



May 12, 2020

**ILLINOIS HEALTH AND HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
MEMORANDUM**

TO: Chief Executive Officers, Member Hospitals and Health Systems
Chief Operating Officers
Chief Medical Officers
Chief Nursing Officers
Chief Quality Officers
Chief Financial Officers
Emergency Preparedness Contacts
Emergency Department Directors
Behavioral Constituency Section
Government Relations Personnel
In-House Counsel
Public Relations Directors

FROM: A.J. Wilhelmi, President & CEO
Tim Nuding, Senior Vice President, Member Services & Corporate Finance
Keneatha Johnson, Director, Quality, Safety, and Health Policy

SUBJECT: IHA COVID-19 Update – May 12, 2020

Following is a brief recap of today's top developments.

Situational Awareness

The Illinois Department of Public Health today announced 4,014 new cases (highest one-day total) and 144 deaths. IDPH also reported 29,266 test specimens were processed in the past 24 hours (highest one-day total). The total number of cases in the state is 83,021 in 98 counties, with a total of 3,601 deaths. Statewide, the number of COVID-19 hospitalized patients increased in the past 24 hours by 307 to 4,626. Of that figure, 1,215 patients were in the ICU (decrease of 33) with 730 on ventilators (no change).

IHA Urges State Legislative Leaders to Enact COVID-19 Help for Hospitals

In a letter sent Monday to the four leaders of the Illinois General Assembly, IHA President & CEO A.J. Wilhelmi urged the leaders to consider enacting several measures and initiatives to

support hospitals and health systems as they continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. IHA's requests on behalf of the hospital community focus on three major areas:

- Civil, Criminal and Administrative Liability Protections: Codifying Governor's Executive Order 19;
- Re-opening Illinois' Healthcare Sector: Expansion of Telehealth Coverage and Reimbursement under Medicaid and Private Insurance; and
- Using Enhanced Federal Medicaid Matching Rate to Pay Down Medicaid Bill Backlog and Provide Enhanced Medicaid Support for COVID-19 Patients.

The letter also urges the legislative leaders to protect the state's healthcare safety net and not impose any Medicaid cuts. Although it's not known yet when the General Assembly will reconvene, lawmakers will have several major issues on their agenda, including the state budget, authorization of Phase 2 of the Hospital Assessment Program, and COVID-19 relief.

Hospitals Receiving \$75 Million in COVID-19 Relief Payments

The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) today announced that hospitals have begun receiving \$75 million in new stability payments to help fight COVID-19. The payments are being issued in three monthly installments (for April, May, and June) as directed payments under the Hospital Assessment program as a result of a federal matching rate increase of 6.2% during the pandemic. IHA commends HFS, Governor Pritzker and the legislative leaders for the COVID relief payments and for the tremendous collaborative effort to update the Hospital Assessment Program. This funding relief is critical to preserving access to care, especially for vulnerable communities, during this health crisis.

Additional CMS Waivers Issued

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has released additional waivers for hospitals and other healthcare facilities. The additional waivers:

- Expand hospitals' ability to offer long-term care services ("swing beds");
- Waive distance requirements, market share, and bed requirements for Sole Community Hospitals;
- Waive certain eligibility requirements for Medicare-Dependent, Small Rural Hospitals (MDHs); and
- Update specific life safety code requirements for hospitals, hospice and long-term care facilities.

See IHA's summary of the most recent waivers; the full list of waivers issued thus far; and IHA summaries of prior waivers on the IHA website.

Provider Relief Fund High-Impact and Rural Hospital Payments

On Friday, May 8, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) published its methodology for determining high impact and rural hospital and provider payments from the Provider Relief Fund. See IHA's summary.

IDPH Situational Webinar Wednesday

IDPH will host a COVID-19 Situational Update webinar on Wednesday, May 13, from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. to provide the latest information on the Coronavirus Disease outbreak and Illinois preparedness efforts. Register [here](#).

U.S. House Democrats Introduce COVID-19 Bill

U.S. House Democrats today introduced [The Heroes Act](#), a \$3 trillion legislative package to respond to the coronavirus. The bill:

- Adds \$100 billion to the Provider Relief Fund to reimburse hospitals and other providers for healthcare related expenses or lost revenue directly attributable to the public health emergency;
- Provides \$75 billion for testing, contact tracing, and other activities necessary to effectively monitor and suppress the virus;
- Improves the Accelerated and Advance Payment Program by lowering the interest rate; extending the payment period; and lowering the amount of per claim recoupment;
- Increases the Federal Matching Assistance Percentage (FMAP) by 14 percentage points through June 2021;
- Allows State Medicaid programs to cover COVID-19 treatment for uninsured patients;
- Delays implementation of the Medicaid Fiscal Accountability Rule (MFAR);
- Includes protections for employer-provided health coverage through COBRA subsidies and the creation of a special enrollment period in the ACA exchanges for uninsured individuals; and
- Provides nearly \$1 trillion to state and local governments.

The House is expected to vote on the measure this Friday; however, Senate Republicans have signaled they do not intend to take up the bill. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) has also said he will oppose legislation that does not include liability protections for businesses.

On Monday, IHA sent the Illinois Congressional delegation a [letter](#) outlining priorities for the next COVID-19 response legislation.

Resources

- [IDPH webpage on COVID-19](#)
- [Illinois COVID-19 website for the public - coronavirus.illinois.gov](https://coronavirus.illinois.gov)
- [CDC Homepage for Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Chicago Department of Public Health COVID-19 webpage](#)
- [IHA webpage on COVID-19](#)

If you have questions or comments, please contact Tim Nuding, Senior Vice President, Member Services and Corporate Finance at 217-541-1164 or tnuding@team-iha.org