



IROQUOIS

Healthcare Association

To: IHA Members

From: Gary J. Fitzgerald, *President & CEO*

Date: March 15, 2020

RE: COVID-19: Weekend Update

FEDERAL COVID-19 UPDATE:

On Friday, the U.S. House of Representatives passed Coronavirus response legislation to provide for emergency paid sick leave and food aid for low-income individuals, as well as to eliminate patient cost sharing for COVID-19 testing and related services.

The package also included a provision to increase state Medicaid funding via a 6.2% increase in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) for the duration of the national emergency. The rise in FMAP is estimated to bring in as much as \$6.7 billion in federal Medicaid funding relief to New York.

While this appears to be positive, Cuomo came out over the weekend blasting NY's federal delegation stating the federal bill will now make passing the NYS budget impossible. According to the the federal bill, NYS government cannot change the localities' reimbursement rate for Medicaid, yet Cuomo's proposal for balancing this year's budget relies on reducing the amount of local spending on Medicaid that is covered by the state.

Additionally, [in an open letter](#) published today in the New York Times, Cuomo asked President Trump for uniformity among states, as well as military aid in addressing the risk to hospitals by creating temporary medical centers.

UPCOMING FEDERAL CALLS/WEBINARS FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS:

- **AHA and Federation of American Hospitals Webinar**
 - Monday, March 16 at 11am to 12:30pm ET
 - Will host a members-only webinar featuring hospital and health system leaders from Israel and Singapore on lessons learned preparing for and responding to COVID-19
 - To register:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/covid19lessonslearned>
 - **You must register by 8pm ET on Sunday, March 15** in order to participate in the webinar
- **CMS Call for Hospitals & Health Systems**
 - Monday, March 16 at 12pm to 1pm ET to discuss information on COVID-19
 - Dial in number: **888-455-1397**
 - Participant passcode: **5854574**
 - CMS plans to hold these calls weekly as the situation evolves.

STATE COVID-19 UPDATE:

As of today, NYS has tested 5,272 individuals and has 729 confirmed COVID-19 cases. The hospitalization rate is now 19% including 65 patients in the ICU and 46 patients intubated. There have been 3 deaths related to COVID-19 statewide.

Yesterday it was announced that two Assembly members representing the Brooklyn area have tested positive for COVID-19, prompting the Governor to close the NYS Capitol to visitors effective today; however, the Governor stated in a press conference this afternoon that he will not shut down government nor will he keep lawmakers at home.

STATE BUDGET UPDATE:

The Governor has, however, said he would welcome a state budget adoption early, prior to April 1. IHA is hearing that 3-way state budget negotiations have been taking place this weekend. We have also heard that the New York State Division of the Budget (DOB) is preparing state budget "extenders", which would essentially keep state government operating, but not contain any additional items (such as [the Medicaid deficit](#), bail reform, legalization of marijuana, etc). There is also discussion around a suspension of the legislative session until a later date, perhaps even July.

TESTING OPERATIONS:

NYS opened its first drive-thru testing site for COVID-19 in New Rochelle over the weekend. Officials are now considering opening other testing areas, including in New York City and Long Island.

CHILDCARE:

As schools across the State continue to announce closures, there are a number of concerns arising regarding continuing of childcare and low-income food aid. In an [Executive Order](#) issued by Cuomo on Friday, he provided some information applying to existing day care centers/family/group settings in relation to capacity limits and ratios.

However, this guidance does not address creating or establishing new childcare facilities. We have raised this issue on behalf of our IHA members and will to continue to raise this issue with the Governor's office and DOH.

NEW DOH & CDC COVID-19 GUIDANCE:

DOH [hosted a webinar](#) on Friday for healthcare providers outlining the latest information related to the outbreak. Below, please find guidance issued by DOH, pertaining to the current COVID-19 outbreak for the following Medicaid providers:

- [NYSDOH Guidance on Preventing Introduction and Spread of COVID-19 in Nursing Homes and Adult Care Facilities](#)
- [Home and Community-Based Services \(HCBS\) providers serving children/youth under the 1915\(c\) Children's Waiver](#)
- [Health Homes Serving Adults, Health Homes Serving Children/Youth, and Care Coordination Organization/Health Homes \(CCO/HH\)](#)
- [Certified Home Health Agencies \(CHHA\)/Licensed Home Care Services Agencies \(LHCSA\)/Long Term Home Health Care Programs/Hospices](#)
- [CDC Specimen Collection Recommendation](#)
- **NYSDOH COVID-19 Patient and Bed Survey on HERDS**
 - Hospitals are required to complete the HERDS survey twice a day:
 - 8am-10am
 - 3pm-5pm
 - The information being collected includes:
 - Confirmed, positive COVID-19 patient numbers:
 - Currently in observation beds, inpatient, ICU, intubated
 - Admitted and discharged since last report
 - Fatalities total and since last report
 - Patient specific details including:
 - Patient initials, age and gender
 - Date of admission; and discharge

- Patient Status; and change since last report
- ICU respiratory support
- Co-morbidities
- Bed Information:
 - Total certified and staffed beds; and total available
 - Total certified and staffed ICU beds; and total available

IHA MEMBERS ON COVID-19:

Upstate University Hospital has created a CNY [regional triage hotline](#) for public questions related to COVID-19. The hotline will be staffed with volunteers from across Upstate's campuses and a healthcare provider will be available at all times to assist with triaging calls. NYS has also created a hotline available to the public at (888) 364-3065.

Please know that IHA continues to be in contact with our allied associations, DOH, the Governor's office and state lawmakers to address ongoing hospital concerns. **Please feel free to share your REQUESTS, IDEAS, CONCERNS and we will communicate them directly to the state.**

Below, please find IHA's updated COVID-19 Resource Guide detailing important information for healthcare providers. You can also [visit us online](#) for more.

[COVID-19 RESOURCE GUIDE](#)

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