



COVID-19 Updates CARES ACT & CMS Accelerated /Advanced Payment Programs

Steve Chrapla, CHFP

CARES Act

CARES Act Provider Relief Fund
provides initial \$30 billion
in funding to hospitals and other healthcare
providers for coronavirus response

CARES Act

- Providers receiving FFS reimbursement in 2019 eligible.
- Distribution based on Medicare FFS Payments in 2019.
- Funds not a loan & **will not need** to be paid back.
- Providers agree to not seek “out of pocket” payments from COVID-19 patients greater than in-network payment.
- Providers need to sign attestation & accept terms within 30 days.

Expanded Accelerated & Advance Payment Program

- Congress/CMS expands the Accelerated & Advanced Payment Program in response to COVID-19.
- \$34 billion has been distributed the first week.
- 25,000 requests for payments from Providers & Suppliers submitted in 1 week!
- This is contrary to 100 requests in past 5 years.

Expanded Accelerated & Advance Payment Program

- Payments Available to:
 - Hospitals
 - Physicians
 - Non-physician Practitioners
 - DME Suppliers
- Up to 6 Months of Medicare Reimbursement can be received.
- Based on prior year historical Medicare payments.
- Critical Access Hospitals can request up to 125% of historical payments.
- Advance Payment / Processing time 4 to 6 days.

Expanded Accelerated & Advance Payment Program

- Hospitals have up to 12 months to repay advance.
- Other providers need to re-pay within 210 days.
- Advances not repaid within time frame subject to interest on advance.
- Current Interest Rates 10.25% set by Treasury.

Operational Billing & AR Follow-UP Issues

- Payer Rules & Regs Constantly Changing
- Dedicate staff to monitor CDC,CMS,AMA billing guidelines
- Monitor plan changes in Co-Pays & Deductibles
- Collection Policies need to align with these changes
- Health Plans & Payers have changed operational protocols for claim statusing/appeals/collection follow-up
- Adjust claim follow-up processes as payers make operational work flow changes

References

- CMS actions in response to COVID-19, are part of the ongoing White House Coronavirus Task Force efforts. To keep up with the important work the Task Force is doing in response to COVID-19, visit:
 - www.coronavirus.gov
- . For a complete and updated list of CMS actions, and other information specific to CMS, please visit the Current Emergencies Website.
 - <https://www.cms.gov/About-CMS/Agency-Information/EPRO/Current-Emergencies/Current-Emergencies-page>
- The fact sheet on the accelerated/advance payment process and how to submit a request can be found here:
 - <http://www.cms.gov/files/document/Accelerated-and-Advanced-Payments-Fact-Sheet.pdf>
- Providers can also contact their Medicare Administrative Contractor for any questions.