



## **Corona Virus Update**

AltaMed is sensitive to the level of stress and anxiety the Corona Virus is having on you, your practice and our patients. I know that you have been inundated with correspondence and position statements from many Health Plans and local, State and Federal agencies. With that in mind, I will be brief.

President Trump has declared a national emergency in relationship to the Pandemic caused by the virus known as SARS-CoV-2 and the disease it causes named “coronavirus disease 2019” or abbreviated as COVID-19. Current interventions center on slowing the spread of the disease or the so called flattening of the disease progression curve. This is essential to prevent the limited health care capacity from being overwhelmed if the disease is allowed to proceed unchecked. However, experts are predicting, if we are successful at flattening the curve, the disease will be with us until mid-summer (July-August time frame) or longer.

AltaMed encourages our provider community to take appropriate safeguards, practices have the option of utilizing telehealth services to receive and deliver care when medically appropriate, as a means to limit exposure to others who may be infected with COVID-19. Remember to keep appropriate documentation of any telehealth encounters, just like you would for a face-to-face encounter.

“A just published article in The Lancet by the French Health Ministry advises no NSAID’s for COVID-19 symptoms, as NSAID’s boost an enzyme that could ‘facilitate and worsen COVID-19 infections.’ Use Tylenol instead.”

Please reference the following website for additional information:

<https://www.sciencealert.com/who-recommends-to-avoid-taking-ibuprofen-for-covid-19-symptoms>

Additionally, please note that AltaMed’s Medical Management will extend all approved authorization expiring with March 1, 2020 to 180 days. Any new requested authorization will be also be approved with 180 days.

### **COVID-19 – Coronavirus Coding & Billing, including Telehealth Guidelines**

The information below is intended to offer guidance about how to report and bill for the following:

- COVID-19 Testing
- COVID-19 Suspected Cases



- COVID-19 Confirmed Cases
- Telehealth Services (Expanded definition pursuant to the California Emergency Services Act)

Please Note: An Emergency ICD-10 diagnosis code specific to COVID-19 has been created, but will not be effective until October, 2020. Please use the suggested coding until October 1, 2020 or until we receive further guidance from CMS/DHCS.

Additionally, a new CPT Code for the lab test has been created, however there are no payment rates tied to the code at this time. Please report testing using the U Codes below.

The following codes should be used to indicate performance of testing (**No cost sharing for any testing**):

U0001	CDC Developed Test SARS-CoV-2/2019 Novel Coronavirus Real Time RT-PCR
U0002	Non CDC Developed Test SARS-CoV-2/2019-nCoV (COVID-19)

Recommended Coding for **Suspected Cases**:

Z03.818	Possible exposure to COVID-19, Condition Ruled Out
Z20.828	Exposure to Confirmed COVID-19

Recommended Coding for **Confirmed Cases**:

J12.89, B97.29	Pneumonia, confirmed as due to COVID—19
J20.8, B97.29	Acute bronchitis, confirmed as due to COVID-19
J40, B97.29	Bronchitis NOS, confirmed as due to COVID-19
J22, B97.29	Acute/lower respiratory infection NOS, confirmed as due to COVID-19
J98.8, B97.29	Respiratory infection NOS, confirmed as due to COVID-19
J80, B97.29	Acute respiratory distress syndrome, confirmed as due to COVID-19

**As required, providers are to report positive cases of COVID-19 for AltaMed Members to 855-848-5252, Option 1, and then Option 2. Our website, [www.altamed.org](http://www.altamed.org), also contains COVID-19 FAQs.**

**Telehealth Services** – (Telehealth is not subject to cost sharing with COVID-19 Diagnosis):

Telehealth services are reimbursed fee-for-service (FFS) if you have a FFS contract to provide professional services to our members. Providers with capitation agreements for



professional services (including usual E&M services) will not receive separate FFS monies for these encounters.

Health plans shall reimburse providers at the same rate, whether a service is provided in-person or through telehealth, if the service is the same regardless of the modality of delivery, as determined by the providers description of the service on a claim.

- Please note that **all claims for Telehealth Services must be billed with Place of Service 02.**
- Medicare Advantage Claims will be paid at the prevailing Facility Rate according to CMS Guidelines. If a facility rate does not exist for the code, it will be paid at the Non-Facility Rate.
- Medi-Cal Claims will be paid at the prevailing Medi-Cal Rate.
- For a list of commonly asked questions regarding Telehealth, please see the link below <https://edit.cms.gov/files/document/medicare-telehealth-frequently-asked-questions-fags-31720.pdf>
- See the link below for the CMS list of Services approved for Telehealth. <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-General-Information/Telehealth/Downloads/covered-telehealth-services.zip>
  - Please note that the following codes is not listed in the CMS list of services, nevertheless, the below codes is billable accordingly for services rendered to AltaMed members.
    - G2010 – RMT EVAL REC VIDEO &/ IMG SB EST PT
    - G2012 – BRIEF COM TBS; 5-10 MIN MED DISCUSSION

We ask of you to wear gloves, masks and face shields when dealing with potentially contagious patients. See patients in an isolation room if possible. Please continue to monitor the CDC and your local health department for the most up to date regulations and recommendations. Remember to protect yourself and your staff, and together we will get through this challenging time.

Should you have any questions, please contact your Provider Network Administrator.

Sincerely,

Keith Wilson, M.D., F.A.C.O.G.SVP,  
Medical Management and CMO, AltaMed Health Network