

### **CMS Aggressive Actions and Flexibilities to help Healthcare Providers COVID-19 Emergency Declaration**

On Friday, the Trump Administration announced aggressive actions and regulatory flexibilities to help healthcare providers and states respond to and contain the spread of 2019 Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19).

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is taking several actions following President Trump's declaration of a national emergency due to COVID-19.

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"Following President Trump's leadership during this health emergency, CMS is taking immediate steps to give our nation's providers, healthcare facilities, and states maximum flexibility," said CMS Administrator Seema Verma. "It is vital that federal requirements designed for periods of relative calm do not hinder measures needed in an emergency. The nationwide waivers we are activating today will be a godsend for those on the frontlines of the fight against this new virus."

#### **Critical Access Hospitals**

- CMS is waiving the requirements that Critical Access Hospitals limit the number of beds to 25, and that the length of stay be limited to 96 hours.

#### **Housing Acute Care patients In Excluded Distinct Part Units**

- CMS is waiving requirements to allow acute care hospitals to house acute care inpatients in excluded distinct part units, where the distinct part unit's beds are appropriate for acute care inpatient. The Inpatient Prospective Payment System (IPPS) hospital is an acute should bill for the care and annotate the patients medical record to indicate the patient is an acute care inpatient being housed in the excluded unit because of capacity issues related to the disaster or emergency.

The President's declaration empowers the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to authorize CMS to take proactive steps through 1135 waivers and rapidly expand the Administration's aggressive efforts against COVID-19 led by the White House Coronavirus Task Force. The HHS Secretary is authorized to waive certain Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) program requirements and conditions of participation under Section 1135 of the Social Security Act once the President declares an emergency through the Stafford Act or National Emergency Act, and the Secretary declares a Public Health Emergency (PHE). HHS Secretary Alex M. Azar issued a PHE on January 31, 2020. As a result of this authority, CMS will activate blanket waivers, which will ease certain requirements for impacted providers.

Please contact your Optimum Support analyst so that we may assist you with any needed modifications to Nurse Stations, Room, and Bed files in Optimum.

**These waivers will allow CMS to take several key administrative actions in response to the national emergency declaration:**

- [List of waivers](#)
- [Press release outlining the CMS announcement](#)
- [Fact sheet outlining these actions](#)

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**If you have questions, please contact us via any of the following:**

- Enter a CSR in Nexus: [Nexus Login](#)
- Call us: [877-532-6347](tel:877-532-6347)

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