force efforts taken in response to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), following is a summary of recent Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) actions. To keep up with the important Task Force work being done in response to COVID-19, click here [www.coronavirus.gov](http://www.coronavirus.gov). For information specific to CMS, please visit the [CMS News Room](#) and [Current Emergencies Website](#). CMS updates these resources on an ongoing basis throughout the day; the information below is current as of May 19, 2020 at 4:00 pm ET.

\*May 20- [HHS Provides \\$225 Million for COVID-19 Testing in Rural Communities](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) provided \$225 million to Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) for COVID-19 testing. These investments will support over 4,500 RHCs across the country to support COVID-19 testing efforts and expand access to testing in rural communities. Rural Health Clinics are a special designation given to health care practices in underserved rural areas by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) that help ensure access to care for rural residents.

\*May 20- [Providers Must Act by June 3, 2020 to Receive Additional Relief Fund General Distribution Payment](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is reminding eligible providers that they have until June 3, 2020, to accept the Terms and Conditions and submit their revenue information to support receiving an additional payment from the Provider Relief Fund \$50 billion General Distribution. All providers who automatically received an additional General Distribution payment prior to 5:00 pm, Friday, April 24th, must provide HHS with an accounting of their annual revenues by submitting tax forms or financial statements.

\*May 21- [Trump Administration's Operation Warp Speed Accelerates AstraZeneca COVID-19 Vaccine to be Available Beginning in October](#). Responding to President Trump's call to develop 300 million doses of SARS-CoV-2 vaccine by January under Operation Warp Speed, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and AstraZeneca are collaborating to make available at least 300 million doses of a coronavirus vaccine called AZD1222, with the first doses delivered as early as October 2020.

## Blog

\*May 15- [3 tips for people in the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary Program](#). If you're among the 7.5 million people in the [Qualified Medicare Beneficiary \(QMB\) Program](#), Medicare providers aren't allowed to bill you for services and items Medicare covers, including deductibles, coinsurance, and copayments. If a provider asks you to pay, that's against the law.

\*May 19- [Medicare helps protect you from viral hepatitis](#). Complications from hepatitis, an inflammation of the liver caused by a virus, kill nearly 1.4 million people worldwide every year.

\*May 21- [Concerned about your blood pressure? Medicare can help](#). It's difficult to detect high blood pressure. High blood pressure (also called "hypertension") usually doesn't have any warning signs until it causes more serious health issues, like heart attack and heart disease, stroke, eye damage, kidney disease, and vascular dementia.

### Items of Interest

\*CMS Office of Minority Health- Deadline Extended to Review and Comment on Rural Maternal Health Care. The deadline has been extended to submit comments to a Request for Information (RFI) to seek public comments regarding rural maternal and infant health care. To review the RFI, please visit [go.cms.gov/ruralhealth](https://go.cms.gov/ruralhealth). CMS encourages all stakeholders to review the RFI at [go.cms.gov/ruralhealth](https://go.cms.gov/ruralhealth) and submit comments to [RuralMaternalRFI@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:RuralMaternalRFI@cms.hhs.gov). Comments will be collected until Sunday, May 31 at 11:59pm ET.

*CMS has developed a [Virtual Toolkit](#) to help you stay informed on CMS and HHS materials available on the COVID-19. Please share these materials, bookmark the page, and check back often for the most up-to-date information.*

*For more information, please email [partnership@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:partnership@cms.hhs.gov)*