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APG COVID-19 Member Update

May 8, 2020

Dear APG Members:

As this unprecedented health crisis continues, APG remains active in advocating on behalf of your practice and the patients and communities you serve. We will keep you updated with the very latest on COVID-19, any changes in legislation or regulations that you need to know, and best practices that some of your colleagues are implementing to help address this global challenge.

Federal Update:

APG Leads Coalition Letter to CMS on Risk Adjusted Payment for Audio-Only Telehealth Services

Earlier this afternoon, APG sent a [letter](#) to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) in conjunction with seven other healthcare organizations advocating that the agency provide additional flexibility so that diagnoses from audio-only telehealth services be counted for the purpose of risk adjusted payment. The letter argued that as some practices transition up to 70 percent of care into telehealth, risk adjusting for these services gains greater importance in order to avoid any barriers that discourage patient participation in telehealth or put organizations in greater financial peril will prevent patients from receiving necessary care. APG has been working diligently to address this issue before CMS and will continue to update members on the progress made during the course of the current pandemic.

HHS Extends Deadline for Attestation and Acceptance of Terms and Conditions for Provider Relief Fund Payments

Yesterday, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced an extension of the deadline for healthcare providers to [attest](#) to receipt of payment and accept [Terms and Conditions](#) from the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund (PHSSEF). The extension increases the amount of time given to providers from 30 days to 45 days from the date they receive payment. If providers do not return the payment within 45 days of receipt, it will be viewed as acceptance of the Terms and Conditions.

The payments are part of the distribution of the now \$175 billion provider relief fund provided for in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act which is being used to support healthcare-related expenses or lost revenue attributable to COVID-19 and to ensure that both testing and treatment are available for the uninsured.

For additional information, read APG's summary of the payment allocations [here](#), visit <http://hhs.gov/providerrelief>, or call the CARES Provider Relief line at (866) 569-3522.

APG Board of Directors Member Mark Mantei Spotlited on CMS COVID-19 Physician Series

Vancouver Clinic CEO and APG board member Mark Mantei was spotlighted earlier today as part of the CMS *Lessons from the Front Lines* series on the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of the series is to highlight the experiences, ideas, strategies, and insights of physicians and other clinicians related to their COVID-19 response. Mr. Mantei was able to share the Vancouver Clinic's experiences in caring for patients during the ongoing public health emergency and some of the best practices that physicians and their organizations can use in order to offer quality care and help themselves financially during the pandemic. *Lessons from the Front Lines* calls are a joint effort between CMS Administrator Seema Verma, Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Stephen Hahn, MD, and the White House Coronavirus Task Force.

Educational Opportunities:

APG and CareJourney Deep Dive on the Future of APMs

[Register today](#) for a **Deep Dive Webinar** hosted by [APG](#) and [CareJourney](#) on Thursday, May 21 at 2pm ET. We have secured a group of **industry experts** who will provide you with unique insights into what risk-based care will look like as the fight against COVID-19 continues and what factors are they considering as they think about their 2021 risk-based strategy.

Here are a few of the topics our group of panelists will discuss:

- *What is the future state of risk-based models in a post-COVID-19 world?*
- *What is the continued value offered by staying in risk-based models in the face of COVID-19?*
- *What factors should we consider when determining how to move forward in risk-based care?*

Our expert panelists include:

- **Marion Couch, Senior Medical Advisor, Office of the Administrator, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services**
- **Steve Neorr**, Chief Administrative Officer, Triad HealthCare Network
- **Melanie Matthews**, CEO, Physicians of Southwest Washington
- **Pamela Pelizzari**, Principal and Healthcare Consultant, Milliman

Valinda Rutledge will also review the [interim final rule](#) released on April 30 which includes policies aimed at providing financial relief and stability for accountable care organizations (ACOs).

Space is limited so please click [here](#) to register.

APG Members in Action:

Every day, APG member organizations are finding innovative ways to continue to care for the patients and communities they serve. If you'd like to **share your COVID-19 best practices or story**, please email [David Allen](#), APG Director of Communications, with a brief description of what you're doing and we'll do our best to communicate your good work across APG membership.

We are here to serve as a resource for you. Please don't hesitate to contact me [here](#) with any questions you may have or any situations within your practice that you want me to be aware of.

You can find more resources on our [COVID-19 web page](#). As always, please know that we are in constant contact with federal and agency officials and will share any additional news with you as soon as possible.

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