



COVID-19 Weekly Compendium #42

CLINICAL UPDATES

- [Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine: Standing Orders for Administering Vaccine to Persons 16 Years of Age and Older - USCDC](#)
- [Post Vaccine Considerations for Healthcare Personnel - USCDC \(Dec. 13\)](#)
- [Increase in Fatal Drug Overdoses Across the United States Driven by Synthetic Opioids Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic - USCDC HAN \(Dec. 17\)](#)
- [Household Transmission of SARS-CoV-2A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis - JAMA \(Dec. 14\)](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccine resource guide - Healthcare Coalition of Maine \(HCCME\) \(Dec. 18\)](#)
- [Immunization Courses: Webcasts and Self Study - USCDC](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Providers Portal - USCDC](#)
- [Post Vaccine Considerations for Healthcare Personnel - USCDC](#)
- [Vaccinating Pregnant and Lactating Patients Against COVID-19 - ACOG Clinical \(Dec. 2020\)](#)
- [Coding and Pricing for COVID-19 Vaccines - CMS.gov](#)

Winter Holidays - USCDC (Dec 16)

The safest way to celebrate winter holidays is at home with the people who live with you. Travel/gatherings with family and friends who do not live with you can increase your chances of getting/spreading COVID-19 or the flu.

POLICY UPDATE

Congress Approves \$900B COVID-19 Relief Bill, Government Spending Package

Congress voted overwhelmingly on Monday to approve a \$2.3 trillion spending package that delivers \$908 billion in COVID-19 relief and funds federal agencies through Sept. 30, 2021. President Trump is expected to sign the measure, but logistical complexities prevented the [5,593-page bill](#) from quickly getting to him.

MPCA is still sifting through the bill text but a few notable provisions of interest in the COVID relief bill include additional funding for the Paycheck Protection Program as well as reforms to the program, including allowing forgivable expenses to include the costs of PPE and workplace modifications.

The package also includes \$20 billion for the government purchase of vaccines, nearly \$9 billion for vaccine distribution and nearly \$22 billion to help states with testing, tracing and COVID-19 mitigation programs.

The \$1.4 trillion omnibus spending bill includes an extension for Community Health Centers, the National Health Service Corps and Teaching Health Centers that operate GME programs through FY2023.

Additional Bill Resources:

[Health Education Labor and Pensions Committee Summary](#)

[Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Summary](#)

[COVID-19 Finance Health Provisions Summary](#)



COVID-19 Weekly Compendium #42

INTERESTING READS

- [Nirav Shah: Maine is ‘squarely seeing the effects’ of COVID-19 spread over Thanksgiving](#) - *Bangor Daily News* (Dec. 16)

“It’s not just Maine. It’s across the country: case numbers are going up and up and up,” said Nirav Shah, director of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, on the same day Maine shattered the record for new daily infections with 554 of them.
- [New At-Home Covid Test Gets Green Light From F.D.A.](#) - *The New York Times* (Dec. 15)

Unlike similar at-home tests, Ellume’s does not require a prescription.
- [The Magic Number for Reducing Infections and Keeping Businesses Open](#) - *The New York Times* (Dec. 16)

While many restaurants, bars and gyms shut down during the pandemic, others have continued operating with limited capacity. New research shows this sacrifice could be effective at curbing transmissions — and density caps may offer one way to keep the economy humming along during the worst of the winter wave.
- [Inside the Chaotic, Cutthroat Gray Market for N95 Masks](#) - *The New York Times* (Nov. 17)

As the country heads into a dangerous new phase of the pandemic, the government’s management of the P.P.E. crisis has left the private sector still straining to meet anticipated demand.
- [Kennedy, NIMH demand urgent action on COVID-19 mental health toll](#) - *MD-edge Psychiatry* (Dec. 15)

A public-private partnership, led by mental health advocate Patrick Kennedy and the head of the National Institute of Mental Health, Joshua Gordon, MD, PhD, want urgent action to address the wave of mental illness and suicide caused by COVID-19.
- [Employers Can Require Workers to Get Covid-19 Vaccine, U.S. Says](#) - *The New York Times* (Dec. 18)

The administration of a Covid-19 vaccine by an employer doesn’t run afoul of the Americans With Disabilities Act, a federal agency said.
- [Frontline Workers and People Over 74 Should Get Shots Next, C.D.C. Panel Says](#) - *The New York Times* (Dec. 20)

The recommendation was a compromise aimed at getting the coronavirus vaccine to the most vulnerable of two high-risk groups.
- [Newly Released COVID-19 Data Show Most U.S. Cities Are 'Sustained Hotspots'](#) - *NPR* (Dec. 18)

The Trump administration on Friday made public a trove of federal data on the pandemic that reveals a country awash in red alerts.



*Please click on the calendar for a full listing of upcoming
MPCA trainings and events.*



COVID-19 Weekly Compendium #42

DENTAL UPDATES

- [COVID-19 Tooth Loss and Oral Health Complications Underscore Importance of Maintaining, Expanding Coverage - Community Catalyst \(Dec. 18\)](#)
- [Periodontal Pockets: A Potential Reservoir for SARS-CoV-2? - Practice Update \(Dec. 9\)](#)
- [Dentists could join state's effort to vaccinate Mainers for COVID-19 - Portland Press Herald \(Dec. 15\)](#)

WORKFORCE UPDATES

RTAT Update

As of last week, Maine's health center participation in the Readiness to Train Assessment Tool (RTAT) has dramatically increased to 53%. We are appreciative of those who've participated and encourage participation through the end of February. Results will shape HRSA's next workforce initiatives. We want our health center voices represented, so future HRSA workforce investments will be most useful to Maine.

The RTAT was created to support **HRSA's Health Professions Education and Training initiative (HP-ET)**, meant to address recruitment and retention needs across the nation. RTAT assesses health center readiness related to engaging in health professions training programs. Please complete the survey to be sure your Health Center's needs and opportunities are known. 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](#)



JOB BOARD
POST YOUR OPENINGS HERE

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!

RACIAL JUSTICE/HEALTH DISPARITY RESOURCES & INFO

- [COVID-19 Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities - USCDC \(Dec 10\)](#)

Why are some racial and ethnic minority groups disproportionately affected by COVID-19?

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



COVID-19 Weekly Compendium #42

TELEHEALTH UPDATE

Telehealth Reimbursement

For dates of services beginning on July 1, 2020, FQHC and RHC telehealth distant site services will be reimbursed at the rate of \$64.42 when billed with HCPCS code G2025. Please resubmit any claims with an effective date on or after July 1, 2020 that did not pay the additional telehealth rate. This rate is paid in addition to your PPS rate. **The State will not be re-processing claims, so please resubmit any claims for G2025 that did not pay \$64.42.**

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

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:

Christopher Pezzullo, DO	Clinical Director	cpezzullo@mepca.org	(207) 707-4545
Sarah Morrill, RN, BSN	Quality Improvement Program Manager	smorrill@mepca.org	(207) 707-4538
Greg Parent	HCCN Program Manager	gparent@mepca.org	(207) 707-4537
Sharon Stanley, MBA, CPC	Finance Program Manager	sstanley@mepca.org	(207) 707-1725
Bryan Wyatt, MA	Director of Policy & Communications	bwyatt@mepca.org	(207) 707-4536
Hillary Colcord	BPHC Program Manager	hcolcord@mepca.org	(207) 707-4542
Beth Pearce	Oral Health Coordinator	bpearce@mepca.org	(207) 495-7172 (VM)
Emily Ferry, MSW	Workforce Program Manager	eferry@mepca.org	(207) 495-7172 (VM)

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.