

**U.S. House and Senate Notification**  
**Wednesday, March 11, 2020**

**To: Congressional Health Staff**

**From: Office of Legislation**  
**Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services**

**Re: CMS Issues Additional Coronavirus Guidance**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has announced additional guidance for healthcare providers, including facemask and respirator guidance; guidance for home health and dialysis facilities; additional information responding to questions about non-emergency survey inspections; and guidance to help Medicare Advantage and Part D plans respond to Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19).

First, CMS sent a memorandum to State Survey Agencies, which are responsible for inspecting nursing homes and other healthcare facilities serving Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries. The memo clarifies the application of CMS policies in light of recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Food and Drug Administration guidance expanding the types of facemasks healthcare workers may use in situations involving COVID-19 and other respiratory infections. A [press release](#) about this announcement is attached.

Second, CMS supplemented its guidance to home health agencies and dialysis facilities to protect the health and safety of our nation's patients and providers in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. A [press release](#) about this announcement is attached.

Third, CMS issued Frequently Asked Questions to ensure surveyors with State Survey Agencies and accrediting organizations charged with inspecting nursing homes and other health care facilities understand the changes in guidance issued on March 4 suspending non-emergency survey inspections, allowing them to focus on the most current serious health and safety threats, like infectious diseases and abuse. A [press release](#) about this announcement is attached.

Finally, CMS published a memorandum to Medicare Advantage and Part D health and prescription drug plans informing them of the flexibilities they have to provide healthcare coverage to Medicare beneficiaries for COVID-19 testing, treatments, and prevention. A [press release](#) about this announcement is attached.

To keep up with the important work CMS is doing in response to COVID-19, please visit the [Current Emergencies Website](#).

If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Legislation. Thank you.