



In this issue...

- [Idaho COVID-19 vaccine update](#)
- [Governor signs Idaho Patient Act delay!](#)
- [Congress pushing for telehealth expansion beyond CARES Act](#)
- [IMA Webinar Education Series](#)
- [Register now for the IAFP virtual May conference!](#)
- [Idaho WWAMI Faculty Development Lunch Series with Stern Faculty](#)
- [IHDE announces new social determinants of health tool](#)
- [Have you ordered your 2021 HCPCS books yet?](#)
- [New IMA membership benefit: Payor Policy Portal](#)

Idaho COVID-19 vaccine update

[New statewide COVID-19 vaccine pre-registration tool](#)

Due to widespread challenges accessing COVID-19 vaccine appointments, the Idaho Department of Health is launching a new statewide pre-registration tool on March 5. Idahoans will be able to pre-register for a vaccine appointment. After Idahoans pre-register, they'll be placed on a waitlist that will be shared with enrolled vaccine providers. When a provider has an open appointment, they'll reach out to eligible Idahoans who have pre-registered. The new tool is meant to eliminate the frustrating process of having to repeatedly check websites and call phone centers for appointments that aren't

available. Idahoans will still have the option to call their local public health district or provider to make an appointment.

Residency or work requirement for vaccine appointments

Given the limited supply of COVID-19 vaccine that is available at this time and Idaho's commitment to equitable and fair access to the vaccine, the state of Idaho is now requiring those seeking COVID-19 vaccines in the state to either live or work in Idaho. For more information see DHW's press release.

COVID-19 variants in Idaho

DHW and Central District Health (CDH) have confirmed the first known infection with the UK (B.1.1.7) variant of the virus that causes COVID-19.

On Feb. 17, 2021, Central District Health reported the presence of the UK variant among wastewater samples submitted from the Boise area in late January. The tested wastewater samples also detected the presence of the California variant; however, this variant is not currently receiving national surveillance. Last week, laboratory testing identified the South African variant (B.1.351) of SARS-CoV-2, in a southwestern Idaho resident. It was the first official discovery of a variant of concern in Idaho. A second case with the South African variant has just been identified in the state, and an investigation is ongoing. With variants of public health concern emerging in Idaho, DHW will begin reporting variant counts on its data dashboard later this week.

Johnson and Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine

On Feb. 28, the FDA granted emergency use authorization of the single-dose Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine. The Department of Health and Welfare estimates that Idaho could start receiving Johnson and Johnson doses as early as the first week of March. [See results from a phase 3 trial of the drug.](#)

Governor signs Idaho Patient Act delay!

Great news! On March 1, Gov. Brad Little signed HB 42 which allows for a delay to the Idaho Patient Act until July 1, 2021, while maintaining some key protections to patients under the existing law. IMA thanks Sen. Kelly Anthon (R-Burley) and Rep. Jason Monks (R-Meridian) for their leadership in advancing the bill through the legislature.

Loyalty pays dividends.

- Professional liability insurance with a vastly superior dividend policy
- No profit motive and low overhead
- Member owned

miec Insurance by physicians, for physicians. miec.com

[Learn more](#)

Idaho Trust Bank
A Relationship You Can Trust!
Idaho Trust Bank

Now that the governor has signed the bill, it becomes law immediately. As a reminder, the specific provisions of the delay are:

Six-month delay to July 1, 2021.

Clarifies that the new July 1, 2021 date pertains to the date the healthcare service was provided.

The existing law required compliance with the Act prior to its effective date.

The portion of the law that limits the collection of attorney's fees in legal actions on behalf of healthcare providers is not included in the delay and thus will remain in effect as of Jan. 1, 2021.

IMA and IHA will continue to engage with Melaleuca to seek improvements to the law to ensure that there are adequate protections for patients and no unnecessary burdens for physicians. Stay tuned for information about how your practice can comply with the delay.

IMA sends a full legislative report every Friday during the legislative session, to subscribe to the IMA Legislative Report email list, please click [here](#).

Congress pushing for telehealth expansion beyond CARES Act

By IMA Reimbursement Consultant Jana Weis, CPC, Principal, Gill Compliance Solutions

In a Jan. 22, 2021 [letter to the governors](#), Norris Cochran, acting Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary, addressed the COVID-19 CARES Act funding by stating, "To assure you of our commitment to the ongoing response, we have determined that the PHE will likely remain in place for the entirety of 2021, and when a decision is made to terminate the declaration or let it expire, HHS will provide states with 60 days' notice prior to termination." This was reassuring to providers across the US that waivers will likely remain in place until the end of 2021. Some of the highlights of the waiver include phone visits paid at an equal value as certain E/M visits where connectivity will not allow for telehealth (audio/video), billing subsequent hospital and skilled nursing telehealth visits without limitations, and remote patient monitoring to be as low as two days for a COVID-19 related diagnosis.

Due to strong lobbying efforts by hospitals, providers and healthcare agencies, several new bills are being introduced to continue telehealth expansion for better patient access. In 2020, lawmakers proposed several bills that died in the House and Senate but have now been reintroduced in the 117th session of Congress. One of the bills, introduced to the House on Jan. 19, 2021, is gaining traction due to its bipartisan support, [H.R. 366 Protecting Access to Post COVID-19 Telehealth Act of 2021](#). The bill seeks to make permanent many of the CARES Act exceptions and provide better structure to evaluating future telehealth lawmaking. Some of the highlights of this bill include the following:

- Eliminates Medicare's geographic restrictions starting on Dec. 31, 2021. This would include allowing home as an originating site for all eligible services starting Jan. 1, 2022
- Grants the Department of Health & Human Services permanent disaster waiver authority to expand telehealth in the future

- Authorizing Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to reimburse for telehealth 90 days after the PHE is rescinded
- Require the Department of Health & Human Services (DHS) to conduct a comprehensive study on telehealth utilization (audio-video vs. audio-only and secure texts), associated costs, and geographic disparities to better allocate resources.
- Revise the law to include FQHCs and RHCs to bill as distant site providers

IMA Webinar Education Series



Challenges and Changes: Coding for Emergency Room and High-Level Hospital Services (1 CEU)
 Wednesday, March 17, 2021, 12:15 – 1:30 pm (MT)

Register today to join IMA Reimbursement Consultant Nicole Benson, Gill Compliance Solutions on March 17, 2021. Don't miss this valuable and informative webinar! This webinar will be presented via Zoom, dial-in instructions as well as any presentation materials will be emailed to you the day before the webinar. A registration form is available at idmed.org. Questions? Contact the IMA at 208-344-7888 or rebecca@idmed.org.

Register now for the IAFP virtual May conference!

The Idaho Academy of Family Physicians is excited to announce the 2021 Virtual Annual Conference that will take place on May 21-22, 2021. With your safety and convenience in mind, IAFP has chosen to hold an all-virtual event that will still result in approximately 13 CME credits in total.

[Visit the IAFP website conference page](#)
[See the draft program for the event](#)
[Register Now!](#)

Early Bird pricing ends March 31, 2021.

Idaho WWAMI Faculty Development Lunch Series with Stern Faculty

Save the date for the next Idaho WWAMI Faculty Development Lunch Series with Stern Faculty featuring Dr. Toni Biskup to be held on May 7, 2021 from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM MST. The session will focus on teaching clinical reasoning.

Join Via Zoom: <https://washington.zoom.us/j/94989821049>
 Meeting ID: 949 8982 1049

If you have any comments, questions, or concerns please contact the Idaho WWAMI office at idwwami@uw.edu or (208) 364-4544.

IHDE announces new social determinants of health tool

The Idaho Health Data Exchange (IHDE) has announced that their Social Determinants of Health tool, Aunt Bertha, is now available to all participants. It is available through a single sign-on in the IHDE Clinical Portal. IHDE's partnership with Aunt Bertha provides a safe, secure, and effective platform for IHDE users to connect patients with social services.

The Aunt Bertha tool can be easily accessed through IHDE's Clinical Portal, allowing users to access the tool in conjunction with the patient's longitudinal record of care. This new IHDE service functions as an extension to your care team, providing connections to nearly 2,000 community programs throughout Idaho.

IHDE is hosting a series of live training sessions. Join IHDE at one of the following dates and times:

Wednesday, February 24th, 12:15 PM MST
Friday, February 26th, 12:15 PM MST
Tuesday, March 2nd, 7:45 AM MST, 12:15 PM MST
Thursday, March 4th, 7:45 AM MST, 12:15 PM MST
Monday, March 8th, 7:45 AM MST, 12:15 PM MST

[Click here to learn more and sign-up!](#)

Have you ordered your 2021 HCPCS books yet?

HCPCS 2021 Level II Professional Edition provides your practice a quick and accurate coding reference. Along with the most current HCPCS codes and regulations included in the codebook, you'll have everything needed for accurate medical billing and maximum reimbursement. Organized for quick and accurate coding, HCPCS Level II 2021 Professional Edition codebook includes the most current Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System codes and regulations, which are essential references needed for accurate medical billing and maximum permissible reimbursement. This professional edition includes such features as Netter's Anatomy illustrations, dental codes and ASC (Ambulatory Surgical Center) payment and status indicators.

The books are already at the IMA office and can be picked up, shipped, or delivered today! As part of your membership, the Idaho Medical Association offers most coding, billing, and reference manuals at a significant discount. This saves you and your office money when you provide your staff with the tools to help you ward off unwelcome challenges to your revenue.

[Click here for the 2021 publications order form](#)

If you have questions or if there is a type of book you don't see but would like to purchase, please contact Rebecca Adams at rebecca@idmed.org or 208-344-7888.

New IMA membership benefit: Payor Policy Portal

As Idaho's physicians continue to navigate the COVID-19 crisis, IMA has partnered with Gill Compliance Solutions to offer a brand new membership benefit to IMA members that will help you find updated telehealth and vaccine payor rules for Idaho all in one place. The new **Payor Policy Portal** provides you with viewing rights to a Smartsheet that includes updated common codes, modifiers, and links to vital information and payor guidelines. The Portal is updated each Monday by IMA's reimbursement consultants at Gill Compliance Solutions with the most current guidelines available to the public. This new benefit comes at no extra cost to your membership. As you continue to take care of Idaho during this challenging time, we hope you find this new resource convenient and helpful.

How to Access:

The Payor Policy Portal is only available to Idaho Medical Association Members, members have access for the entire 2021 membership year. If you would like access to this benefit, please complete the following steps:

1. Email Rebecca at the IMA (rebecca@idmed.org) and include the email addresses in your practice that should have access to the Portal.
2. The IMA will verify membership and send your information to Gill Compliance Solutions.
3. Within 24 hours, you will receive an email from Smartsheet with your access to the Portal (you will be required to create a login and password). This email will also include a disclosure for your review.
4. Once you've accessed the Portal, you are able to scroll and view at anytime. Updates are made weekly and highlighted for your convenience.
5. *PLEASE* watch [this two-minute tutorial](#) for navigating the Portal.

*Note: Payors might publish information more frequently than the Smartsheet and this resource should only be used as a reference. Guidelines are not contract-specific and only the most utilized payors are included.

New Payor Policy Portal Tutorial



Idaho Medical Association
P.O. Box 2668 Boise, ID 83701 | 208-344-7888
idmed.org | [Unsubscribe](#)

