CMS Announces Additional Regulatory Relief to Assist Physicians in Continuing to Provide Care
April 2, 2020

CMS issues regulatory waivers and new rules to ease the provision of care throughout the country for the duration of this public health emergency. These changes include:

**Provision of Telehealth Services**
- Allowing telehealth to be provided via audio only, waiving the requirement that there be two-way audio and video
- Addition of more than 80 services allowed to be provided via telehealth
- Allowing providers to bill telehealth services at the same rate as in-person visits
- Clarifying that remote patient monitoring can be provided to patients with acute and chronic conditions as well as to patients with only one condition
- Allowing physicians to use remote technologies to supervise their clinical staff as appropriate

**Increasing Hospital Capacity**
- Allowing non-hospital sites, including ASCs, to be used for services typically provided on an inpatient basis as well as for quarantines
- Allowing hospitals to bill for services provided outside the building, including telehealth
- Allowing physician-owned hospitals to temporarily increase the number of beds, hospital rooms, and procedure rooms

**Rapid Expansion of Healthcare Workforce**
- Allowing hospitals to hire private practice physicians and their clinical staff without violating current law
- Issuing waivers to allow hospitals to employ nurse practitioners and physician assistants to the fullest extent possible per each state’s emergency preparedness or pandemic plan
- Waiving the requirement that CRNAs are under a physician’s supervision to expand the capacity of CRNAs and physicians
- Issuing a blanket waiver to allow hospitals to provide benefits to their medical staff including meals, childcare, and laundry

**Elimination of Paperwork Requirements**
- Allowing Medicare coverage of respiratory-related devices and equipment for any reason as determined by clinicians
- Provision of relief from many audit and reporting requirements

Details on the regulatory flexibilities and a press release are available via CMS.