



COVID-19 Report to Members ~ April 19, 2022

Reports are sent on Tuesdays, unless there's breaking news.

Editor's note

It is with no small amount of joy that I announce the retirement of IHA's COVID Update. After two years and nearly 200 updates, I couldn't be more thrilled to put this masthead out to pasture. With Idaho's emergency declaration ending last Friday, it seems like a natural time to also end these updates.

We know COVID has caused long-term issues for our healthcare system and that new variants continue to try to make a name for themselves, but everyday we continue to see our hospitals, public health partners, and others focus more on recovery efforts and how they will create a "new normal." There will be a lot of news and information as hospitals change, not only in response to the pandemic but also to address workforce and other looming issues. That news and information will become part of our regular IHA Bulletin.

As I look back on all the information, news, data, and regulatory changes we crammed into those Updates, I see one big hole. I wish we could have highlighted the incredible compassion, dedication, camaraderie, and unwavering commitment to service shown by you and the healthcare teams you work alongside. The herculean efforts to share resources and expertise; avoid rationing treatment; get patients into beds; and launch massive public health endeavors for testing and vaccination are inspiring and motivating. It was and will continue to be an honor to work on your behalf.

Before we jump into this week's news, there are a few folks that have been incredible resources in bringing these Updates to our members. Chris, Bozena, Nicole and Karen from our IHA team were relentless in sifting through mountains of clinical, research and reporting information. You are all rockstars! Brian and Toni were dedicated proofreaders and helped make sense of policy, fiscal and regulation news. Michelle Griffin and Kris Carter at IDHW, thank you so much for your daily news round ups; they were invaluable. This was a team effort, and I couldn't have asked for a better team. Thank you all!

Last, but certainly not least, to all of you who worked day in and day out caring for patients, families, communities, and each other, "amazing" seems an understatement. On behalf of all of us at IHA, thank you for not giving up the fight. Your work matters!

~Darryl-Lynn Oakes, editor

Reimbursement & Policy

Emergency declarations and waivers

While Friday brought about the end of [Idaho's public health emergency declaration](#), HHS has renewed the [federal declaration](#) through mid-July.

The federal declaration allows providers some flexibilities in the delivery of healthcare services, often through 1135 waivers. With the end of the state declaration, IHA and others have asked how that will impact the waivers hospitals are currently operating under.

The Division of Licensing and Certification stated that "there are currently no state licensing rules waived for hospitals." Therefore, all CMS waivers granted to hospitals are still in effect until CMS, not the state, ends them or the federal declaration.

A recent [QSO memo](#) from CMS did outline some waivers that are slated to end in May and June. However, those waivers apply to skilled nursing, intermediate care facilities, inpatient hospices, and end-stage renal disease. Applicable waivers for hospitals remain in effect.

Resources & Information

FDA authorizes breathalyzer test

A diagnostic breath test by InspectIR Systems has received an FDA EUA. The point-of-care test can provide results in under three minutes. Samples are collected under the supervision of a healthcare provider and are treated as presumptive until confirmed with a molecular test. For additional information, please see the [Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers](#).

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A [CDC study](#) released today underscores the importance of vaccinating children. The study reviewed the cases of nearly 400 children hospitalized between December 19, 2021 and February 28, 2022. Of those, 87% were unvaccinated, 30% had no underlying medical conditions, and 19% were admitted to an ICU.

The White House and HHS will host a virtual summit to discuss how the healthcare community can encourage vaccinations for children, pregnant people, and young adults.

Conversations on Encouraging COVID-19 Vaccinations

April 22 – 10a MT / 9a PAC

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