

March 21, 2020



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How is Your Practice Changing as a Result of the Coronavirus?



Coronavirus Resources for COA Members

As orthopaedic practices change to limit exposure to the Coronavirus, below are some resources for you to consider for

1. [Tips from Orthopaedic Practice Managers](#)
2. [CMS Medicare Guidance](#)
3. [Workers' Compensation Guidance – Treatment and Medical-Legal Evaluations](#)
4. [Outpatient Surgery Centers \(ASC\) Guidance](#)
5. [Employer Requirements](#)
6. [Medi-Cal Guidance](#)
7. [Department of Managed Health Care – Directive to Health Plans](#)
8. [COA White Paper on Telehealth Visits](#)

10 Tips From Orthopaedic Practice Managers

1. Screen patients before their appointment to see if they are running a fever, coughing, or having respiratory problems.
2. Take the patient's history remotely to reduce the patient's time in the office.
3. Ask patients to wait in their cars until you are ready to take them directly into an exam room.
4. Have the staff and the surgeons wear masks and protective clothing. Some offices are able to get surgical masks from their ASC.
5. As the patient enters your office, take their temperature. If they are running a fever direct them to your local county health department for care.
6. If you are having patients wait in your waiting room, remove chairs so that patients are at least 6 feet apart.
7. As the patient enters the exam room have them wash their hands.
8. The surgeon should wash their hands also immediately before examining the patient.
9. Report any patient diagnostic imaging results to the patient on-line through secure messaging. FYI, COA is in discussions with several firms to create a new COA member benefit to allow Telehealth visits and HIPAA secure messaging via a computer or smartphone for those who may not have this capability within their EHR or practice management system. DrFirst is one of the firms being considered. They have software called "Backline Telehealth" and offering the software at a rate of \$300 per year per

provider. For more information contact – Eric Shark – eshark@drfirst.com Tell Eric that you are a COA member.

10. Clean, clean, clean several times a day. Don't forget to wipe down the doorknobs.

CMS Medicare Guidance



- CMS.gov "[Medicare Telemedicine Health Care Provider Fact Sheet](#)" - March 17, 2020
- Elective Surgeries CMS Releases Recommendations on Adult Elective Surgeries, Non-Essential Medical, Surgical, and Dental Procedures During COVID-19 Response The recommendations can be found [here](#)
- [Center for Connected Health Policy – Medicare Telehealth Update](#)
- [Telehealth CPT Guidelines](#)

CMS suspends certain Telehealth Coverage requirements for COVID-19 public health emergency



HMBA
On March 17, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services issued guidance that explains its new temporary Telehealth Coverage Policies to help address the COVID-19 emergency situation. CMS is using its 1135 waiver authority to expand telehealth benefits, effective March 6, 2020 until the end of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. [READ MORE](#)

COVID-19: CMS issues EMTALA guidance



Foley
As the coronavirus pandemic has unfolded, hospitals across the country have begun asking how the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act will be applied to them when they are confronted with individuals coming to their dedicated emergency departments with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis. [READ MORE](#)



These CMS alerts and earlier CMS actions in response to the COVID-19 virus, are part of the ongoing White House Task Force efforts. To keep up with the important work the Task Force is doing in response to COVID-19, click here www.coronavirus.gov. For information specific to CMS, please visit the [Current Emergencies Website](#).

Workers' Compensation Guidance

CA DWC Provides Guidance on Medical Evaluations During State of Emergency Period



Department of Industrial Relations
The Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) appreciates the efforts of the workers' compensation community to provide care for injured workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Of paramount importance is that everyone follow all guidance from the Governor as well as federal, state and local public health agencies regarding COVID-19. [READ MORE](#)

Broadspire releases white paper on workers' compensation impacts of 2019 coronavirus



Broadspire recently announced the release of a white paper to look at how COVID-19 and similar occupational diseases are viewed in a workers compensation context. As the 2019 Coronavirus (COVID-19) begins to spread in the United States, questions of the impact on workers compensation claims are beginning to arise. [READ MORE](#)

Outpatient Surgery Centers Guidance

Guidance from the Ambulatory Surgery Center Association (ASCA) for Outpatient Surgery Centers on Necessary Surgeries



ASCA

In response to government guidance that hospitals and ambulatory surgery centers postpone elective surgeries during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ambulatory Surgery Center Association (ASCA) has consulted with clinical leaders to solicit recommendations on how and when facilities should proceed with cases that, for clinical reasons, should not be postponed. A surgery may be deemed urgent and necessary if the treating physician decides that a months-long delay would increase the likelihood of significantly worse morbidity or prognosis for the patient. [READ MORE](#)

Employer Requirements

California employment considerations during temporary shutdowns due to coronavirus



California Employment Law Report

In response to the coronavirus, many cities throughout California are issuing emergency orders and placing temporary restrictions on certain business, such as restaurants, bars, movie theaters, bowling alleys, arcades, and gyms. Los Angeles City has issued an order to temporary close these type of establishments until March 31, 2020. [READ MORE](#)

Medi-Cal Guidance

Medicaid State Plan Fee-For-Service Payments for Services Delivered Via Telehealth



Medicaid

This document is intended to assist states in understanding policy options for paying Medicaid providers that use telehealth technology to deliver services. The overview and sample state plan language apply to Medicaid fee-for-service payments and additional considerations may be warranted for states interested in offering telehealth within other delivery systems. [READ MORE](#)

Department of Managed Health Care Directive to Health Plans

[HMOs, Anthem Blue Cross, Blue Shield, and Kaiser Permanente](#)



COA's White Paper on Telehealth Visits

Telehealth in Orthopaedics: An Essential Technology



COA

As patients increasingly seek improved access and convenience, a well-designed and well-adopted telehealth platform using modern digital technologies, allows your practice to deliver on both access and convenience to patients. The healthcare consumer increasingly carries the expectation of virtual care capabilities and

convenience is becoming a major determinant of patient satisfaction. In addition, these technologies allow many routine visits to be completed in a fraction of the time leading to improved practice efficiencies. [READ MORE](#)

Other Coronavirus News

Coronavirus: A 5-point plan for pharmaceutical companies



NBC News

The novel coronavirus is now a pandemic, and like any global problem, it's going to take the partnership of many to solve. "Morning Joe" co-host and Know Your Value founder Mika Brzezinski sat down with Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla to discuss the current situation: how companies and government can work together, progress with potential coronavirus vaccines and how we can be better prepared for future health crises. [READ MORE](#)

COVID-19 in Italy: A sign of things to come in the U.S.?



MedPage Today

Lorenzo Menicanti, MD, head of cardiac surgery at Policlinico San Donato in Milan, Italy — one of the most active centers for cardiac surgery in Italy — is performing heart surgeries only on an emergency basis, as all of his cardiac intensive care unit beds have been reassigned to patients with COVID-19. [READ MORE](#)

COVID-19: States waive in-state licensing requirements for health care providers



Foley

Over the last week, the number of COVID-19 cases in the United States has spread to nearly all 50 states, with the number of confirmed cases changing by the minute. Federal, state, and local officials are evaluating options in real time to combat the virus's spread and ease access to medical care. [READ MORE](#)

Managing the commercial impact of the coronavirus: Implications for healthcare



FOLEY

"In general, except in the limited circumstances described elsewhere in this Bulletin, affirmative reporting to the media or the public at large about an identifiable patient, or the disclosure to the public or media of specific information about treatment of an identifiable patient, such as specific tests, test results or details of a patient's illness, may not be done without the patient's written authorization[.]" (Department of Health and Human Services, commenting on HIPAA's limitations on disclosing COVID-19 related patient information) [READ MORE](#)

Text messages with false coronavirus info are being sent to hospital staff



Becker's Health IT

Physicians from hospitals across the country have received text messages with false information about the coronavirus and the government's response plans, according to *ABC News*. On March 15 a physician at a Boston area hospital got a suspicious text that warned of an impending shutdown of public and government services because of the COVID-19 outbreak. The physician went on to pass along the text message, causing the false information to spread. [READ MORE](#)

Newsletter: Trying to turn the tide



Los Angeles Times

As hospitals prepare for a nationwide explosion of new coronavirus infections, the federal government turns to more emergency measures. President Trump has invoked wartime powers that could increase the manufacturing of medical equipment used to fight the coronavirus pandemic, such as ventilators needed to keep critically ill patients alive and protective masks and gowns for hospital workers. [READ MORE](#)

US prepares for 18-month pandemic; 52% of COVID-19 patients are younger than 55 — 7 key updates



Becker's Hospital Review

In the COVID-19 pandemic, 9,415 American cases have been reported, along with 150 deaths, as of 10 a.m. CDT, March 19. Worldwide, 222,643 cases and 9,115 deaths have been reported, while 84,506 people have recovered from the illness. [READ MORE](#)

The Trump administration says Medicare and Medicaid might not cover all healthcare for coronavirus patients



Business Insider

Seema Verma, the administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, said on Monday evening that her agency may not be able to pay for all "products and services" required for coronavirus patients dependent on government insurance. [READ MORE](#)

Walmart health clinics will drive 'consumer revolution,' former Apple CEO says



Becker's Hospital Review

With the promise of low prices and convenient point-of-care delivery, Walmart's standalone health centers are set to create a "consumer revolution" in healthcare, according to former Apple CEO John Sculley. In the past six months, Walmart has expanded its footprint in the primary care market, opening two standalone health clinics in Dallas, Ga., and Calhoun, Ga. [READ MORE](#)

The VA recommends apps for PTSD and pain management. It's led to new veteran privacy concerns



Fierce Health

Federal lawmakers are taking a hard look at how the VA protects patient data shared with VA-approved health apps. As more health data is shared with technology companies and mobile apps, it raises concerns about potential privacy and security risks for veterans, according to federal lawmakers charged with oversight of the Department of Veterans Affairs' IT modernization efforts. [READ MORE](#)

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California Orthopaedic Association

1246 P Street | Sacramento, CA 95814 | 916-454-9884 | [Contact Us](#)

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