



COVID-19: CARES Act Provider Relief Fund, Private Payer Policies and New Clinical Policies The AAFP Is Here to Support You as You Serve Your Patients and Community

April 16, 2020

Dear colleagues,

It has been nearly three months since the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in the United States. In that time, we have all experienced a wide variety of emotions, from fear, to sadness, to anger, to frustration, but as physicians, we have banded together to fight for our patients, staff, practices, families and communities. The AAFP has been, and will continue to be, alongside each of you to provide support as we continue the fight. Below is some of the new information and resources the AAFP has available that you may find helpful as you navigate patient care and practice management during this pandemic.

Virtual Town Hall

We had a great session last night at our Virtual Town Hall, where we heard from the AAFP's Director of Practice Advancement Heidi Robertson-Cooper and Director of Government Relations Stephanie Quinn. They shared details on key policies and regulations for which we have successfully advocated and provided practical insights into how you can apply those within your practice. If you missed it, be sure to check out the replay on our [COVID-19 Member Communications page](#). As a reminder, the weekly Virtual Town Hall is available for one [live](#) or [enduring](#) Prescribed CME credit each week, so be sure to evaluate the session and claim your credit.

Supplies

As a part of our ongoing efforts to resolve dire personal protective equipment shortages for members, the AAFP met with [Project N95](#), a nonprofit organization created by a rapid-response team of individuals with health care, government and technology industry backgrounds that formed a month ago. Project N95 is working to:

- Source and triage supplies of PPE on the open market.
- Collect PPE needs from all types of health care providers.
- Coordinate with governments and other large purchasers to aggregate orders of fewer than 100,000 units.
- Provide governments with access to the compiled PPE needs of all hospitals and clinicians in their jurisdiction who have reported demand in order to inform procurement and ensure equitable distribution.

Project N95 is aware that although frontline family physicians should always be well equipped, they may be among the last to receive PPE under the current model. They want to ensure

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family physicians are counted in the acute need for planning current and future U.S. PPE needs as they work with national, state and local governments.

You can assist by reporting your needs on their [request form](#). Note that this isn't a direct order of PPE, but rather an opportunity to improve the system, ramp up supply via methods beyond the system we currently have, and better indicate where the needs are. In the event Project N95 or government entities identify a supplier who can meet your needs, you and/or the purchasing contact you provide will be contacted regarding next steps.

In addition to our ongoing conversations with Project N95, the AAFP will continue to advocate with government officials to express the need to deliver critical PPE to family physicians on the front line of this COVID-19 battle.

Financial Relief

On April 10, HHS announced the immediate disbursement of the first \$30 billion of the \$100 billion that Congress allocated to hospitals, physicians and other health care providers in the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The AAFP has a page dedicated to the [CARES Act Provider Relief Fund](#) where you can find information on how the money is distributed, eligibility criteria and next steps. We have heard that some of you have already received these grant funds. If you receive funds, you need to sign an attestation confirming receipt and agree to the terms and conditions within 30 days of receiving the money. We anticipate HHS will provide the link to the attestation any day now, and we will add it to our page as soon as it is available.

COVID-19 Private Payer Policies and Payment

With private payers taking varying approaches to payment, the AAFP is closely monitoring their policies related to care provided during the COVID-19 pandemic. To make it easier for you to stay on top of what various private payers are doing, we have compiled a list of [frequently asked questions](#) and a [table of private payer payment policies](#) based on information on each payer's website. We update these resources regularly.

Clinical Information

Over the past couple of weeks, we have added some information to the [clinical resources and patient education section of our COVID-19 microsite](#) that you may find helpful:

- We recently added a section with resources to help you assist patients who may be at higher risk for complications related to COVID-19. One important area is [smoking cessation resources](#). We know that smoking and vaping can put people at higher risk if they contract COVID-19, so this is a great opportunity to encourage patients to quit. We will continue to add relevant resources for serving high-risk patients.
- This week, the AAFP issued a [statement on breastfeeding](#) that outlines recommendations for parents who have been exposed to or diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Last week, we issued a [policy on medications for COVID-19](#), cautioning against prescribing any medications in an attempt to treat or prevent COVID-19 because there are no proven treatments or preventive medications at this time.

I will again close with a couple of key reminders of AAFP resources available to you:

- **Webinar series:** Our Friday evening COVID-19 webinar series is a one-hour live, online CME session that provides you with an opportunity for live interaction with physician experts and offers a chance to ask questions. This week's topic is Managing the COVID-19 Crisis: Maintaining the Emotional Health of You, Your Team and Your Patients, so join us tomorrow, April 17, at 7 p.m. CT. Visit the [COVID-19 CME page](#) for more details.
- **AAFP COVID-19 site:** Remember to visit [the AAFP's COVID-19 microsite](#) every day as we continue to add new resources, tools and advocacy information to help you easily find and understand what you need.

Your dedication and perseverance continue to be a bright spot during this tremendously difficult time. Thank you for everything you are doing!

Gary L. LeRoy, MD
President
American Academy of Family Physicians