



CMS Snapshot

February 27-March 5, 2020

Delivered to you by the Partner Relations Group in the Office of Communications

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, February 27 through 2pm Thursday, March 5, 2020.

News Releases

*March 2- [Secretary Azar Statement on Launch of Kidney Risk Awareness Campaign](#). March marks National Kidney Month and on Monday, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) launched a nationwide kidney risk awareness campaign with the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) and the American Society of Nephrology (ASN). Secretary Azar issued the following statement.

*March 3- [Health Care Provider Pays \\$100,000 Settlement to OCR for Failing to Implement HIPAA Security Rule Requirements](#). The practice of Steven A. Porter, M.D., has agreed to pay \$100,000 to the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and to adopt a corrective action plan to settle a potential violation of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Security Rule. Dr. Porter's medical practice provides gastroenterological services to over 3,000 patients per year in Ogden, Utah.

*March 3- [Health Mart Independent Pharmacies Donate Their Dispensing Services to HHS to Support the Ending the HIV Epidemic Initiative](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and [Health Mart](#) today announced that more than 3,300 Health Mart independent pharmacies agreed to donate their dispensing services to support *Ready, Set, PrEP*, the HHS program that provides free PrEP medication to uninsured individuals. As part of that donation, Health Mart pharmacies will provide patient counseling and take steps to promote medication adherence as well as provide free PrEP medications in store at no cost for those eligible.

*March 4- [HHS Announces Initial Funding to Jurisdictions Supporting COVID-19 Response](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is announcing upcoming action to provide initial resources to a limited number of state and local jurisdictions in support of our nation's response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

*March 4- [CMS Announces Actions to Address Spread of Coronavirus](#). Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is announcing several actions aimed at limiting the spread of the Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19). Specifically, CMS is issuing a call to action to health care providers across the country to ensure they are implementing their infection control procedures, which they are required to maintain at all times.

*March 4- [HHS to Procure N95 Respirators to Support Healthcare Workers in COVID-19 Outbreaks](#). As part of the government-wide efforts to respond to the global outbreak of the 2019 novel coronavirus infection ([COVID-19](#)), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services intends to purchase 500 million N95 respirators over the next 18 months for the Strategic National Stockpile ([SNS](#)).

Blogs

*February 27- [Tips for “reconciling” your premium tax credit on 2019 taxes](#). You have until April 15, 2020 to file your 2019 federal income tax return. If you had a Marketplace plan in 2019 and used [advance payments of the premium tax credit \(APTC\)](#) to lower your monthly payment, you’ll have to “reconcile” your tax return.

*March 1- [Don’t wait: Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment ends March 31](#). Did you know that if you’re unhappy with your [Medicare Advantage Plan](#) (Medicare Part C), you have options? Each year, there’s a [Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period](#) from January 1 – March 31. During this time, if you’re in a Medicare Advantage Plan and want to change your health plan, you can do one of these.

*March 2- [Prevent Medicare fraud — become an informed Medicare consumer](#). Each day, you make important choices about your finances, health, privacy, and more. During [National Consumer Protection Week](#) (NCPW), March 1–7, 2020, non-profit organizations and government agencies can help you protect yourself and prevent fraud by taking advantage of your rights and making better, more informed choices.

*March 3- [Medicare now covers coronavirus testing](#). You may be hearing about the coronavirus (officially called 2019-novel coronavirus or COVID-19) in the news. While there isn’t a vaccine yet, Medicare is still here to help. [Medicare Part B \(Medical Insurance\)](#) covers a [test to see if you have coronavirus](#). This test is covered when your doctor or other health care provider orders it, if you got the test on or after February 4, 2020.

*March 4- [Empowering Research Participants with Information](#). As a pediatric critical care specialist, I witnessed the impact novel treatments could have on the most vulnerable patients; they were often life-saving. None of these medical advances would be possible without people willing to volunteer to participate in medical research.

For more information please email partnership@cms.hhs.gov