

COVID-19 TOWN HALL Q&A – August 12, 2020

QUESTION TOPIC INDEX	
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<p align="center">Thank you for joining our informative discussion with Darlene Lawrence, MD, FAAFP, and Chris Tramp, MD.</p>	
MEMBER QUESTIONS	
AAFP RESPONSES	
GUEST SPEAKER QUESTIONS	
How do we find Dr. Tramp on Facebook?	Dr. Tramp can be found on Facebook here .
TELEHEALTH	
Can you explain the parity of face-to-face visits versus virtual visits with each commercial payer?	Each private payer has its own telehealth reimbursement policy. Policies differ across all plans. Many payers have updated their websites to provide telehealth payment policy information to physicians.
When will we no longer be covered by insurance for using FaceTime (for those who don't use Zoom or Doxy) for audiovisual telemedicine appointments?	The U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's (HHS) Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is exercising its enforcement discretion to not impose penalties for noncompliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) rules in connection with the good faith provision of telehealth using nonpublic-facing audio or video communication technologies (e.g., FaceTime, Skype, etc.) during the COVID-19 nationwide public health emergency (PHE) period. Once the PHE period is officially declared to have ended, OCR will likely resume standard HIPAA enforcement activities. While each private payer has its own telehealth payment policy, and policies differ across plans, many policies have evolved to pay for services delivered using technologies presently permissible under OCR's current guidance for good faith provision of care. Many payers have updated their websites to provide telehealth payment policy information to physicians.
HEALTH OF THE PUBLIC AND SCIENCE	
What is appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for me and my staff to wear during routine care of patients who screen negative for COVID-19?	The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is recommending the use of facemasks for all health care professional, patients, and visitors—even with patients who screened negative for COVID-19.
What PPE are people going to wear during the cold and flu season? We don't have enough for every patient.	Facemasks should be worn during all patient encounters. The CDC has provided strategies for optimizing PPE .
How do you keep up to date on the latest COVID-19 research?	Major literature databases and many journals are providing easy access to curated literature on COVID-19, including PubMed and American Family Physician . These are good resources to use. Some journals are publishing studies prior to peer review, which means the data has not

	been evaluated and the article may be revised or removed after peer review.
When is the AAFP going to promote full face shields to protect instead of masks for students and staff in the classroom?	<p>The evidence does not support the use of face shields in lieu of masks, as there is still potential for droplets to be dispersed around the sides of the shield. Many health care systems are encouraging the use of both masks and face shields in areas of high risk of transmission or aerosolizing procedures.</p> <p>Per the CDC, “a face shield is primarily used for eye protection for the person wearing it. At this time, it is not known what level of protection a face shield provides to people nearby from the spray of respiratory droplets from the wearer. There is currently not enough evidence to support the effectiveness of face shields for source control. Therefore, CDC does not currently recommend use of face shields as a substitute for masks.”</p>