

March 17, 2020

Medicaid Member Bulletin

From: Jim Jones, State Medicaid Director

Subject: Wisconsin Medicaid Response to COVID-19 Outbreak

We know that you are hearing a lot about the COVID-19 outbreak going on across the country and around the world. Staff at the Wisconsin Department of Health Services are working hard to make sure that we are as ready as we can be to protect the people of our state, keep you as safe and healthy as possible, and support you getting quality health care when you need it.

Our health plans and health care providers are key partners in these efforts. We are working with them to see what flexibilities we can provide to make things easier, faster, and more efficient during this emergency.

- We're reminding everyone that there are currently no copayments for any services.
- As of March 20, 2020, providers will be allowed to early refill most prescriptions to ensure you have enough supply on hand if you need to stay at home. We will have further guidance on controlled substances at a later time.
- Some drugs are available in a 3-month supply and you are encouraged to talk to your provider to see if your drug is available. We are working on expanding the list of drugs available for this option. Please continue to check with your provider to see if your prescription becomes available in a 3-month supply.
- We'll be opening up some ways for you to get care without having to travel to locations where you could be at a greater risk of getting sick. Check with your doctor or other health care provider to see what services can be provided to you at a distance through a computer, tablet, or phone, also known as telehealth services
- We are working with your health plans and health care providers to make sure they know what services you can get to test for or treat COVID-19 without a wait.

If you develop symptoms such as fever, cough, and/or difficulty breathing, and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or have recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19, **stay home and call your healthcare provider**. Older patients and individuals who have severe underlying medical conditions or have compromised immune systems should contact their healthcare provider early, even if their illness is mild. Your doctor will determine if you have signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and whether you should be tested. **If you have severe symptoms, such as persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion or inability to arouse, or bluish lips, contact your healthcare provider or emergency room and seek care immediately.**

We encourage you to work with your health plans, health care providers, member services, care teams – whoever you usually rely on to support your care and services, to find out what is available and best for you during this event.

In the meantime, just some reminders about things you can do to keep you and your loved ones safe and healthy right now:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially before eating and after going to the bathroom, blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

During this outbreak when information is changing often, please check our website (<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>) and listen to messages from the CDC for the most current information.