

## COVID-19 Report to Members ~ October 12, 2020

Reports are sent on Mondays and Thursdays, unless there's breaking news.

### Idaho Rebounds Progress

Governor Brad Little will review Idaho's latest metrics and discuss the state's progress on Thursday, October 15 at 1p MTN / 12p PAC. Live streaming of the Governor's comments will be available on [Idaho Public Television](#).

### Reimbursement & Policy

#### CMS revises terms for relief payments

Late Thursday, CMS announced new repayment terms for hospitals and other providers receiving funds from the Medicare Accelerated and Advance Payment (AAP) programs. AHA has outlined the new repayment terms below and additional information is provided in the CMS [factsheet](#) and [FAQ](#).

##### New AAP repayment terms

**Repayment start time** - Repayment begins one year from the date the AAP was issued. Previously, repayment began 120 days after the issuance of payment.

**Recoupment schedule** - Once repayment begins, Medicare payments owed to providers and suppliers will be recouped at a rate of 25% for 11 months. After the 11-month period, Medicare payments will be recouped at a rate of 50% for six additional months. The withhold/recoupment rate had previously been 100%.

**Remaining balance** - After the repayment period ends (i.e., after the 12-month grace period and 17-month repayment period), a letter for any remaining balance of the AAPs will be issued. Providers and suppliers will have 30 days from the date of the letter to repay the balance in full. If payment is not received within 30 days, interest will accrue at the rate of 4% from the date the letter was issued, and will be assessed for each full 30-day period that the balance remains unpaid.

Providers and suppliers experiencing financial hardship are able to submit requests for an Extended Repayment Schedule (ERS) to their assigned Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) after the letter is issued. Specifically, the provider would need to meet specified criteria related to financial hardship or extreme hardship under 42 C.F.R. 401.607(c)(2) in order to be eligible for an ERS.

**Additional repayment flexibility** - A provider or supplier may repay their AAP at any time before or during the repayment period by contacting their MAC. Providers and suppliers can submit one or more lump sum payment to pay off their AAP amount. If such payment is repaid in full, the repayment terms above will not apply. Providers and suppliers interested in making voluntary lump sum payments should contact their MAC for further instructions regarding this option.

**Periodic Interim Payment (PIP) hospitals** - Per the CMS factsheet, the recoupment process from bi-weekly PIP payments will begin after 12 months from the date the provider received their accelerated payment. Repayment will align with the recoupment schedule for non-PIP providers. Accelerated payments will not be included in the reconciliation and settlement of final cost reports.

### Quality & Patient Safety

#### Guidance for patient-collected samples

The FDA recently released information for healthcare providers working with patients who will self-collect nasal samples for testing. Incorrect or inadequate collection of the sample may decrease the sensitivity of the test and produce inaccurate results.

In the [Letter to Healthcare Providers](#), specific instructions for collection are provided. HealthPulse Solutions' [animated and printed materials](#) as well as [printable instructions](#) from the CDC might also be helpful to providers.

### Resources & Equipment

#### IHA to serve on vaccine committee

On October 1, Governor Little directed the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare to convene the new Idaho COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee to advise him on:

- prioritization of vaccines when in limited supply;
- implementation of the vaccination plan; and
- communication and delivery of the vaccine.

The Department of Health and Welfare has invited IHA's president, Brian Whitlock, to serve on the Idaho COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee. This Advisory Committee will assist state and local entities in ensuring the Idaho vaccination response to COVID-19 is thoughtfully planned and successfully executed. Committee members will lend their expertise to best enhance Idaho's vaccine distribution plan in adherence with federal guidance and requirements, ensuring equitable access to COVID-19 vaccination across the state based on priority populations.

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