

September 25, 2020

## **To Our Valued Clients and Partners,**

We have hit the six-month mark since most states went on pandemic lockdown. On March 29th of this year, the US had less than 100K positive COVID-19 cases, just over 1,000 deaths, and Dr. Birx and the White House's Coronavirus Task Force shocked the nation with a warning of 100-200K potential deaths. The U.S. has now exceeded the death toll that most people could not fathom six months ago. This week, the predicted Fall case surge has taken hold across Europe as global numbers near 32 million cases and authorities fear a U.S. surge is next.

In testimony to Congress on Wednesday, September 23rd, Dr. Anthony Fauci raised alarms over potential long-term side-effects of COVID-19, including heart complications, that some COVID-19 patients experiences for weeks to months after they have cleared the virus and tested negative. He urged Americans to continue preventive measures to curb the spread of COVID-19 and the flu. Dr. Fauci also spurred hope for a viable vaccine as early as the Spring of 2021, explaining that three vaccine candidates are currently in phase three trials. We continue to closely monitor progress on vaccine developments and will swiftly notify clients when a viable vaccine is available. We also urge clients to continue efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as it may be another six months before a vaccine could be broadly available and until that time, everyone is still at risk.

As you likely know, we contributed early on to the support of [convalescent plasma research efforts](#). Recently, the FDA issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for COVID-19 acute treatment protocols. Today, we continue to support this research by encouraging all of our members recovering from COVID-19 to consider donating their plasma once they have fully recovered from COVID-19.

## **Testing trends regionally and across our membership**

We continue to evolve and refine our COVID-19 reporting as new procedure codes are published and as providers resubmit claims with new codes. Currently, about 75% of our clients have at least one member with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis. Because not all testing is submitted as a claim, there are likely more positive cases across a larger span of our clients that we see in our claims data. For example, COVID-19 return to work

testing and asymptomatic testing for travel purposes, just like pre-employment drug testing, is not a covered benefit for most of our clients so we do not receive claims or diagnosis codes for these types of tests.

Across our membership, approximately 14.5% of our members have had at least one COVID-19 testing claim and over 20% of those tested have more than one testing claim.

### **Treatment claims cost trends across our membership**

Approximately 3.3% of members tested have a positive COVID-19 diagnosis and just over 12% of members with a positive COVID-19 diagnosis have required hospitalization. Our largest COVID-19 treatment plan payment total to date (for a single member) is \$83K. Less than 3% of members' COVID-19 treatment plan payments (per member) have been over \$10K and 88% of members' COVID-19 treatment plan payments are under \$1K.

Our Q3 COVID-19 Client Impact reports will be posted to our analytics portal by the end of October for clients, brokers, and consultants to pick up. Please contact your Account Manager if you would like to have your report sent to you or if you have any questions about the information in your report. We hope you find these reports helpful and we welcome your feedback.

Our COVID-19 member updates page contains useful information and links to resources to address the most common member questions our Customer Care Advocates receive.

In case you missed our communication last week about our response to the wildfires that have ravaged communities across the Northwest, you can catch up [here](#).

### **We're Here for You**

Our focus, dedication, and support remain steadfast as we navigate these unique times with you. Know that our Care Management nurses are reaching out to those members diagnosed with COVID-19 to help them access the care and resources they need to recover safely. Thank you for your continued trust in our organization. We are in this with you and hope that you and yours stay safe and healthy. Please reach out to your Account Manager if you have any questions or if there's anything we can do to help.

Best Regards,

**Lindsay Harris, MPP** *President*

**Regence Group Administrators**