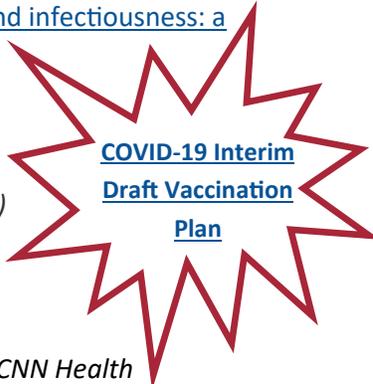




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CLINICAL UPDATES

- [Test sensitivity is secondary to frequency and turnaround time for COVID-19 screening](#) - *Science Advances* (November 20)
- [Face Masks, Including Surgical Masks, and Respirators for COVID-19](#) - *US FDA*
- [SARS-CoV-2, SARS-CoV, and MERS-CoV viral load dynamics, duration of viral shedding, and infectiousness: a systematic review and meta-analysis](#) - *The Lancet* (November 19)
- [Estimated incidence of COVID-19 illness and hospitalization](#) - *The Oxford Academic* (November 20)
- [Blood Glucose on Admission Predicts COVID-19 Severity in All](#) - *Medscape* (November 30)
- [Eval for Sick Child in Schools with PCR Antigen Testing](#) - *Maine AAP* (November 23)



[COVID-19 Interim
Draft Vaccination
Plan](#)

INTERESTING READS

- [FDA authorizes new Covid-19 antibody test that quantifies specific levels of antibodies](#) - *CNN Health* (November 25)

The US Food and Drug Administration has issued an emergency use authorization for Kantaro Bioscience's Covid-19 antibody test kit, the group announced on Wednesday. The newly authorized antibody test, called COVID-SeroKlir, identifies and measures precise levels of antibodies that are present in a person after Covid-19 recovery.

- [Evidence Builds That an Early Mutation Made the Pandemic Harder to Stop](#) - *The New York Times* (November 24)

Scientists were initially skeptical that a mutation made the coronavirus more contagious. But new research has changed many of their minds.

AMA WEBINAR SERIES - COVID-19: What Physicians Need to Know

Episode 4: Vaccine Update

December 3 | 2:00 PM ET | [Information and Registration](#)

Host: AMA President, Susan R. Bailey, MD

Guest: Peter Marks, MD, PhD, Director of the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

Dr. Marks and Dr. Bailey will discuss the latest developments on the road to effective COVID-19 vaccines. Dr. Marks will do a deep dive into the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) process, explaining how the timeline was shortened from years to just months. Learn the similarities and differences between routine vaccine development and the EUA process, and how accelerated approval is being arrived at safely.



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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.

POLICY UPDATE

Funding Negotiations Continue in Washington

In the wake of the 2020 general election, Members of Congress are returning to previous conversations concerning the [FY21 budget](#), an additional [COVID-19 relief package](#), and re-authorization of funding for health extender programs. Late last week, Sen. King said he is involved in a bipartisan effort to craft a pandemic relief package for consideration later this month. King says senators from both parties negotiated through the holiday break to prepare a significant relief package for Congress to consider in the next few weeks. MPCA will continue to monitor these negotiations and those involving the December 11 deadline of the [previously passed Continuing Resolution](#), and will report updates as they develop in the coming weeks.

NACHC Seeks Provider Relief Fund (PRF) Guidance from HRSA

In an effort to ensure that FQHCs are using PRF funding in a manner consistent with Congressional intent and HHS policy, NACHC sent a detailed letter to HRSA on 11/24 raising concerns and requesting clarifications on several issues regarding the Provider Relief Fund, including the narrowing definition of when/how funds can be used. A copy of the letter can be found [here](#).

WORKFORCE UPDATE

The **Readiness to Train Assessment Tool (RTAT)** has been distributed to FQHCs & Look-Alikes across the nation as a part of HRSA's **Health Professions Education and Training initiative (HP-ET)**, in an effort to recognize recruitment and retention issues among health centers. This HRSA initiative helps Health Centers address concerns regarding capacity, resources, and organizational abilities when launching health professions education and training programs. The RTAT tool is important, as it serves as a platform to encourage conversation and action at various levels and inform future HRSA workforce initiatives. To learn more about RTAT, [click here](#).

Your voices need to be at the forefront of these important workforce discussions. Please take a moment and complete the survey to be sure your Health Center is accounted for. We are hoping to have participation from every Health Center; multiple employees within your organization, including clinical and administrative staff, are encouraged to

[Take the Survey.](#)



Is Your Health Center Hiring?

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



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Mills Administration Announces New Grants for Maine Health Care Organizations

Beginning Dec. 1, health care organizations that were ineligible for funding under the Maine Economic Recovery Grant program may apply for the new grants. These include hospitals and nursing facilities of any size, as well as congregate care, behavioral health, community service providers, and other providers with more than 250 employees. Health care organizations must have served MaineCare members in 2020 to qualify. The new grants will provide up to \$100,000 in financial relief for health care organizations that have incurred business disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. DECD will administer the grant program in coordination with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Application materials and further information will be available on the [DECD website](#). The application portal for the program will open on Tuesday, December 1, 2020 at noon on DECD's website. The deadline to apply is December 10, 2020. Awards are expected to be distributed prior to the end of the month. The award amount will be based on demonstrated need, accounting for other sources of funding providers have accessed to offset revenue losses related to the pandemic.

UDS UPDATE

The following is an update provided by Ellen Radis, MPCA's 2020 UDS trainer:

COVID-related:

- For those asking where COVID tests are captured, health centers are reporting that information to HRSA weekly [here](#). It looks like 70% of health centers are responding, so for those who want to be sure that HRSA knows all the testing they are doing, they should be sure they are completing that [survey](#). As mentioned, testing alone is not reported on the UDS.
- The BPHC [Coronavirus FAQ](#) page has lots of specific answers to questions about [Coronavirus and UDS](#), as well as [Temporary Sites during COVID-19](#) and more.
- HRSA has also created this [UDS Novel Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\) Reporting](#) page, which reiterates some of what we have discussed about when testing does and does not rise to the level of a countable visit.

Clinical Measure related:

- We made a [quick little video](#) showing how to access code sets for the clinical quality measures.

For additional information, check out the [2020 UDS Training Toolkit](#) on our website.

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.

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.



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RACIAL JUSTICE/HEALTH DISPARITY RESOURCES & INFO

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

TELEHEALTH UPDATE

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

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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 Channel**. Please feel free to reach out to it@mepca.org for help with joining.