NEW - RACIAL JUSTICE/HEALTH DISPARITY RESOURCES & INFORMATION

Webinar Recordings
- Compounding Oppression: Antiracism in COVID-19 Response - National Health Care for the Homeless Council
- Prioritizing Equity Video Series: Police Brutality & COVID-19 - AMA
- The Impact of Racism on the Health and Well-Being of the Nation - APHA (2015 4-Part Webinar Series)

Resources/Articles
- Leading During Triggering and Traumatic Events - Diversity Equity Inclusiveness Consulting
- Racial Equity Tools - Racial Equity Tools
- The Trauma of Racism - McSilver Institute
- Health Disparities are a Symptom of Broader Social & Economic Inequities - Kaiser Family Foundation (June 1)

POLICY UPDATE

President Signs Bill Allowing Flexibility for Paycheck Protection Program Loans
On Friday, June 5, the president signed the Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act into law, bringing some tweaks to the program favored by business owners. The legislation which increases the flexibility for borrowers with PPP loans, in terms of both how much of their loan can be forgiven, and how long they have to repay. Soon after the vote, the bill was sent to the President’s desk, where it awaits a final signature. Specifically, the law:

- extends the time period during which borrowers must spend loans in order to have the debt forgiven from the current eight weeks to 24 weeks;
- lowers the minimum percentage of funds that must be spent on payroll costs in order to qualify for loan forgiveness - currently, this threshold is 75% and the bill lowers it to 60%; and
- extends how long borrowers have to pay back amounts that are not forgiven from the current two years to five years.

Senate Starts Next Round of Discussions on COVID-19 Package
The Senate has entered discussions on a 4th COVID-19 package but is not expected to vote until later this month or early July, as there is no hard timeline for action nor agreement on what a new bill package would contain. It is widely expected that the HEROES Act, which passed the House on May 15, will not be considered as a whole, forcing Republicans and Democrats to sit down and negotiate an entirely new stimulus bill. Besides funding and programs, there are conversations being had about retaining some policies implemented by waiver in the emergency COVID response, such as telehealth policies and others.

The Mills Administration announced on Monday that it is further expanding COVID-19 testing capacity in Maine. Under the plan, the state will quadruple COVID-19 testing capacity at the State lab, develop testing sites throughout Maine, and allow more people in Maine with elevated risk of exposure to get tested for the virus. Additionally, Gov. Mills unveiled an alternative to the State’s 14-day quarantine requirement for people entering Maine. The multi-layered “Keep Maine Healthy” plan, aims to protect the health of Maine people and visitors while allowing the
COVID-19 Weekly Compendium #14

POLICY UPDATE (CONT’D)

opportunity for people to visit Maine and support Maine small businesses during the summer months. The plan rests on three cornerstones: 1) having visitors certify that they have received a recent negative COVID-19 test to stay in lodging establishments, such as hotels, as an alternative to quarantine; 2) increasing symptom checks at places where visitors tend to go; and 3) supporting community promotion of COVID-19 prevention best practices and public health education.

Chart of Deadlines Related to Federal Funding Sources for COVID-19 Relief

NACHC has prepared a chart summarizing upcoming deadlines related to BPHC grant funds, Paycheck Protection Loans, Provider Relief Fund allotments, and other Federal funding sources related to COVID-19. You can view the chart here.

INTERESTING READS

- **Genes May Leave Some People More Vulnerable to Severe Covid-19** - *New York Times* (June 3)
  Why do some people infected with the coronavirus suffer only mild symptoms, while others become deathly ill? Geneticists have been scouring our DNA for clues. Now, a study by European scientists is the first to document a strong statistical link between genetic variations and Covid-19, the illness caused by the coronavirus.

- **COVID-19 Could be a Seasonal Illness with Higher Risk in Winter** - *Science Daily* (June 2)
  A study conducted in Sydney, Australia, during the early epidemic stage of COVID-19 has found an association between lower humidity and an increase in locally acquired positive cases. Researchers discovered a 1 percent decrease in humidity could increase the number of COVID-19 cases by 6 percent.

- **Could Heartburn Med Pepcid Ease COVID-19 Symptoms?** - *WebMD* (June 4)
  An over-the-counter heartburn remedy is showing some potential as a symptom reliever for COVID-19, a small study finds.

- **More Vitamin D, Lower Risk of Severe COVID-19?** - *WebMD* (May 18)
  Could having a healthy blood level of vitamin D help you avoid the intensive care unit and death if you become infected with COVID-19?

TELEHEALTH UPDATE

Rapid Telehealth Implementation During COVID-19 ECHO - Ongoing Learning Series

- **Tuesdays** (except for the 3rd Tuesday each month) from 1:00 - 2:00 PM via Zoom.
  - Tuesday, June 23 - *Reopening and Sustainability - Telehealth after the Pandemic* (pt.1)
  - Tuesday, June 30 - *Reopening and Sustainability - Telehealth after the Pandemic* (pt.2)

For more information or to register as a participant, please email Greg Parent - gparent@mepca.org.

For updates from insurers and other relevant information concerning Telehealth, please visit the Telehealth Resources page on the MPCA website.
**CHCNet Data Academy** two-part data governance live learning series, presented in partnership with Health Initiatives Consulting:

- **Wednesday, June 24 | 1:00 - 2:00 PM** - *Assessing Your Data Governance Framework Strategies and Return on Information Through the Lens of COVID-19*
- **Wednesday, July 22 | 1:00 - 2:00 PM** - *Data Governance Reset, Repositioning and Redesign for Strategic Margin and Mission*

For more information including meeting invitations, connection links, phone numbers, and details about learning objectives, please contact Greg Parent: [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) 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.

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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](mailto:it@mepca.org) for help with joining.**