



**To:** ALL IEHP Providers & IPAs  
**From:** IEHP – Provider Relations  
**Date:** April 13, 2020  
**Subject:** **Trump Administration Acts to Ensure U.S. Healthcare Facilities Can Maximize Frontline Workforces to Confront COVID-19 Crisis**

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On April 9, 2020, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released an updated list of emergency declaration blanket waivers that greatly expands the workforce flexibilities CMS announced on March 30, 2020. The goal of these new waivers is to allow clinicians to practice to the full scope of their licenses to address staffing needs during the public health emergency.

Examples of some of the results of CMS's action include but are not limited to (source: [CMS.gov Newsroom](https://www.cms.gov/newsroom) press release dated April 9, 2020):

- Doctors can now directly care for patients at rural hospitals, across state lines if necessary, via phone, radio, or online communication, without having to be physically present. Remotely located physicians, coordinating with nurse practitioners at rural facilities, will provide staffs at such facilities additional flexibility to meet the needs of their patients.
- Nurse practitioners, in addition to physicians, may now perform some medical exams on Medicare patients at skilled nursing facilities so that patient needs, whether COVID-19 related or not, continue to be met in the face of increased care demands.
- Occupational therapists from home health agencies can now perform initial assessments on certain homebound patients, allowing home health services to start sooner and freeing home-health nurses to do more direct patient care.
- Hospice nurses will be relieved of hospice aide in-service training tasks so they can spend more time with patients.

IEHP fully supports the new expanded workforce flexibilities allowed by these emergency declaration blanket waivers. Please review the details of these blanket waivers which can be found at <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/summary-covid-19-emergency-declaration-waivers.pdf> and on IEHP's Provider COVID-19 resource page.

<https://www.iehp.org/en/providers/plan-updates?target=coronavirus-advisory>

As a reminder, all communications sent by IEHP can also be found on our Provider portal at: [www.iehp.org](http://www.iehp.org) > For Providers > Plan Updates > Correspondence.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the IEHP Provider Relations Team at (909) 890-2054.