



## COVID-19 Weekly Compendium #22

### POLICY UPDATE

#### **340B Memo on Recent Program Developments and Requests for Information**

NACHC has prepared an in-depth [340B Memo](#) that addresses the plethora of issues that have erupted in the 340B program over the past few weeks, including the Executive Order issued by the President on July 24 and the range of letters and actions by drug manufacturers targeting the contract pharmacy model. As you know, MPCA has been monitoring this issue very closely and is collecting Maine-specific health center info on the importance of this program to your patients. In addition, we will be hosting Colleen Meiman, NACHC Director of Regulatory Affairs, at our next PCA Public Policy Committee meeting on Aug. 12, to talk about the latest developments and to learn how we can support NACHC's efforts on our behalf.

#### **Congress Continues Negotiations on Next COVID Stimulus Package**

As we reported last week, Senate Republican leaders have released their fourth stimulus package, the Health, Economic Assistance, Liability Protection and Schools (HEALS) Act. The package includes \$7.6 billion in supplemental funding for CHCs and preserves the ability of FQHCs and RHCs to provide telehealth services in Medicare for 5 years following the end of the public health emergency. Following days of meetings between Senate Republicans and the White House, negotiations have begun with House and Senate Democrats; however, many issues need to be resolved before a final bill comes together. For more on these negotiations, click [here](#).

#### **Surprise Billing Update**

Although we've been hearing reports since January that Congress was on the cusp of a breakthrough on the Surprise Billing issue – where the Community Health Centers five-year long-term funding currently sits – [recent developments provide more optimism an agreement is within reach](#). There are new reports from the Hill that there is more alignment among operative Committee Chairs and Ranking Members, and even House and Senate political leadership could be on board. We will be sure to keep you posted on new updates as they occur.

#### **State Medicaid COVID Resource Guide**

It is widely expected – and already occurring in some states across the country, including Maine – that state budgets will be severely impacted by the pandemic and resulting economic downturn. At the same time, some states are seeing spikes in Medicaid enrollment and greater pressures on their budgets. In response to this growing concern, NACHC developed this [State Medicaid COVID Resource Guide](#) to assist FQHCs and primary care associations (PCAs) in planning for Medicaid sustainability this year and into 2021.



### **NATIONAL HEALTH CENTER WEEK**

This year, we will be celebrating National Health Center Week Aug. 9-15. For any events/giveaways/promotions, etc., you are planning, please sent the information to [Andrea](#) and we will post your events on the [2020 NHCW](#) page on our website.



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### CLINICAL UPDATE

- [False Negative Tests for SARS-CoV-2 Infection — Challenges and Implications](#) - *New England Journal of Medicine* (June 5)
- [Clinical Evaluation of Three Sample-to-Answer Platforms for Detection of SARS-CoV-2](#) - *American Society for Microbiology*
- [Performance of Abbott ID Now COVID-19 Rapid Nucleic Acid Amplification Test Using Nasopharyngeal Swabs Transported in Viral Transport Media and Dry Nasal Swabs in a New York City Academic Institution](#) - *American Society for Microbiology*

### INTERESTING READS

**Kudos to Maine Mobile Health Program for their work providing COVID testing for migrant/seasonal farm workers in Maine, with acknowledgement by Dr. Shaw and the press in the following two articles!**

- [COVID-19 cases among blueberry workers worsen farm labor shortage](#) - *Portland Press Herald* (August 3)  
Maine health officials are confident that two outbreaks at Hancock County businesses will not spread, but if migrant workers are sidelined because of the coronavirus, there may not be enough local workers to fill those gaps. Lisa Tapert, CEO of Maine Mobile Health Program, the primary health care provider for migrant and seasonal farm workers, said a lot of work went into creating guidelines to keep workers safe. “It’s important for people to know that we have been doing everything we can since the start to help keep workers who come into Maine to support the local economy and the surrounding communities safe,” she said.
- [Maine confirms coronavirus outbreak at another Hancock County blueberry business](#) - *Bangor Daily News* (July 30)  
Two Hancock County blueberry businesses now have confirmed outbreaks of the coronavirus after one was reported earlier this week at Hancock Foods and a second was reported Thursday at Merrill Blueberry Farms in Ellsworth. Dr. Nirav Shah, Director of the MeCDC, credited the Maine Mobile Health Program, an organization that provides health care to the state’s seasonal farmworkers, with helping to quickly test workers when they arrive from out-of-state so that they can know whether to stay isolated to prevent others from catching the infection.
- [Is Telemedicine Here to Stay?](#) - *The New York Times* (August 3)  
The answer largely depends on whether Medicare and private health insurers will adequately cover virtual doctor visits once coronavirus outbreaks subside.
- [How to fix the cash flow problem that makes rural healthcare unsustainable](#) - *Quartz* (July 30)  
By and large, US healthcare is set up to generate profits. Put simply, the more services a patient purchases, the more money the provider makes. But while billing for each service provided is often very lucrative for large urban hospitals with a steady stream of patients, it leaves rural hospitals unable to predict their cash flow and plan their finances.



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### INTERESTING READS (CONT'D)

- [Scared That Covid-19 Immunity Won't Last? Don't Be](#) - *The New York Times* (July 31)  
Dropping antibody counts aren't a sign that our immune system is failing against the coronavirus, nor an omen that we can't develop a viable vaccine.
- [Headlines in Health Policy](#) - *The Commonwealth Fund* (August 4)  
A roundup of recent news about health coverage, health delivery system reform, and more.

### RISK MANAGEMENT/EP UPDATE

As we begin to process our actions to-date in response to Covid-19, MPCA is working with consultant Debra Halm to advance our network's Emergency Preparedness Planning. Over the next several weeks, Debra will be scheduling Zoom calls with each health center to discuss individual CHC needs, as well as opportunities for state-wide improvement. **MPCA is asking each FQHC to identify a point-of-contact for EP** and to take this opportunity to engage in this important assessment. The results of Debra's interviews will be used to curate resources and to guide future EP projects. Please be on the look-out for a scheduling email in the next several days. Any questions, please reach out to Sarah at [smorrill@mepca.org](mailto:smorrill@mepca.org).

### TELEHEALTH UPDATE

- [Trump signs executive order to expand telehealth, boost rural health care](#) - *Fierce Healthcare* (August 3)  
President Donald Trump issued an executive order Monday to support healthcare in rural areas by permanently expanding some telehealth services beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. These telehealth expansions would build on the work CMS has done during the public health emergency to more than double allowable telehealth services, greatly expanding access to high quality care, officials said.

#### **Connected Health Virtual Summit: Delivering Quality Care in the COVID Era - Sept. 14-18 | Times vary**

We invite all payers and providers to attend free of charge. This includes employees of major hospitals, physician practices, outpatient centers, ACOs, and skilled nursing facilities; as well as those who work for payers, insurance companies and MCOs. We invite you to listen live, ask questions, and collaborate in our virtual environment.

[Click here](#) to see sessions and to sign up. If you are currently unemployed or furloughed, please [contact us](#) directly to register.

#### **Upcoming Teledental Webinar Series**

- **8/20/20 | 12:00 - 1:00 PM - Hybrid Dental Practice: Creating Opportunities for Weaving Teledental and Traditional Practice**  
Registration: <https://mepca.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJclceCvpzMjH9yDx0yykeHkST5hPvN1PILM>
- **9/24/20 | 12:00 - 1:00 PM - Virtual Dental Home: Outreaching and Delivering Preventative Care Remotely**  
Registration: <https://mepca.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMqce2srz0qH9RTol1CgTNKudNKhESyt17>

For updates from insurers and other relevant information concerning Telehealth, please visit the [Telehealth Resources](#) page on the MPCA website.



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### RACIAL JUSTICE/HEALTH DISPARITY RESOURCES & INFORMATION

- [Mills Administration announces \\$1M to address racial and ethnic disparities in COVID-19 cases](#) - *The Associated Press (July 30)*

The administration of Democratic Gov. Janet Mills said Thursday it would spend \$1 million to expand services to try to reduce the state's racial disparity in coronavirus cases. Black Mainers represent about 1.4% of the state's population but more than 22% of the COVID-19 cases in the state in which race is known, the Mills administration said.

#### **Tele-Town Hall: Uncovering and Addressing Racial Disparities in Maine - August 5th | 7:00 - 8:00 PM | [Registration](#)**

Please join PPMEAF, the ACLU of Maine, MECEP, Maine Equal Justice, Maine Initiatives, and Health Equity Alliance for a Tele-Town hall to discuss the root causes of racial disparities in healthcare, housing, unemployment and more. At this town hall you'll learn how systemic racism disproportionately impacts BIPOC communities in Maine and find out how you can engage in this work and combat systemic racism.

#### **ME DHHS Webinar: Strategies for Addressing Disparate Impacts of COVID 19 - 3rd Wednesdays | 7:30-8:30 AM**

Maine DHHS is supporting several efforts aimed at improving health equity and addressing disparities with respect to race and ethnicity, particularly in response to disparities related to COVID 19. As part of that work, Maine DHHS is partnering with colleagues to offer a series of monthly webinars focused on sharing creative solutions and best practices for working with Black, Indigenous and people of color at higher risk of COVID-19 infection.

- Wed, Aug 19: A Conversation with Health Care Providers Serving Diverse Communities
- Wed, Sept 16: Building Trust With Diverse Communities: Essential Steps for Health Care Providers - Part 1
- Wed, Oct 21: Building Trust With Diverse Communities: Essential Steps for Health Care Providers - Part 2

Join Zoom Meeting | Meeting ID: 621 843 4986 | Password: 338847 (*Same Zoom invite for all webinars*)  
<https://zoom.us/j/6218434986?pwd=dEJoNEVRSkVSN2dwZlJ5WEI3WjJsZz09>

For resources and other relevant information, please visit the [Racial Justice/Health Disparities Resources](#) page on the [MPCA website](#).

**\*\*Join MPCA on SLACK!** We are building our communication outreach capacity between meetings using the Slack communication platform. Many of you are already connected with us in several peer groups including our **Clinical Channel** and our **Billing and Coding Chanel**. Please feel free to reach out to [it@mepca.org](mailto:it@mepca.org) for help with joining. **\*\***



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### CHCNET UPDATE

#### HealthInfoNet (HIN) joining Office Hours - New Feature Demonstration (Thursday, August 6 | 4:00 - 5:00 PM)

Our partners at HealthInfoNet have introduced a new way to use the Health Information Exchange to track if attributed patients receive a positive COVID-19 Test:

- HealthInfoNet recently added a new notification type to our Clinical Portal's "My Subscriptions" component for "New COVID-19 Laboratory Result Available." By subscribing to this notification type, users will automatically be notified either in real time or on a daily basis (depending on their preference) when a COVID-19 laboratory test result is received by HealthInfoNet for one of their attributed patients. [Learn more.](#)

Please join us for COVID-19 Office Hours as the HIN team joins us to demonstrate this new feature and answer your questions.

#### Upcoming Webinar - Overview of the HRSA-Approved 2020 UDS Changes

Join MPCA and Health Initiatives Consulting as we review the changes put in place by HRSA that will impact UDS 2020. Please invite any/all health center staff who work on annual UDS reporting - the more the merrier!

- **Wednesday, August 19, 2020 | 1:00 - 2:00 PM** - [Click here](#) to mark your calendar

For the latest information concerning the MPCA's HCCN, **Community Health Center Network of Maine (CHCNet)**, or for support with health information technology needs, please visit the [CHCNet Member Portal](#) or contact Greg Parent: [gparent@mepca.org](mailto:gparent@mepca.org) and/or Lisa Tuttle: [ltuttle@mepca.org](mailto:ltuttle@mepca.org).

### RESOURCES ADDENDUM

For the **Stay Informed, Sign Up, Maine Helps**, and **Coping and Stress Resources** information, please visit the [Weekly Compendium Resources Addendum](#) page on the MPCA website.

### **MPCA CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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