Practice tips during COVID 19 Pandemic

**CMS has waved prior tele-health restrictions and requirements** – previous coverage was limited to shortage areas and required the patient be assessed from an “originating site” such as a clinic. CMS also required that a physician-patient relationship be previously established prior to utilizing tele-health for coverage. All of that has been waved so that all Medicare patients in all types of locations can receive tele-health care services from their home or work and with a new clinician. **A tele-visit is reimbursed the same as an in-office visit.** There are additional tele-health options as well. **Patient co-share of costs are waved** making these options less costly for patients than in-office visits. Please see these resources as well as the ACP resources below to find out logistics on documentation, billing and coding etc.: [Fact Sheet](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDAsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMDAzMTcuMTg4NjkzNzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5jbXMuZ292L25ld3Nyb29tL2ZhY3Qtc2hlZXRzL21lZGljYXJlLXRlbGVtZWRpY2luZS1oZWFsdGgtY2FyZS1wcm92aWRlci1mYWN0LXNoZWV0In0.hxQCarZpRC3I7yaSPgSzgDERp4YT-eJ0tltGhHRxIUk/br/76218850546-l) and [Frequently Asked Questions](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDEsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMDAzMTcuMTg4NjkzNzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL2VkaXQuY21zLmdvdi9maWxlcy9kb2N1bWVudC9tZWRpY2FyZS10ZWxlaGVhbHRoLWZyZXF1ZW50bHktYXNrZWQtcXVlc3Rpb25zLWZhcXMtMzE3MjAucGRmIn0.NHvIEXmjb-dOXm99lWG_-iq_uw6V1YBI43q6QkP6YY4/br/76218850546-l)

**Please consider using tele-health options** for **both acute assessment of patients with symptoms of respiratory infections** but also for other medical care, including **chronic care issues and other acute issues to reduce exposure to patients as well as to our health care workers** (all of you). The American College of Physicians has gathered some tips to help practices utilize tele-health (as well as other tips) <https://www.acponline.org/practice-resources/business-resources/covid-19-management-tips-for-practices> - also see links to commercial payer policies in this document

In addition, for **in-office care for those patients that require in-person assessment** ensure **separate care streams** (no shared waiting rooms or check-in process); one for patients with respiratory symptoms or fever and one for those without. For the patients with respiratory illness/fever, recall that several different respiratory viruses are circulating now, including RSV and Influenza and not all will have COVID 19 and we don’t want them to get it nor those with COVID 19 to contract a second virus. Therefore, those patients coming in with respiratory symptoms need separation as best can be provided. Recall that aerosolized droplets from the SARS CoV-2 virus can linger in the air for around 3 hours and on surfaces for hours to days. It is suggested to do as much outdoors/from car as possible.