

SCCIPA

Santa Clara County IPA

COVID-19 Provider Update 03/16/2020

The Covid-19 situation continues to change rapidly. San Francisco Bay Area counties will be placed on a “shelter in place” order for the following counties: San Francisco, Santa Clara, San Mateo, Contra Costa and Alameda. It is to take effect 12:01AM Tuesday March 17, 2020 and stay in place until at least April 7, 2020. All of this panic in our county, our country and our world are placing a huge burden on the Healthcare System and everyone’s medical practice. We want you to know that SCCIPA/PPMSI is well aware of your crisis and is here to help in any way possible.

To support the order, PPMSI is executing its remote workforce business continuity plan today to ensure the team is faithfully doing all the tasks you have come to expect from SCCIPA including but not limited to processing authorizations, paying claims and performing case management.

The following are thoughts to help with your practice during this crisis:

- Use your office space to help create Social Distancing
- Keep the examination and consultation rooms full with individual patients and those who came with them to help reduce crowding in the waiting room.
- When the waiting room gets crowded have patients wait in their car and notify them by cell phone when it is their turn to come to the office and keep them informed during this process.
- Use telemedicine as much as possible. Be sure to document details of the call in the patient record. SCCIPA will pay for codes 99441, 99442, 99443 at CMS rates when billed with the requisite Modifier (GT, GQ, GO or 95) to denote the type of technology used along with Place of Service Code '02' Telehealth.

COVID-19 testing in Santa Clara County is still not easily available but for sure it will not be done in the physician’s office in the near term. Use telemedicine to direct appropriate symptomatic patients and exposed high risk patients to known testing sites such as Hospital ER’s and please let the ER’s know when you are sending a patient for testing.

One last thing, the American College of Surgeons and the U.S. Surgeon General have sent out recommendations for surgeons in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic. Their goal: to preserve acute care hospitals’ capacity to provide services to COVID-19 patients. To effect that goal, they asked that hospitals, hospital systems, and surgeons “thoughtfully review all scheduled elective procedures.”

Consistent with those recommendations, please consider postponing, for at least 30 days, any surgery or procedure that meets the following criteria:

- (a) it is to be performed in one of our acute care hospitals; and
- (b) its postponement will not, in your judgment, adversely affect the patient’s short or long-term health.

Contact facility schedulers to assist with rescheduling any surgery or procedure that meets these criteria.

We are all in this together. We will continue to strive for the best possible outcome.

Thanks for being part of SCCIPA,



J Kersten Kraft