



Risk Management SNAPSHOT

Current issues and trends for
practice managers



COVID-19: A Message from Medical Mutual as Healthcare Providers Begin to Resume Services

Reopening Your Practice

It is important to document your reopen plan and keep copies of all documents created for this reopening. We have included a list of issues to consider and links to several resources below to help you as you plan for your reopen. When determining if your practice is able to reopen, here are some issues to consider.

Guidelines, Regulations, and Recommendations:

- Current federal, state, and local government guidance/orders.
- Current federal and state CDC recommendations.
- Guidance from Licensing Boards.
- Guidance from professional association(s).
- Guidance from Worker's Compensation Commission.

Staff:

- Review any labor relations and employment/workplace practices issues.
- Provide staff training and education on COVID-19 and its associated infection control issues.
- Provide staff training on new office practice system processes.
- Provide staff training on patient communications and patient education for COVID-19.

Patient Communications and Flow:

- Plan for a phased reopening.
- Establish a process to determine medical priority.
- Determine how patient encounters will occur, i.e., in person, telehealth, or a combination.
- Plan patient flow through the office to decrease person-to-person contact.
- Determine what screening/tests will be required when the patient presents.
- Provide patient education information. (How to; What information; When will they receive it; Who will provide)

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Office Engineering, Housekeeping, and Supplies:

- Determine any physical changes in office space needed, i.e., chair distancing in waiting areas, plexiglass at the reception area.
- Plan for acquiring required supplies.
- Establish cleaning protocols for work areas and patient rooms.
- Staff training on new processes.
- Determine how much PPE will your office need based on current numbers of COVID-19 cases in the community.
- Verify COVID-19 test and COVID-19 related testing supplies availability.

Reopening Practices Resources:

AMA: [COVID-19: A physician practice guide to reopening](#)

MGMA: [COVID-19 Medical Practice Reopening Checklist](#)

CDC: [Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes](#)

ASCA: [CMS Releases Recommendations for Reopening Healthcare Facilities](#)

CMS: [OPENING UP AMERICA AGAIN Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services \(CMS\) Recommendations Re-opening Facilities to Provide Non-emergent Non-COVID-19 Healthcare: Phase I](#)

OSHA: [Ten Steps All Workplaces Can Take to Reduce Risk of Exposure to Coronavirus](#)

Maine:

Maine.gov: [COVID19 Prevention Checklist General Guidance](#)

Maine.gov: [COVID-19 Guidance for Health Care Providers](#)

Massachusetts:

The National Law Review: [Massachusetts Announces Four Phase Plan to Reopen](#)

Mass.gov: [Reopening Health and Human Services in Massachusetts](#)

New Hampshire:

Nh.gov: [COVID-19 Healthcare Providers](#)

Vermont:

VT Dept of Health: [Outpatient Services: Clinic Visits, Diagnostic Imaging, and Limited Outpatient Surgeries and Procedures](#)

VT Dept of Health: [Resuming Outpatient Services: Clinic Visits, Diagnostic Imaging, and Limited Outpatient Surgeries and Procedures](#)

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Patient Education:

AAFP: [COVID-19: Clinical Resources & Patient Education](#)

CDC: [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)

UpToDate.com: [Patient education: Coronavirus disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) overview \(The Basics\)](#)

Consent for elective procedures during COVID-19

Organizations are not required to have a separate COVID-19 specific consent form. Organizations should provide the patient with information on office process changes, standards in place for disinfection/infection control and patient safety. Patient discussions should set patient expectations with an understanding that the plan may change if COVID-19 cases increase.

Providers are required to inform patients of what risks COVID-19 may pose for them prior to beginning treatment. An explanation should be provided to the patient of what to expect both before and after their procedure. For example, what testing will be required to clear the patient for the procedure? It is important that the patient is informed of and understands that there is an increased risk they could contract COVID-19 after the procedure. The discussion should include how contracting COVID-19 may complicate the patient recovery process. Inform the patient of any changes in the operations of the office due to COVID-19. Let them know what options are available for follow-up visits after the procedure. For example, will this be by telehealth or will they need to come into the office. Patient should be given the option to defer treatment when postponing treatment will not affect the outcome.

Document this conversation, include what the patient had for feedback, confirm patient understanding of the risks associated with having the elective procedure and clinical judgement in the decision to move forward with the procedure, or in determining the patient can wait.

Resuming Elective Surgery Resources:

FACS: [COVID-19: Elective Case Triage Guidelines for Surgical Care](#)

FACS: [Joint Statement: Roadmap for Resuming Elective Surgery after COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

FACS: [Local Resumption of Elective Surgery Guidance](#)

ASCA: [ASCA's COVID-19 Resource Center](#)

ASCA: [ASCA Statement on Resuming Elective Surgery as the COVID-19 Pandemic Recedes](#)

[Sample Separate Informed Consent](#)

[Risk Management Tips for Providers on Informed Consent and Patient Follow-up Instructions](#)

[Sample COVID-19 Discharge Instructions](#)