

OPRA MEMBER UPDATE

APRIL 14, 2020

Columbus Dispatch Runs Story Highlighting Need For PPE

On Sunday, April 12, the Columbus Dispatch published an article titled "Direct Care Workers Struggle to Find Protective Equipment". The article features interviews with OPRA's Pete Moore, as well Bethany Toledo of the Ohio Alliance of Direct Support Professionals, and spotlights the unique need DSPs have for Personal Protective Equipment in order to keep themselves and the people they support safe and healthy. OPRA will continue to develop resources and strategies to assist members in accessing PPE.

[The Columbus Dispatch Article can be read here.](#)

OPRA has developed a toolkit designed to help members reach out to local media and raise awareness of the need for PPE for your agency and staff. That toolkit can be found at www.opra.org or by [clicking here.](#)

OPRA and OACB Submit HPC Funding Proposal

On Friday, April 10th, OPRA, in collaboration with the Ohio Association of County Boards, submitted a proposal to Director Davis of DODD, which was then submitted to the Ohio Department of Medicaid. The proposal is aimed at supporting providers who have taken on additional costs in staffing, overtime, administrative coordination and PPE development since the beginning of the crisis, as well as setting aside emergency funds for agencies dealing with an outbreak of Covid-19.

This proposal was developed in response to data collected late last week, indicating providers had already taken on significant costs in the aforementioned areas, even before the surge began and day service centers closed. We anticipate that costs will be even higher in April and that agencies who experience a Covid-19 infection will need even further resource and support.

The proposal requests a 10% rate increase in residential services for the month of March, followed by another 10% rate increase in April. Additionally, emergency grant funds have been requested for agencies working through an active Covid-19 infection.

The proposal is currently with the Ohio Department Medicaid and is still dependent on the application for emergency appendix K relief from CMS.

[To read the data analysis and proposal, click here.](#)



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OPRA Submits Feedback to Ohio Economic Taskforce

The Ohio Economic Taskforce has been tasked to develop a plan on how to reopen Ohio's economy. The Taskforce is made up of a group of Representatives from the Ohio House of Representatives. You can read about the taskforce [here](#).

We aimed to highlight some of the bigger issues Members are facing that are outside of the control of DODD and OOD. Suggestions included finding a solution for situations when unemployment is potentially more lucrative than staying at work, the financial burden when you are reimbursing (self-insured) non-profit for unemployment benefits, and support for our Members who have over 500 employees that have largely been left out of the conversation at a federal level. There is one exception for the service-specific exclusion. We included suggestions around providing funds for day array services as we continue to struggle with our system partners to see the importance of supporting our day providers through the pandemic.

Businesses were strongly encouraged to submit their suggestions on no more than one page, which significantly limited the number of suggestions.

[You can read OPRA's suggestions here.](#)

OOD Introduces REACH Service

On Friday, April 10, The Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities agency introduced a new service, called REACH (Refer, Educate, and Check-in). This service offers a flat fee of \$100 for providers to "listen, offer support, and refer and assist participants in the engagement of local community resources" to VR participants they are already working with.

OPRA is gathering feedback from members on this new service offering and will continue to work with OOD on strategies to support providers and job seekers with disabilities through this time.

To learn more about REACH including service expectations and payment standards can be found [here](#).

ODH Reporting Process

In response to a discussion from our morning call on April 14th, we are reposting the most up-to-date guidance from ODH on the processes for reporting a positive case for Covid-19 and how to handle situations where someone may be suspected to be infected. We are expecting this guidance may be updated in the coming days, but as of now, you can read the most recent procedures by [clicking here](#).



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ODM Shares New Guidance for Expanded TeleHealth



COVID-19 EMERGENCY TELEHEALTH RULES SUMMARY OF UPDATED GUIDANCE

April 13, 2020

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the state of emergency declared by Ohio Governor Mike DeWine on March 9, 2020, the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) adopted emergency rule 5160-1-21, "Telehealth during a state of emergency." This rule enhanced ODM's telehealth policy and provides several flexibilities for providers and Medicaid covered individuals in need of care. Today, ODM is releasing additional policy guidance and detailed billing guidelines related to this rule.

ODM's policy guidance further expands telehealth to the following:

- ✓ Additional covered telehealth services:
 - Limited oral evaluation
 - Hospice home care and long-term care
 - Direct skilled nursing services in the home health or hospice setting
 - Services of home health or hospice aides
 - Additional occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech language pathology, and audiology services
 - End stage renal disease (ESRD) related services
- ✓ Additional covered rendering practitioner types:
 - Dentists
 - Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses working in a hospice or home health setting
 - Licensed and credentialed health professionals working in a hospital or nursing facility setting (see the question 14 in the updated FAQ document for additional information)
 - Home health and hospice aides
- ✓ Additional covered billing provider types:
 - Professional dental groups
 - Home health and hospice agencies

ODM's billing guidelines detail the following:

- ✓ For nearly all services, the telehealth changes resulting from the emergency rule will be implemented in claims processing systems on April 15, 2020 by Medicaid fee-for-service (FFS), Medicaid Managed Care Plans (MCPs), and MyCare Ohio Plans (MCOPs).
- ✓ ESRD-related services and some skilled therapy services will not be implemented in the FFS, MCP, and MCOP claims processing systems on April 15. These services should be billed as if they were rendered face-to-face until the IT system changes are in place. Additional details about these services can be found in the billing guidance. ODM will communicate about the implementation date for these services in the near future.
- ✓ Providers must maintain documentation of services delivered via telehealth prior to and after the IT system changes are made.

- ✓ Once the IT system changes are implemented on April 15, 2020, to the extent possible, providers should comply with the new billing guidance.
- ✓ Providers should maintain documentation to support any necessary exceptions to the billing guidance while working to provide access to care for individuals during this time of emergency.

The April 13 updates add to the March 2020 emergency telehealth rule, which implemented the following changes:

- ✓ The definition of Telehealth now includes additional forms of communication during a state of emergency, including telephone calls, fax, email, and other communication methods that may not have audio and video elements.
- ✓ Medicaid covered individuals can access telehealth services wherever they are located. This includes homes, schools, temporary housing, hospitals, nursing facilities, group homes, and any other location, except for a prison or correctional facility.
- ✓ Eligible providers can deliver telehealth services from any location, including their own home offices and other non-institutional settings.
- ✓ Individuals with Medicaid can access telehealth services without having an established relationship with a provider.
- ✓ Medicaid is covering new types of rendering practitioners and billing providers for the services they deliver through telehealth.
- ✓ Medicaid is covering many more services when they are delivered through telehealth, including a number of previously uncovered services that are covered by Medicare.
- ✓ The emergency rule also adopts guidelines found in the Office of Civil Rights' "Notification of HIPAA Enforcement Discretion for Telehealth Remote Communication During the COVID-19 Nationwide Public Emergency."

The following documents released today will be helpful to providers implementing ODM's expanded telehealth services:

- ✓ [Telehealth Billing Guidelines During COVID-19 State of Emergency](#). Please note: this document does NOT apply to OhioMHAS-certified providers.
- ✓ For OhioMHAS-certified Providers:
 - [MITS Bits Telehealth Follow Up: IT System Changes Eff. Apr 15 and BH Provider Manual Updated](#)
 - [Provider Requirements and Reimbursement Manual Emergency Version \(Version 1.1\) for OhioMHAS-certified Providers](#)
- ✓ [Updated List of COVID-19 Telehealth Rule Frequently Asked Questions \(Version 2\)](#)
- ✓ [COVID-19 Telehealth Billing Desk Guide](#)
- ✓ Additionally, a new [Medicaid Handbook Transmittal Letter \(MHTL\)](#) will be posted by 4/15/20

Please visit Ohio Medicaid's [COVID-19 website](#) for ongoing updates. Additional questions and feedback regarding Medicaid policy can be directed to medicaid@medicaid.ohio.gov. OhioMHAS-certified providers can contact BH-Enroll@medicaid.ohio.gov.

Additional COVID-19 information and resources can be found at coronavirus.ohio.gov or by calling 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

50 W. Town Street, Suite 400
Columbus, Ohio 43215
medicaid.ohio.gov

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OPRA and OADSP Team for Virtual Concert featuring Zayne Harshaw

