



CMS Snapshot

March 27-April 2, 2020

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

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, March 26 through 2pm Thursday, April 2, 2020.

News Releases

*March 27- [Secretary Azar Statement on President Trump's Signing of the CARES Act](#). HHS Secretary Alex Azar issued the following statement following President Trump's signing of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

*March 27- [Trump Administration Approves 34th State Request for Medicaid Emergency Waivers](#). Under President Trump's leadership, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) approved its 34th state Medicaid waiver request under Section 1135 of the Social Security Act. Granting these waivers is made possible by the President's national emergency declaration to ensure that CMS is providing state partners with the maximum flexibility needed to care for Medicaid beneficiaries during the coronavirus public health emergency.

*March 28- [OCR Issues Bulletin on Civil Rights Laws and HIPAA Flexibilities That Apply During the COVID-19 Emergency](#). Today, the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is issuing a bulletin to ensure that entities covered by civil rights authorities keep in mind their obligations under laws and regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, and exercise of conscience and religion in HHS-funded programs, including in the provision of health care services during COVID-19.

*March 28- [Trump Administration Provides Financial Relief for Medicare Providers](#). Under the President's leadership, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is announcing an expansion of its accelerated and advance payment program for Medicare participating health care providers and suppliers, to ensure they have the resources needed to combat the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

*March 29- [HHS accepts donations of medicine to Strategic National Stockpile as possible treatments for COVID-19 patients](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) today accepted 30 million doses of hydroxychloroquine sulfate donated by Sandoz, the Novartis generics and biosimilars division, and one million doses of chloroquine phosphate donated by

Bayer Pharmaceuticals, for possible use in treating patients hospitalized with [COVID-19](#) or for use in clinical trials.

*March 29- [Trump Administration Engages America's Hospitals in Unprecedented Data Sharing](#). Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) sent a letter to the nation's hospitals on behalf of Vice President Pence requesting they report data in connection with their efforts to fight the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

*March 30- [HHS Accelerates Clinical Trials, Prepares for Manufacturing of COVID-19 Vaccines](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services took steps today to speed the development and manufacturing of vaccines to prevent [COVID-19](#), working with New Jersey-based Janssen Research & Development, part of Johnson & Johnson, and Moderna of Cambridge, Massachusetts.

*March 30- [Secretary Azar Statement on FDA Authorization of Mask Sterilization Procedure](#). On Sunday, the Food and Drug Administration issued a revised Emergency Use Authorization to allow the large-scale use of a system created by Battelle Memorial Institute to decontaminate used N95 respirators during the COVID-19 pandemic. HHS Secretary Alex Azar issued the following statement.

*March 30- [Trump Administration Makes Sweeping Regulatory Changes to Help U.S. Healthcare System Address COVID-19 Patient Surge](#). At President Trump's direction, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) today is issuing an unprecedented array of temporary regulatory waivers and new rules to equip the American healthcare system with maximum flexibility to respond to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

*March 30- [CMS News Alert March 30, 2020](#). Here is a summary of recent Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) actions taken in response to the COVID-19 virus, as part of the ongoing White House Task Force efforts. To keep up with the important work the Task Force is doing in response to COVID-19, click here www.coronavirus.gov. For information specific to CMS, please visit the [CMS News Room](#) and [Current Emergencies Website](#).

*March 31- [Optimizing Ventilator Use during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). Because of the unprecedented demand on hospital and ICU resources during the COVID-19 (SARS CoV-2) pandemic, many hospitals may be challenged with providing mechanical ventilation to all those in need of this therapy.

*March 31- [CMS News Alert March 31, 2020](#)- Here is a summary of recent Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) actions taken in response to the COVID-19 virus, as part of the ongoing White House Task Force efforts. To keep up with the important work the Task Force is doing in response to COVID-19, click here www.coronavirus.gov. For information specific to CMS, please visit the [CMS News Room](#) and [Current Emergencies Website](#).

*April 2- [OCR Announces Notification of Enforcement Discretion to Allow Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information by Business Associates for Public Health and Health Oversight](#)

[Activities During The COVID-19 Nationwide Public Health Emergency](#). Today, the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced, effective immediately, that it will exercise its enforcement discretion and will not impose penalties for violations of certain provisions of the HIPAA Privacy Rule against health care providers or their business associates for the good faith uses and disclosures of protected health information (PHI) by business associates for public health and health oversight activities during the COVID-19 nationwide public health emergency.

*April 2- [DOJ and HHS Partner to Distribute More Than Half A Million Medical Supplies Confiscated From Price Gougers](#). The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) today announced the distribution of hoarded personal protective equipment (PPE), including approximately 192,000 N95 respirator masks, to those on the frontline of the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) response in New York and New Jersey.

*April 2- [CMS News Alert April 2, 2020](#). Here is a summary of recent Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) actions taken in response to the COVID-19 virus, as part of the ongoing White House Task Force efforts. To keep up with the important work the Task Force is doing in response to COVID-19, click here 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 April 2, 2020 at 12:00 PM EST.

Fact Sheets

*March 30- [Additional Background: Sweeping Regulatory Changes to Help U.S. Healthcare System Address COVID-19 Patient Surge](#). At President Trump's direction, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is taking historic and unprecedented steps to equip the American healthcare system with maximum flexibility to respond to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Blogs

*April 1- [Medicare covers alcohol misuse screening](#). It's important to remember that as you get older you have an increased sensitivity to alcohol. This means that you experience the symptoms from drinking more quickly than you may have when you were younger. And, alcohol misuse can have a serious impact on your medications and [current health problems](#).

For more information please email partnership@cms.hhs.gov