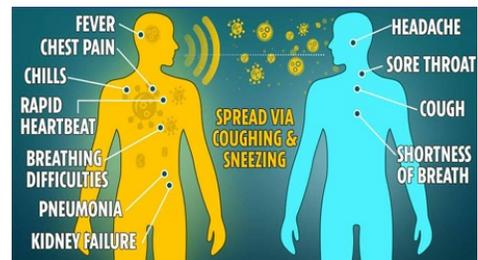




Maine Health Care Association



Visit our COVID-19 Page Here

Dear Member:

CARES Act payments to individuals will not impact cost of care

The economic relief payments of up to \$1,200 per person that were authorized by Congress this year will not affect the cost of care calculation for MaineCare residents in long term care. MHCA received confirmation of this from DHHS and AHCA after guidance was recently issued by CMS. The following response was included in a lengthy Q&A section of the guidance.

Is the relief payment to individuals and families provided by section 2201 of the CARES Act countable for Medicaid and CHIP eligibility?

No. Section 2201 of the CARES Act allows a refundable tax credit for 2020 to eligible individuals. It also directs the Internal Revenue Service to provide payments in 2020 as an advance refund of the credit to eligible individuals, called "Recovery Rebates." The payments are not taxable income and are therefore not countable in MAGI-based eligibility determinations. Separately, 26 U.S.C. § 6409 prohibits the counting of federal tax rebates or advance payments with respect to refundable tax credits as income, and, for 12 months following receipt, resources, in the eligibility determination of any federal needs-based program (such as Medicaid). Thus, the Recovery Rebates may not be counted as income, and, for 12 months, as resources, in non-MAGI financial eligibility determinations.

Complimentary/Discounted Lodging for Caregivers during COVID-19

The following Portland area hotels and the Marriott brand nationwide are offering either complimentary or discounted lodging to health care workers. See below for the specific information and please note that where it says hospital in the Maine hotel flyers, MHCA has verified that it includes long term care employees as well. AHCA has done the same for the national Marriott arrangement (hotel participation may vary). Employees may be asked to provide name tag/badge or other proof of health care employment. Be sure to check during the reservation process. If anyone has any leads in Augusta, Bangor, our County, please let MHCA know.

- [Hampton Inn Portland Downtown](#)
- [Clarion Hotel Portland](#)
- [Marriott](#)

CDC Releases [Updated Guidance on Infection Prevention and Control: PPE and Beyond](#)

To address asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic transmission, CDC is now recommending the implementation of **source control for everyone entering a healthcare facility** (e.g., healthcare personnel, patients, visitors), **regardless of symptoms**. This action is recommended to help prevent transmission from infected individuals who may or may not have symptoms of COVID-19. What does this mean for you?

MHCA has said it before but it is worth repeating, we are in crisis level capacity for PPE supplies in the state of Maine. In times of shortages, alternatives to N95s should be considered, including powered air-purifying respirators (PAPRs), other classes of disposable FFRs, elastomeric half-mask, and full facepiece air-purifying respirators where

feasible. **Special care should be taken to ensure that respirators are reserved for situations where respiratory protection is most important, such as performance of aerosol generating procedures on patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 or provision of care to patients with other infections for which respiratory protection is strongly indicated (e.g., tuberculosis, measles, varicella).**

According to this most recent [guidance](#), some healthcare personnel (HCP) whose job duties do not require PPE (e.g., clerical personnel) might continue to wear their **cloth face covering for source control while in the healthcare facility**. Other HCP (e.g., nurses, physicians) might wear their cloth face covering for part of the day when not engaged in direct patient care activities, only switching to a respirator or facemask when PPE is required. To avoid risking self-contamination, HCP should consider continuing to wear their respirator or facemask (extended use) instead of intermittently switching back to their cloth face covering.

Keep in mind, Cloth face coverings are not considered PPE because their capability to protect healthcare personnel (HCP) is unknown. Facemasks, *if available*, should be reserved for HCP. For visitors and patients, a cloth face covering may be appropriate. If a visitor or patient arrives to the healthcare facility without a cloth face covering, a facemask may be used for source control if supplies are available. Actively screen everyone for fever and symptoms of COVID-19 before they enter the healthcare facility.

There is no way of knowing right now when the PPE supply will rebound. The Maine CDC and DHHS are working with local vendors to attempt to supplement the current PPE inventory. Just yesterday the Maine Governor's Office announced a coalition facilitated through Abaca's growing [COVID-19 Response Pipeline list](#). The pipeline is a living and growing list of Abaca companies that are responding directly to the crisis. In addition, MHCA is working to compile a list of manufacturers, small businesses and independent craftsman who have expressed an interest in helping our facilities.

Lessons from the Frontlines: CMS Webinar FRIDAY

Tomorrow, Friday April 17th from 12:30-2:00pm CMS will be holding a briefing on **Lessons from the Front Lines: COVID-19**. This call series is an opportunity to hear physicians and other clinical leaders share their experiences, best practices, strategies, and insights related to COVID-19. Lessons from The Front Lines calls are held weekly on Fridays at 12:30 PM Eastern and specific topics vary. Dial in details are below.

- CMS Lessons from the Front Lines: COVID-19
- **Friday, April 17th, 12:30 – 2:00 PM Eastern**
- **Participant Dial-In:** (877) 251-0301
- **Access Code:** 8672948
- **Webcast Streaming:** [Lessons Learned from Frontlines](#)

Conference lines are limited, so you are highly encouraged to join via audio webcast, either on your computer or smartphone web browser.

Thank you for all you do to care for your residents and staff.

Nadine L. Grosso
Vice President and Director of Communications
ngrosso@mehca.org