

Greetings!

### **Advocacy News Summary**

In these unprecedented times there are so many rapid changes that it is hard to keep abreast of everything. In an effort to help our members, ASE's legislative consultants have summarized the healthcare-related news from last week in [this update](#).

### **ASE Advocacy Efforts**

ASE continues to advocate for our members and the community. With the review and approval of the Advocacy Committee, the Society has taken action and signed [a letter](#) to Congressional leadership regarding access to personal protective equipment. This letter demonstrates that medicine is speaking in one united voice. Feel free to share this letter with your own Congressional representative. *ASE has heard you, and we are working hard to ensure you have the necessary personal protective equipment.*

On the [ASE Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Resources page](#) you can find information on the tax provisions included in the Phase III Coronavirus package.

- [Key Tax Provisions of the CARES Act](#)
- [CARE Act FAQs](#)
- [Coverage and Cost-Sharing of COVID-19 Testing](#)
- [Public Health Emergencies and Major Disaster Declarations](#)
- [Telehealth Payments in the Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Federal Relief to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [State Resources Regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Resources for Small Businesses during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

### **The Administration Provides Financial Relief for Medicare Providers**

On Saturday, CMS [announced 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 COVID-19. "With our nation's health care providers on the front lines in the fight against COVID-19, dollars and cents shouldn't be adding to their worries," said CMS Administrator Seema Verma.

### **Changes in Coding**

Last week, we announced that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has announced several new temporary code changes to help treat COVID-19 patients. To help practitioners better navigate these new codes, AMA has produced a video on [Special coding advice during COVID-19 public health emergency](#). [Click here](#) for more details.

Anthem Inc. has announced it will suspend some prior authorization requirements and audit protocols on its health plans to help clinicians deliver care to COVID-19 infected patients more quickly and effectively.

- Anthem will suspend prior authorization requirements for patient transfers, along with suspension of prior authorization requirements for use of medical equipment critical to COVID-19 treatment
- Anthem will cover respiratory services for acute treatment of COVID-19 along with in-network and out-of-network coverage for COVID-19 laboratory testing
- Anthem will also temporarily adjust handling and monitoring of claims and audits

Additionally, New York Governor Cuomo has issued an Executive Order relaxing requirements for documentation and coding. The following section may be of particular interest to New York state residents.

- Notwithstanding any law or regulation to the contrary, health care providers are relieved of recordkeeping requirements to the extent necessary for health care providers to perform tasks as may be necessary to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak, including, but not limited to, requirements to maintain medical records that accurately reflect the evaluation and treatment of patients, or requirements to assign diagnostic codes or to create or maintain other records for billing purposes. Any person acting reasonably and in good faith under this provision shall be afforded absolute immunity from liability for any failure to comply with any recordkeeping requirement. In order to protect from liability any person acting reasonably and in good faith under this provision, requirements to maintain medical records under Subdivision 32 of Section 6530 of the Education Law, Paragraph (3) of Subdivision (a) of Section 29.2 of Title 8 of the NYCRR, and Sections 58-111, 405.10, and 415.22 of Title 10 of the NYCRR, or any other such laws or regulations are suspended or modified to the extent necessary for health care providers to perform tasks as may be necessary to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak;

### **Additional Resources**

More information is available at [COVID-19 Resource](#), with useful links including governmental updates, transportation alerts, and online educational resources. This page is updated on a regular basis as changes occur. In addition, we have created a [community](#) to share information on Connect@ASE where members are sharing important procedural information that may be of interest to you. We encourage you to join this group to stay up-to-date.

Also, ASE hosted a [FREE Webinar on COVID-19 Preparedness for Echo Labs](#). **A follow-up webinar is scheduled for this Friday, April 3, at 11:00 AM ET. More details to follow.**

Please feel free to share this with your colleagues.

Thank you for all your efforts,

Michael Main, MD, FASE  
Advocacy Committee Chair

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