



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES  
Bureau for Medical Services

Bill J. Crouch  
Cabinet Secretary

Cynthia E. Beane  
Commissioner

TO: WV Personal Care Service Providers

FROM: Cynthia Beane, MSW, LCSW *CB*  
Commissioner

DATE: March 23, 2020

SUBJECT: Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Precautions

Due to the World Health Organization declaring Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) a pandemic, the West Virginia Bureau for Medical Services (BMS) is allowing for the following preventative measures in the Personal Care program. These measures went into effect on March 13, 2020 and will remain in place through June 30, 2020. Working closely with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS), BMS will monitor the impact of the pandemic and notify providers and members of additional precautions or extensions.

Staff Training: Staff qualification requirements other than being 18 years of age (Initial and annual training including CPR; First Aid; Universal Precautions; Assisting with ADLs/IADLs; Abuse/Neglect/Exploitation Identification & Reporting; HIPAA; Direct Care Ethics; and Member Health & Welfare) and fingerprint criminal background check will be suspended until 7/1/2020. The screening of new employees through the WV CARES system will continue to be required.

Provider agencies may provide on-line training for courses including CPR and First Aid. Trainings may also be conducted by telephone or electronic means (Skype/Zoom). If member-specific training is provided electronically, it must be through a secure network to protect the member's confidentiality.

Member Eligibility Assessments: Initial and annual medical eligibility assessments will be conducted electronically or by phone with the member, legal representative (if applicable) and others as required. If the assessment is conducted electronically (Skype, Zoom, etc.) it must be through a secure network. If it is not possible to conduct an active member's assessment using these means, the assigned RN may request to postpone the assessment. Kepro will work with the RN to extend the member's existing services for up to three months past the expiration of the member's current eligibility period.

Provider Monitoring: BoSS will conduct agency quality reviews remotely rather than sending the Nurse Monitors to the agencies. If necessary, the provider monitoring process will be suspended until 7/1/2020.

Member Plan of Care: Annual and six-month planning meetings are to be held electronically or by phone and no face-to-face visits are permitted unless they are required for the RN to intervene in an emergency circumstance.

Routine Meetings: Quarterly provider meetings and Contract Management meetings will be conducted by phone or webinar.

Supports for Hospitalized Members: Should a member be hospitalized due to COVID-19, the member may be authorized to receive direct-care services as needed during the hospitalization. This is limited to members that have substantial communication or behavioral needs.

As stated in the March 13, 2020 notification, this is an ongoing situation and BMS will continue to make updates as information becomes available. Future updates regarding COVID 19 preventative measures will be provided through the now established Question and Answer (Q&A) format.

Please monitor the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website for guidance on workforce protections:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>

CMS has also issued relevant guidance at the following link:

<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-17-all.pdf>