



CMS Announces New Repayment Terms for Medicare Loans Made to Providers During COVID-19



CMS announced amended terms for payments issued under the Accelerated and Advance Payment (AAP) Program. This Medicare loan program allows CMS to make advance payments to providers, which are typically used in emergency situations. Under the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act, repayment will now begin one year from the issuance date of each provider or supplier's accelerated or advance payment.

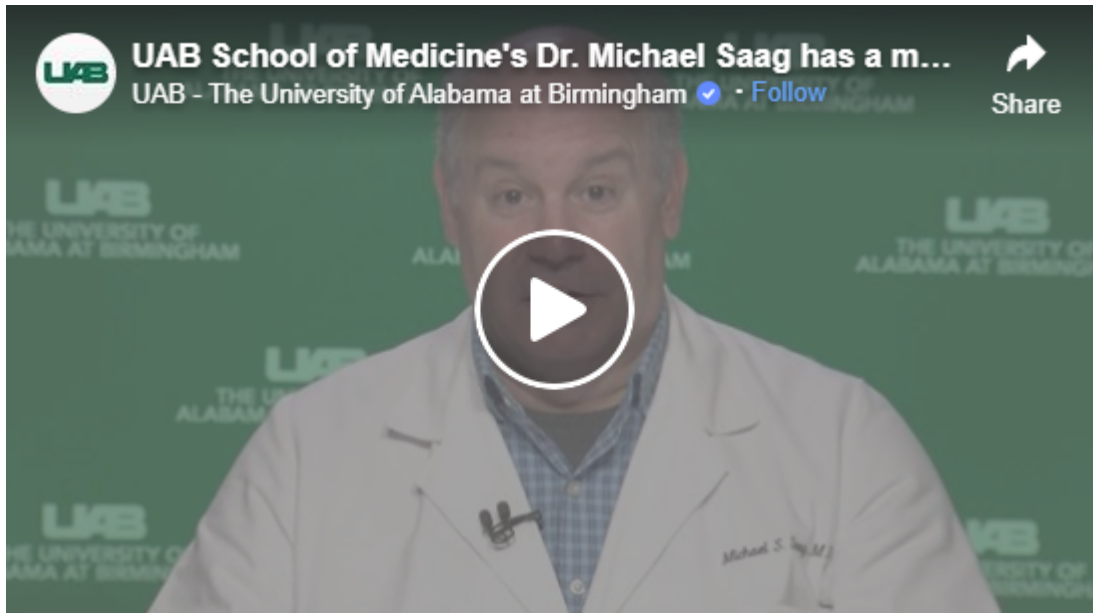
[Fact Sheet](#)

[FAQ](#)

"In the throes of an unprecedented pandemic, providers and suppliers on the frontlines needed a lifeline to help keep them afloat," said CMS Administrator Seema Verma. "CMS' advanced payments were loans given to providers and suppliers to avoid having to close their doors and potentially causing a disruption in service for seniors. While we are seeing patients return to hospitals and doctors providing care we are not yet back to normal," she added.

[See the alert from CMS](#)

Dr. Michael Saag: 'We've got to take it a day at a time'



UAB's Dr. Michael Saag posted a message for students and staff Monday about COVID-19.

Saag said he wished he could answer the question, "When is COVID going away?"

He said he doesn't know, but we need to do all the things we know to do to keep the virus from spreading.

He said to keep wearing our masks, avoid crowded places and social distance.

[Watch the video here](#)

Report shows lack of health care access in Black Belt



Alabama's Black Belt counties have less physical access to health care options and the state overall is suffering poor health outcomes, according to a recent report released by the University of Alabama's Education Policy Center.

The EPC's definition of the Black Belt includes 24 counties, and Monday's report, "Health Care: A Key Challenge in Alabama's Black Belt," said 17 of them have fewer than the statewide average of 3.9 hospital beds per 1,000 people. Four Black Belt counties, Lamar, Lowndes, Perry and Pickens, don't have any hospitals.

[Read the article from Alabama Daily News](#)

What have we done for you during the COVID-19 pandemic?

 LIABILITY PROTECTION Helped enact executive orders to protect you from COVID-19 lawsuits	 PPE SOURCE Provided the opportunity to purchase PPE when supplies were scarce	 ADVOCATE FOR TELEHEALTH Worked to institute expanded telehealth policies	 COVID-19 UPDATES Communicated urgent information via daily email updates to all physicians
 ADVOCACY Influential voice and representation on the State and Federal level	 EDUCATION Earn accredited CME hours on the topics that matter most to you	 INSURANCE Save thousands on out-of-pocket expenses with our health insurance plans	 APHP Confidential support to physicians dealing with substance abuse and mental illness

1. Liability Protection

The Medical Association has helped to enact executive orders to protect you from COVID-19 lawsuits and encouraged Alabama's legislators to make conscious decisions regarding the safety of both Alabama's physicians and patients.

2. Communicating Covid-19

MASA's staff has been diligent in informing our physician members with timely, up-to-date information about practicing medicine among the impacts of Covid-19. We have shared resources tailored to your specific setting including:

- Information relevant to managing your practices
- Information relevant to specialty physicians
- Information relevant to clinical care

3. PPE Provisions Among Scarce Supply

Since March 2020, MASA has coordinated the orders of over 40,360 units of PPE to 200 physician offices. Over 800 miles were traveled throughout Alabama, hand-delivering necessary protective equipment to physicians just like you.

4. Grants for physicians

In response to our advocacy and recommendations, Governor Kay Ivey has allocated \$35 million from Alabama's federal coronavirus relief money to set up the grant program to help physicians, dentists, clinics, ambulance services, and other health care and emergency response providers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. On a first-come-first-serve basis, the state of Alabama will offer cash grants in an amount up to \$15,000 (per practice) for Alabama health care and emergency response providers that meet eligibility requirements.

5. Advocate for Telehealth Policies

The Medical Association of the State of Alabama continues to strive for greater telehealth coverage. We have worked with insurance companies to increase their policies and coverages of necessary telehealth services. We will continue to fight for Alabama's citizens as so many need telehealth services. [See our letter to Blue Cross here.](#)

Join or Renew today!

Physicians Insurance Plan of Alabama Open Enrollement



The Physicians Insurance Plan of Alabama through Blue Cross Blue Shield is available for members of the Medical Association. PIPA provides you, your family, and your staff with strong benefits at affordable premiums as compared to other options. We worked with Blue Cross to keep the rate increase to a minimum. While many groups are experiencing a double digit increase, ours is only a 2% increase. Dental coverage has increased by 4 percent.

Qualified members may sign up for PIPA when full Regular Member dues are paid. PIPA does not require all participants in your office be on the same plan. **Open enrollment for PIPA is Oct. 1 - Nov. 16, 2020 for a Jan. 1, 2021, effective date.** If you are currently enrolled in PIPA, you do not have to reapply. However, if you or your staff wish to make changes to your current plan, please do so no later than Nov. 16, 2020.

[Click here to see rates for 2021](#)

UAB Substance Use Disorder Project ECHO

UAB has started a Substance Use Disorder Project ECHO to help address the needs of our state as Substance Use has increased during COVID-19. Project ECHO uses videoconferencing technology to connect providers with content experts. Each "ECHO clinic" normally includes a brief, high-yield educational session, but most of the learning takes place during in-depth discussions of real-world cases submitted by ECHO participants. All participants contribute to the "all teach, all learn" discussion model, and clinical recommendations are shared. The videoconferencing software is provided at no cost, so all that's needed is Internet access and a smartphone or computer with a webcam and microphone.

[This link will allow you to Register and Submit Cases.](#)

Upcoming ACHN Webinar for Primary Care Providers

A webinar for ACHN providers is scheduled October 14, 2020 from 12-noon until 1:00 p.m. The Alabama Medicaid Agency will discuss changes to MARA Risk Scoring on provider scorecards and provide additional information and reminders for providers. Attendees will have the opportunity to submit questions during the live webinar. The webinar will also be recorded and placed on the ACHN Provider page on the Medicaid website.

ACHN Provider Profiler Updates: MARA Risk Scoring
Wednesday, October 14, 2020
Noon – 1 pm

Meeting number (access code): 133 888 5390

Meeting password: Medicaid1

or

Join by phone: 1-415-655-0001 US Toll

WebEx Link

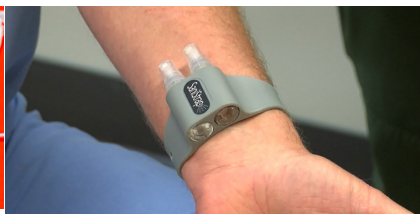


Need PPE?

PPE is still available!

- Direct Shipping now available
- Free shipping on orders over \$500
- No \$500 limit

[Click here for info.](#)



Sanistrap

SaniStrap contains wristband, two refillable bottles, and one travel size refill bottle. Sanitizer is NOT included in order - liquid gel sanitizer is recommended.

[Click here for info.](#)



Hand Sanitizer

Hand Sanitizer Options Available are:

70% Alcohol Gel Hand Sanitizer. Twelve (12), One (1) Liter bottles with pull-tab cap.

[Click here for info.](#)

WHAT WE'RE READING

- [Regeneron Must Ration COVID-19 Treatment, CEO Says](#)
- [Coronavirus Survives on Surfaces for Weeks: Study](#)
- [How physicians can better care for Native American patients](#)
- [How the FDA plans to build physician trust for COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [Why clinical algorithms fall short on race](#)



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