




To: Acute Hospitals, Utilization Control Agent (Telligen)
From: Robert R. Neall, Secretary 
Re: COVID-19 #11: Temporary Waiver of Requirements for the Concurrent Review Process for Acute Care Hospitals

Issue Date: April 1, 2020

Effective Date: April 1, 2020

NOTE: Please ensure appropriate staff members in your organization are informed of the contents of this memorandum

Background

On March 5, 2020, Governor Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., declared a state of emergency due to disease (“COVID-19”) caused by the novel coronavirus. An outbreak of disease due to COVID-19 first occurred in the Hubei Province, China, in late 2019, and has currently been detected in more than 109 countries, including the United States. COVID-19 is a severe respiratory disease, resulting in illness or death, caused by person-to-person spread of the novel coronavirus.

The measures outlined in this document are restricted to use during the emergency declared by Governor Hogan to deal with the outbreak of COVID-19 and will expire immediately at the end of the declared emergency or revised by additional orders such that the Secretary’s authority to issue this guidance no longer exists.

This memorandum intends to reduce the administrative burden on Acute Care Hospitals during the COVID-19 outbreak by providing hospitals flexibility to manage the increase in COVID-19 cases in their community. The policies described in this memorandum apply to Acute Care Hospitals delivering services to eligible, fee-for-service Medicaid participants.

Relaxation of Concurrent Reviews

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Department and its utilization control agent, Telligen, will not issue a technical denial for failure to submit concurrent reviews for inpatient admissions if the request is not submitted within 48 hours or by the next business day. All concurrent reviews should be submitted as soon as is practical.

The Department and Telligen also will relax the requirement that the concurrent review peer-to-peer process established in Hospital Transmittal No. 265

<https://mmcp.health.maryland.gov/MCOupdates/Documents/PT%2016-19%20Acute%20Inpatient%20Hospitalizations%20New%20Concurrent%20Review%20Process.pdf>) be initiated within two business days of receipt of notice of the pending denial in Qualitrac. During the state of emergency, the Department will allow hospitals to contest denials by requesting peer-to-peer reviews at the time of the retroactive review process, if necessary.

This policy applies to fee-for-service (FFS) hospital admissions under the Maryland Medical Assistance Program (“Maryland Medicaid”). Maryland HealthChoice Managed Care Organizations (“MCOs”) are still responsible for determining their own utilization reviews for HealthChoice participants. Please contact HealthChoice MCOs for more information about their hospital utilization review requirements.

If you have any questions please contact Denise James, Chief of the Division of Hospital Services at denise.james@maryland.gov.

For additional guidance during the COVID-19 emergency, including additional billing information, please see the following pages:

For Medicaid-related Coronavirus updates, visit mmcp.health.maryland.gov

For questions about the Coronavirus, visit coronavirus.maryland.gov.

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