



SANTÉ COMMUNITY
PHYSICIANS

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 10, 2020
TO: Santé Community Physicians Providers
FROM: Kelly Lilles, Director of Physician Services and Education
RE: COVID-19

This communication is intended for all Santé Community Physicians (SCP) providers. In lieu of the recent declaration of state of emergency in California due to the coronavirus outbreak, SCP would like to communicate the following:

Waiver of Cost-Sharing Amounts

- Immediately reduce cost sharing to zero for all necessary medical screening and testing for COVID-19, including hospitalization (including emergency department), urgent care visits and provider visits where the purpose of the visit is to be screened and/or tested for COVID-19.

Ensuring Enrollees Have Timely Access to Care

- Cover all medically necessary emergency care without prior authorization whether that care is provided by an in-network (plan) or out-of-network provider (non-plan).
- Waive prior authorization requests for services related to COVID-19.
- Ensuring the network is adequate to handle an increase in the need for health care services, including offering access to out-of-network (non-plan) services where appropriate and required, as more COVID-19 cases emerge in California.

- Ensuring enrollees are not liable for unlawful balance bills from providers, including balance bills related to testing for COVID-19.

Proactive Steps

- Use telehealth services to deliver care when medically appropriate, as a means to limit enrollee's exposure to others who may be infected with COVID-19.
- Waive prior authorization and/or step therapy requirements if the enrollee's prescribing provider recommends the enrollee take a different drug to treat enrollee's condition.

In addition, even though the virus is new, there are codes with the current 2020 ICD-20-CM codes set that you can use to document COVID-19.

- B97.29 *confirmed cases of COVID-19*
- J12.89 *other viral pneumonia*
- A41.89 *other specified sepsis*
- B97.21 *SARS-associated coronavirus as the cause of disease classified elsewhere*
- Z20.828 *contact with and (suspected) exposure to other viral communicable diseases*

The CDC explains that **B34.2** *Coronavirus infection, unspecified* is inappropriate because the coronavirus is a respiratory illness and, therefore, the site is not unspecified.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Santé Customer Service Department at (559) 228-5410.