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April 6, 2020

Welcome to America's Physician Groups' "Healthcare on the Hill," where you can get the latest on healthcare happenings in our nation's capital--and with a special focus on the value-based care movement.

As our nation--and the world--continues to face the many challenge presented by COVID-19, we are working to ensure you have the very latest information on the virus and our rapidly changing healthcare landscape.

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Senior Vice President of Federal Affairs
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APG Submits Comments on MA Advance Rate Notice

APG submitted its comments to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) regarding the Contract Year 2021 and 2022 Policy and Technical Changes to the Medicare Advantage (MA) Program. In the letter, APG reiterated its robust support for MA

and advocated for changes to program elements such as the ESRD Rates, the Part D Prescription Drug Program Quality Rating System, supplemental benefits and COVID-19 impact in order to promote value and coordinated care in a way that will strengthen and improve the program for current and future beneficiaries. You can view our letter [here](#).

FCC Report and Order on COVID-19 Telehealth Program

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released a [Report and Order](#) providing guidance on the COVID-19 Telehealth Program, which was established by the FCC following passage of the [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security \(CARES\) Act](#). This program provides \$200 million in critical resources for healthcare providers who are on the front lines of this unprecedented health crisis.

Here are key takeaways:

- The \$200 million will be available until the funds run out or the pandemic ends
- The FCC anticipates capping funds awarded at \$1 million per applicant to ensure as many applicants as possible receive funding
- Healthcare providers who are eligible to apply for funds are limited to:
 - Post-secondary educational institutions offering health care instruction, teaching hospitals, and medical schools
 - Community health centers or health centers providing health care to migrants
 - Local health departments or agencies
 - Community mental health centers
 - Not-for-profit hospitals
 - Rural health clinics
 - Skilled nursing facilities
 - A consortia of healthcare providers consisting of one or more entities falling into the first seven categories

The categories of eligible applicants are important to note as individual practices cannot apply. However, individual practices as part of a consortia are eligible to apply for funds.

Applications for the COVID-19 Telehealth Program must be submitted through the FCC's [Electronic Comment Filing System](#) (ECFS) under WC Docket No. 20-89.

SBA Launches the Paycheck Protection Program

The Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Department of the Treasury launched the \$349 billion Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), part of the CARES Act. The PPP is specifically designed to help small businesses keep their workforce employed and provide critical funding to businesses. All loan payments will be deferred for six months and they will forgive the portion of the loan proceeds that are used to cover the first eight weeks of payroll costs, rent, utilities, and mortgage interest. The SBA offers a 100 percent guarantee behind PPP loans. Please click [here](#) to apply for a PPP loan and [here](#) to download an application.

CARES Act and Interim Final Rule Summary

The CARES Act was recently published in the Federal Register. You can find APG's summary of and the Cares Act [here](#) and the Interim Final Rule [here](#).

You can find more resources on APG's [COVID-19 web page](#).



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