



## COVID-19 Weekly Compendium #30

### PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR 2020 VIRTUAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE STARTING OCT. 1 AT 3:00 PM

Keynote speaker **Mark Friedberg, MD, MPP, SVP, Performance Measurement & Improvement, BC/BS of Massachusetts**, opens our conference with his presentation: *Professional Satisfaction, Payment, & Organizational Resilience*. [Register today!](#)

### CLINICAL UPDATE

- [Coronavirus \(Covid-19\) - The New England Journal of Medicine](#)  
A collection of articles and other resources on the Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak, including clinical reports, management guidelines, and commentary.
- [Prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 antibodies in a large nationwide sample of patients on dialysis in the USA: a cross-sectional study - THE LANCET \(September 25\)](#)  
Many patients receiving dialysis in the USA share the socioeconomic characteristics of underserved communities, and undergo routine monthly laboratory testing, facilitating a practical, unbiased, and repeatable assessment of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) seroprevalence.
- [FAQ for Electronic Testing Order and Reporting \(eTOR\) and Submitting COVID19 Specimens - Health & Environmental Testing Laboratory \(HETL\) \(September 28\)](#)

### INTERESTING READS

- [Tall Pines Healthcare COVID-19 Outbreak Experience in Rural Waldo County, Maine, April 2020 - Journal of Ambulatory Care Management \(October/December 2020\)](#)  
As a family physician and a family nurse practitioner in a Federally Qualified Health Center in rural Maine, we experienced a COVID-19 outbreak at our local long-term care facility, which involved 32 patient cases, 11 staff cases, 19 recovered cases, and 13 deaths over 34 days in April 2020.
- [The Road Ahead: Charting the coronavirus pandemic over the next 12 months — and beyond - STAT \(September 22\)](#)  
Now — with health authorities saying it may not be until at least the end of 2021 before there's a degree of post-Covid normalcy in our lives — look forward. Imagine the next 15 months and what life will be like.
- [Child deaths tied to covid-19 remain remarkably low, months into U.S. pandemic - The Washington Post \(September 25\)](#)  
Covid-19 has become the nation's third-leading cause of death this year, but 18 states had not seen a single fatality among people under 20 as of Sept. 10.
- [CDC: 74% of children who died from SARS-CoV-2 are Hispanic, Black - AAP News \(September 15\)](#)  
At least 121 children and young adults have died from illness linked to SARS-CoV-2, and these deaths disproportionately affected minorities and youths with underlying medical conditions.
- [How Do Children Fight Off the Coronavirus? - The New York Times \(September 25\)](#)  
Why the coronavirus affects children much less severely than adults has become an enduring mystery of the pandemic. The vast majority of children do not get sick; when they do, they usually recover.



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### COVID-19 OFFICE HOURS RECAP (FROM SEPTEMBER 24)

Deb Halm presented key findings from her EP assessment and report; the full report will be made available soon.

### POLICY UPDATE

#### 340B Developments and Updates

- **Executive Order (EO) Update:** The new regulation implementing the President's Executive Order around insulin and EpiPens will no longer be a "Interim Final Rule," meaning a regulation that would go into effect immediately. [OMB has revised their webpage](#) to indicate that it will be a Proposed Rule (aka NPRM.) That means that the new rules will not go into effect almost immediately upon publication; rather, HHS will issue a proposal, the public will have an opportunity to submit written comments, and then HHS must consider those comments before issuing a Final Rule and setting an effective date. This process is certain to take several months, at a minimum.
- **HHS Letter to Eli Lilly:** Recently, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) told Lilly in a strongly worded [letter](#) that it was wrong to assume that U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) endorsed its policy.
- **Is Novartis Backing Off its Oct. 1 Deadline for 340B Covered Entities?** *340B Report* is reporting that at least two community health centers were recently told by Cardinal Health representatives that Novartis was backing off its plan to stop providing 340B-priced products to the contract pharmacies of covered entities that do not register with 340B ESP and upload their contract pharmacy claims data. Additionally, a source told *340B Report* late last week that a congressional staffer also confirmed that Novartis was backing off as well. Stay tuned.
- **Only 30 Providers Have Supplied Merck with Requested 340B Claims Data:** According to *340B Report*, less than 1 percent—of the 340B covered entities that drug manufacturer Merck wrote to this summer seeking their contract pharmacy claims data have shared their data with Merck via its contractor 340B ESP.

**Congressional Delegation Meetings Continue:** Over the past week, MPCA and health center representatives met with Reps. Pingree and Golden to discuss the importance of 340B to Maine's FQHCs and their patients and to request enactment of a legislative solution to prevent discriminatory contracting under 340B and preserve the integrity of the contract pharmacy model. Both representatives expressed their support and pledged to do what they can to protect the program. Meetings with Sens. Collins and King are scheduled next week.

**Covid-19 Stimulus Vote Possible This Week:** House Democrats unveiled a [\\$2.2 trillion pandemic relief package](#) Monday night as part of a last-ditch attempt to secure new aid before the Nov. 3 elections. The new draft Democratic measure, which could get a floor vote later this week if bipartisan talks stall, amounts to a slimmed-down version of a \$3.4 trillion bill the House passed in May. The legislation addresses many of Democrats' top priorities, like additional money for testing and drug development, state/local/tribal governments, additional unemployment benefits and small business loans.

**Vote to Extend Government Funding Expected This Week:** On September 23, the House voted to pass a [Continuing Resolution \(CR\)](#) which would create a stopgap for government funding until December 11, 2020. Also included in this extension were the Community Health Center Fund, the National Health Service Corps, and the Teaching Health Centers Graduate Medical Education Program, all at current funding levels. Find a summary of the legislation [here](#). It is expected that a final Senate vote on this spending measure will take place on [Wednesday](#).



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### CHCNET UPDATE

**Visit Volume Impact Dashboard Project:** MPCA is continuing the *Visit Volume Impact Dashboard* project to understand how COVID-19 has impacted health centers and how health centers have responded. Please continue to report your monthly data via [this spreadsheet](#) and email it, or any questions, to [gparent@mepca.org](mailto:gparent@mepca.org).

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).

### RACIAL JUSTICE/HEALTH DISPARITY RESOURCES & INFORMATION

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

#### **Advancing Excellence in Transgender Health: A Course for the Whole Care Team (Virtual)**

**October 16 - 19, 2020**

This conference is designed to train the whole health care team in providing responsive and confident gender-affirming health care, grounded in research evidence and best clinical practices. Sessions are led by expert faculty specialized in transgender-focused research and patient care. The conference is appropriate for all members of health care teams, including physicians, behavioral health care providers, physician assistants, nurses, and other staff. [Register today!](#)

#### **Employer of Choice: Strategies for Retaining Your Best Asset – Your People**

Wednesday, Sept. 30 | 9:15 AM – 12:30 PM EST | [Register](#)

The Rural Health and Primary Care Program is sponsoring a virtual event to be held on September 30, 2020. Michelle Varcho will again be with us and she will be joined by Jennifer Higgins. Recruitment and retention in difficult (like COVID-19) times and through the generations will be the advanced topics of instruction. Click [here](#) for the event brochure.



#### **Is Your Health Center Hiring?**

Click on the icon to the left to utilize the new MPCA Job Board and list your openings on our website!



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### DENTAL UPDATE

#### MaineCare Dental Changes

The Department has removed the prior authorization (PA) requirement related to scaling and root planning code D4341 effective 09/01/2020. The PA was removed for all ages. The plan on this change is to announce it only for the PHE, but we hope to evaluate the usage throughout the next few weeks. We will likely look to make it permanent if we don't see anything concerning after we evaluate usage.

### TELEHEALTH UPDATE

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

### 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](#).

*Please click on the calendar for a full listing of upcoming MPCA trainings and events. These events can be viewed by the day, month or as a list.*



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**\*\* 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. **\*\***