



CMS Snapshot

February 25-March 4, 2021

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

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, February 25 through 2pm Thursday, March 4, 2021.

News Releases

*February 26- [Biden Administration Strengthens Requirements that Plans and Issuers Cover COVID-19 Diagnostic Testing Without Cost Sharing and Ensures Providers are Reimbursed for Administering COVID-19 Vaccines to Uninsured](#). In accordance with the [Executive Order](#) President Biden signed on January 21, 2021, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), together with the Department of Labor and the Department of the Treasury, (collectively, the Departments) issued new [guidance](#) today removing barriers to COVID-19 diagnostic testing and vaccinations and strengthening requirements that plans and issuers cover diagnostic testing without cost sharing.

*March 1- [CMS Announces Additional Navigator Funding to Support Marketplace Special Enrollment Period](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is making approximately \$2.3 million in additional funding available to current Navigator grantees in Federally-facilitated Marketplace (FFM) states to support the outreach, education and enrollment efforts around the 2021 Special Enrollment Period (SEP) that runs through May 15, 2021.

*March 2- [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Announces Additional Biden-Harris Administration Staff Appointments](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced additional Biden-Harris Administration appointments, building on an experienced team committed to President Biden's mission to end the COVID-19 pandemic, expand affordable health care, and advance equity.

*March 2- [Biden Administration Announces Historic Manufacturing Collaboration Between Merck and Johnson & Johnson to Expand Production of COVID-19 Vaccines](#). *President Biden Invokes Defense Production Act to Support Measures to Accelerate Vaccine Development.* President Biden announced today that his Administration has helped forge a historic manufacturing collaboration between two of the largest U.S. health care and pharmaceutical companies, Merck and Johnson & Johnson (J&J), to expand production of J&J's COVID-19

vaccine. The collaboration will increase manufacture of vaccine drug substance, as well as its fill-finish capacity – two of the biggest bottlenecks facing J&J in the production of its vaccine.

*March 4- [HHS OCR and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan Enter Voluntary Resolution Agreement with Michigan Bariatric Practice to Protect Patients from HIV Discrimination](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights ("HHS OCR") and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan have entered into a Voluntary Resolution Agreement with Great Lakes Surgical Associates ("GLSA") to protect patients from discrimination on the basis of HIV status. The Complainant, an African American man and a Medicare beneficiary, initially filed a complaint with the Department of Justice (DOJ), reporting that his primary care physician referred him to GLSA for bariatric surgery to address his high blood pressure and diabetes. However, GLSA allegedly refused to fully evaluate him for bariatric surgery or to provide him with the surgery due to the Complainant's HIV status.

Fact Sheet

*March 3- [2021 Marketplace Special Enrollment Period Report](#). February 15 – February 28, 2021. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) report that more than 206,000 Americans signed up for health insurance plans during the first two weeks of the 2021 Marketplace Special Enrollment Period (SEP) for consumers in HealthCare.gov States.

Blogs

*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 1- [How to file an appeal if your Medicare Advantage Plan doesn't cover an item or service](#). If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan, you know it covers a lot of items and services, like prescription drugs, diabetic test supplies, cardiovascular screenings, and hospital visits. But, what should you do if your plan won't cost an item or service you need?

*March 3- [Prevent Medicare fraud — become an informed Medicare consumer](#). Each day, you make important choices about your finances, health, privacy, and more. It's [National Consumer Protection Week](#) (NCPW), a time that 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 4- [Accelerating Innovation in Diagnostic Testing for Lyme Disease: HHS Request for Information \(RFI\)](#). One tick bite can change your life – or the life of your child. Diagnostics are just one of the many issues surrounding the multifaceted challenges of Lyme disease. Lyme disease is the most common vector-borne disease and fastest-growing vector-borne disease in the United States, accounting for over 80% of all tick-borne diseases domestically. The CDC estimates that [approximately 476,000 Americans are diagnosed and treated for Lyme disease each year](#).

CMS has developed a [Virtual Toolkit](#) to help you stay informed on CMS and HHS materials available on the COVID-19. Please share these materials, bookmark the page, and check back often for the most up-to-date information. For more information, please email partnership@cms.hhs.gov