



# COVID-19

## Physician Financial Relief Updates

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**1** : The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is now dispersing a second \$20 billion round of funds to physicians and other providers. As with the last tranche of payments, these funds are referred to by HHS as “general distribution” funds since they are being distributed broadly rather than on a targeted basis. Please note that unlike the round of general distribution funding, many physicians did not receive this second round of funding automatically and will have to submit additional data to HHS to receive these funds.

A portion of providers automatically received an advance payment on April 24 based on the revenue data they submit in CMS cost reports. Medicare providers for whom HHS did not have adequate cost report data on file must submit their revenue information to the [General Distribution Portal](#) in order to receive additional general distribution funds and agree to the Terms and Conditions for this additional distribution. Providers who received their additional funds automatically will still need to submit their revenue information so that it can be verified via the portal.

A link to the general distribution portal and other [official information can be found here](#).

You can also [click here for answers to FAQs about the General Distribution Portal](#). This document includes eligibility information and other important facts.

Finally, AMA guidance on the relief fund is [available here](#).

**2** : Beginning April 26, 2020, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will not be accepting any new applications for the Advance Payment Program, and it will be reevaluating all pending and new applications for Accelerated Payments in light of historical direct payments made available through the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Provider Relief Fund. The FMA strongly disapproves of this decision and continues to urge the advance payment program be updated and improved upon. More information is available in [this fact sheet](#).

**3** : On April 30, CMS raised payments for audio-only telephone E/M visits to match in-person rates. This will increase payments for these services from a range of about \$14-\$41 to about \$46-\$110. The payment increase is retroactive to March 1, 2020. This represents a significant win for physicians and patients.

Read CMS' [announcement here](#).

**4** : Physicians who provide COVID-19 related treatment to uninsured patients will now be eligible to receive payments, at the Medicare rate, for qualified services. Physicians who accept these funds will have to agree not to balance bill patients. Other terms and conditions apply.

[You can access the portal and more information here](#).