

**Meadows Institute COVID-19 Regulatory & Reimbursement Newsletter**

***Letter to Providers #51: State and Federal Updates – April 9, 2021***

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With federal and state health care policies changing in response to COVID-19, the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (Meadows Institute) is issuing *COVID-19 Regulatory & Reimbursement Newsletters* to support providers. In these newsletters, we highlight recent changes and extensions to regulatory and reimbursement rules, as well as newly published or updated guidance and answers to frequently asked questions.

These newsletters, along with additional information on mental health resources during a pandemic, are posted here: <https://mmhpi.org/work/covid19/>. If you would like to have additional organizations added to our distribution list or have follow up questions on the content, please email Rachael McLaughlin at [rmclaughlin@mmhpi.org](mailto:rmclaughlin@mmhpi.org).

## Texas Updates

### CSHCN Extensions

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<b>Date</b>	April 1, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	<p>As part of its continued response to COVID-19, the Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN) Services Program will provide reimbursement for previously identified telemedicine and telehealth services through April 30, 2021, unless the federal public health emergency ends sooner. The requirement to obtain the client or guardian signatures on the CSHCN Services Program Documentation of Receipt Form is <a href="#">waived</a> through April 30, 2021.</p> <p>The <a href="#">provision</a> allowing for relaxed document submission timeframes for new and initial prior authorizations for providers that are unable to provide certain required documentation during the public health emergency has also been extended through April 30, 2021. This is an update to the article titled, "<a href="#">Guidance for Providers Regarding New and initial Prior Authorizations</a>," which was published on July 2, 2020.</p>
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://www.tmhp.com/news/2021-04-01-cshcn-covid-19-telehealth-and-telemedicine-extensions-through-april-30-2021">https://www.tmhp.com/news/2021-04-01-cshcn-covid-19-telehealth-and-telemedicine-extensions-through-april-30-2021</a>

### Texas' CANS Will Be Conducted via Telehealth

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<b>Date</b>	April 1, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Effective April 1, 2021, it will be a permanent option for Texas' Child and Adolescent Needs and Strength (TX CANS) 2.0 assessment to be conducted via telehealth for children ages 3-17 years old in STAR Health. The goal of allowing the TX CANS 2.0 to be conducted via telehealth is to increase completion of the TX CANS 2.0 assessments and increase access to TX CANS 2.0 certified providers to drive appropriate treatment planning. Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) must ensure:</p>

- A certified TX CANS 2.0 assessment provider in the MCO's network performs the assessment.
- Members have a choice of telehealth providers.
- The TX CANS 2.0 is completed for children ages 3-17 in state conservatorship within 30 days of STAR Health enrollment and annually thereafter.
- The TX CANS 2.0 assessment may be completed via telehealth using a secure portal and utilization of a remote site (e.g., foster home, temporary shelter, residential treatment center, DFPS office, etc.).

For more information, contact: [StarHealthPPD@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:StarHealthPPD@hhsc.state.tx.us)

**Link**

<https://hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/services/health/coronavirus-covid-19/mcs-covid-19-info-handout-apr-1-2021.pdf>

### Update to 'Current Driver's License Requirement Temporarily Waived Due to COVID-19 Public Health Emergency'

<b>Date</b>	April 1, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	This is an update to the article titled, " <a href="#">Current Driver's License Requirement Temporarily Waived Due to COVID-19 Public Health Emergency</a> ," which the Texas Medicaid Healthcare Partnership (TMHP) posted on July 9, 2020. The update is that the temporarily waived requirement to have a current driver's license to enroll in Texas Medicaid is set to expire on April 14, 2021. After this date, driver's license expiration dates must be current upon application submission.
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://www.tmhp.com/news/2021-04-01-update-current-drivers-license-requirement-temporarily-waived-due-covid-19-public">https://www.tmhp.com/news/2021-04-01-update-current-drivers-license-requirement-temporarily-waived-due-covid-19-public</a>

### Updated COVID-19 Response Plan and FAQ for ICF Providers

<b>Date</b>	April 1, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Long-term Care Regulation updated the Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF) <a href="#">COVID-19 Response Plan</a> and <a href="#">FAQ</a> document.
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://hhs.texas.gov/about-hhs/communications-events/news/2021/04/hhsc-publishes-updated-covid-19-response-plan-frequently-asked-questions-icf-providers">https://hhs.texas.gov/about-hhs/communications-events/news/2021/04/hhsc-publishes-updated-covid-19-response-plan-frequently-asked-questions-icf-providers</a>

## Vaccine Updates

### Texas Vaccine Data

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<b>Date</b>	April 2, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	<p>The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) issued a news release recapping the latest vaccine data. According to the release, more than 2.5 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine are being shipped this week to providers across Texas. DSHS is allocating 1,094,920 first doses to 2,011 providers in 200 counties, the largest number of doses and providers to date. DSHS is ordering 626,290 second doses for people vaccinated a few weeks ago. An estimated 900,000 additional first and second doses are expected to be available to pharmacy locations, federally qualified health centers, and dialysis centers as allocated directly by the federal government. Nearly 7.8 million people have received at least one dose, and more than 4.3 million are now fully vaccinated. More than two-thirds of Texas seniors have received at least one dose, and nearly half are now fully vaccinated. More than one-third of all Texans at least 16 years old have gotten a shot and nearly one in five are fully vaccinated.</p>
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/news/releases/2021/20210402">https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/news/releases/2021/20210402</a>

### Vaccine Reimbursement Rate Change

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<b>Date</b>	April 1, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	<p>On April 1, HHSC set fee-for-service (FFS) reimbursement rates to align with Medicare. For all <a href="#">COVID-19 vaccines</a>, the FFS administration reimbursement rate is \$40 for each administration. If a person receives a multi-dose vaccine, then Medicaid should reimburse providers \$40 for each dose's administration.</p>
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://www.txvendordrug.com/about/news/2021/covid-19-vaccine-administration-rate-change-effective-april-1">https://www.txvendordrug.com/about/news/2021/covid-19-vaccine-administration-rate-change-effective-april-1</a>

### Vaccine Administration Billing Process for NF Providers

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<b>Date</b>	April 1, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	<p>DSHS created the COVID-19 Vaccine Program in 2020; it allows qualifying health care facilities to enroll to be a COVID-19 vaccine provider. Medicare or Medicaid will reimburse providers.</p> <p>For Medicare billing, the Centers for Medicare &amp; Medicaid Services (CMS) created a <a href="#">COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit</a>. It includes guidance for billing Medicare for <a href="#">COVID-19 vaccine shot administration</a>.</p> <p>To be eligible for reimbursement for Medicaid FFS long-term care COVID-19 vaccine administration services claims, nursing facilities must enroll with Texas Medicaid and Healthcare Partnership via TexMedConnect or Electronic Data Interchange 837I.</p> <p>For reimbursement for vaccine administration from Medicaid, nursing facilities must <a href="#">email HHSC Claims Support</a>. The claims support team will begin the process to create the necessary service authorizations.</p> <p><a href="#">See the COVID-19 Vaccine Billing Frequently Asked Questions (PDF)</a> for information on the COVID-19 vaccine billing process.</p>
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://www.tmhp.com/news/2021-04-01-covid-19-vaccine-administration-billing-process-nf-providers-sent-corrected-email">https://www.tmhp.com/news/2021-04-01-covid-19-vaccine-administration-billing-process-nf-providers-sent-corrected-email</a>

### Save Our Senior Initiative Update

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<b>Date</b>	April 6, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Governor Greg Abbott announced that the Texas Division of Emergency (TDEM), the Texas Military Department (TMD), and DSHS have 46 counties participating in the sixth week of the Save Our Seniors COVID-19 vaccine initiative. The Governor <a href="#">announced the Save Our Seniors program</a> in Corpus Christi in February to provide vaccines to seniors throughout the state. To date, 107 counties have participated in the program.</p>
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-announces-46-participating-counties-for-sixth-week-of-save-our-seniors-initiative">https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-announces-46-participating-counties-for-sixth-week-of-save-our-seniors-initiative</a>

### Texas Vaccine Webinars

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<b>Date</b>	April 5, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	DSHS recently notified vaccine providers that the regular Tuesday/Thursday webinars will be changing format starting this week. Tuesday webinars will be geared toward advanced users of the Vaccine Allocation and Ordering System (VAOS), including those who have received allocations and are actively administering the vaccine. This will include important updates, clinical considerations, and advanced user tips. Thursday webinars will be geared toward new providers and will cover the basics, including the enrollment process, how to get started in VAOS, etc. See the past recordings and presentation materials <a href="#">here</a> .
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/covid19/COVID-19-Vaccine-Provider-Webinars/">https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/covid19/COVID-19-Vaccine-Provider-Webinars/</a>

### Revised Inpatient Hospice COVID-19 Emergency Rules

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<b>Date</b>	April 1, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	HHSC has published revised <a href="#">Inpatient Hospice COVID-19 emergency rules</a> . The rules describe the requirements related to limited indoor and outdoor visitation in a hospice inpatient unit.
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://www.tmhp.com/news/2021-04-05-hhsc-publishes-revised-inpatient-hospice-covid-19-emergency-rules-april-1">https://www.tmhp.com/news/2021-04-05-hhsc-publishes-revised-inpatient-hospice-covid-19-emergency-rules-april-1</a>

## Federal Updates

### CMHC Grant Program

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<b>Date</b>	April 6, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	<p>The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is accepting applications for the fiscal year 2021 Community Mental Health Centers (CMHC) Grant Program. The grant amount is \$825 million. This is the second half of the \$1.65 billion provided to SAMHSA for the Mental Health Block Grant from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (H.R. 133) at the end of last year. These are competitive grants for community mental health centers with applications due May 21, 2021. Anticipated awards range from \$500,000 to \$2.5 million per year for up to two years.</p> <p>SAMHSA <a href="#">announced</a> the award of the first \$825 million in Mental Health Services Block Grant funding back in March. <a href="#">Texas received \$74.6 million</a> in supplemental awards from that funding.</p>
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/grant-announcements/">https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/grant-announcements/</a>

### FCC to Launch Second Round of COVID-19 Telehealth Program

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<b>Date</b>	March 30, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	<p>The <a href="#">Federal Communications Commission</a> (FCC) recently approved the relaunch of the <a href="#">COVID-19 Telehealth Program</a> on March 30, 2021, setting in motion the next round of awards for providers and healthcare organizations. The announcement means that providers and entities providing telehealth services can begin applying for program funding. The COVID-19 Telehealth Program is one of several connected health funding opportunities introduced by the FCC in recent years and in response to COVID-19. FCC's <a href="#">Connected Care Pilot Program</a> provides \$100 million in funding over a three-year period to support broadband connectivity and network equipment for telehealth providers serving low-income areas and veterans.</p>
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-371187A1.pdf">https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-371187A1.pdf</a>

## Vaccine Updates

### Repayment of COVID-19 Accelerated and Advance Payments

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<b>Date</b>	March 30, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	CMS issued information about repayment of COVID-19 accelerated and advance payments beginning on March 30, 2021; it includes information on recouping these payments, such as identifying payments recovered and preparing billing staff. General information on COVID-19 accelerated and advance payments can be found <a href="#">here</a> .
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://www.cms.gov/files/document/se21004.pdf">https://www.cms.gov/files/document/se21004.pdf</a>

### HHS Launches Nationwide Network to Encourage Vaccination

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<b>Date</b>	April 1, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced additional measures to encourage vaccinations and increase vaccine confidence as part of the next phase of its COVID-19 public education campaign. The Biden Administration is launching the COVID-19 Community Corps – a nationwide, grassroots network of local voices people know and trust to encourage Americans to get vaccinated.
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/04/01/hhs-launches-nationwide-network-trusted-voices-encourage-vaccination-next-phase-covid-19-public-education-campaign.html">https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/04/01/hhs-launches-nationwide-network-trusted-voices-encourage-vaccination-next-phase-covid-19-public-education-campaign.html</a>

### Expansion of COVID-19 Vaccine Program to All Community Health Centers Across the Country

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<b>Date</b>	April 7, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra announced that all Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) -funded health centers and Health Center Program look-alikes will now be invited to participate in the Health Center COVID-19 Vaccine Program. These health centers will have the opportunity to join the program as soon as they are ready, increasing the total number of health centers that have been invited to 1,470 nationwide. This expansion will be made through the HRSA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/04/07/hhs-secretary-xavier-becerra-announces-expansion-of-covid-19-vaccine-program-to-all-community-health-centers-across-the-country.html">https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/04/07/hhs-secretary-xavier-becerra-announces-expansion-of-covid-19-vaccine-program-to-all-community-health-centers-across-the-country.html</a>



### Moderna Dosing/Vial Changes

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<b>Date</b>	April 1, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced two revisions regarding the number of doses per vial available for the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. The first revision clarifies the number of doses per vial for vials that are currently available, in that the maximum number of extractable doses is 11, with a range of 10-11 doses. The second revision authorizes the availability of an additional multi-dose vial in which each vial contains a maximum of 15 doses, with a range of 13-15 doses that can potentially be extracted. Read the FDA's updated provider <a href="#">fact sheet</a> for more details.
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-makes-two-revisions-moderna-covid-19-vaccine-emergency-use">https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-makes-two-revisions-moderna-covid-19-vaccine-emergency-use</a>

### FDA Advances Over-the Counter and Other Screening Test Development

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<b>Date</b>	March 31, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	FDA authorized several tests for over-the-counter (OTC) use without a prescription when used for serial screening. In addition to the tests authorized for OTC use, one serial screening test was authorized for use in a point-of-care (POC) setting without a prescription, and an additional screening test was authorized for POC use with a prescription. The addition of the OTC and POC tests for screening will give schools, workplaces, communities and others several options for serial screening tests that are accurate and reliable. These authorizations follow the FDA's recent actions to advance OTC and other screening test development.
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-continues-advance-over-counter-and-other-screening-test-development">https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-continues-advance-over-counter-and-other-screening-test-development</a>

## FDA Issues Emergency Use Authorization for the Symbiotica COVID-19 Self-Collected Antibody Test System

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<b>Date</b>	April 6, 2021
<b>Summary</b>	FDA has issued an <a href="#">emergency use authorization (EUA)</a> for the Symbiotica COVID-19 Self-Collected Antibody Test System, the first antibody test authorized for use with home collected dried blood spot samples. Samples collected at home are then sent to a Symbiotica, Inc. laboratory for analysis.
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-issues-emergency-use-authorization-symbiotica-covid-19-self">https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-issues-emergency-use-authorization-symbiotica-covid-19-self</a>