

Hot Topics In Risk Management



Every day we hear from our insureds on the Risk Management Hotline, and we will be sharing some of those questions and answers with you.

Our Risk Management Team is here to help you minimize and mitigate Medical Professional Liability risk.



Preparing Your Practice for Post COVID-19 Patient Care – Training and Refreshing Physicians and Practice Staff

In response to COVID-19, many practices significantly decreased their business hours and/or postponed routine or well appointments. Physicians, practice administrators, and practice staff should prepare themselves and the practice for the "new normal" and more in-person appointments. Preparation includes new or refresher education and training on the clinical aspects of COVID-19; infection prevention and control techniques; new or revised practice policies and processes; stress management; and communicating with patients, their families, and other members of the health care team.

I. Clinical Aspects of COVID-19 and Infection Prevention and Control

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Arizona Department of Health Services, and Utah Department of Health offer free clinical and infection control education. The CDC offers the following courses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/training.html>:

- What Clinicians Need to Know
- Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations
- Clinical Management of Critically Ill Adults
- Caring for Children and Pregnant Women
- Coronavirus Testing
- Optimization Strategies for Healthcare Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Healthcare Respiratory Protection Resources
- The Science of Social Distancing Parts 1 and 2

The Arizona Department of Health Services provides information and training on screening visitors for COVID-19, contingent use of PPE, exposure of physicians and other health care professionals to probably or confirmed cases of COVID-19, and therapeutic options for patients with COVID-19 at <https://azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-disease-epidemiology/index.php#novel-coronavirus-healthcare-providers>.

The Utah Department of Health developed a guidance document for assessing health care work risk after contact with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patient and treatment suggestions for COVID-19 at <https://coronavirus.utah.gov/recommendations-for-providers/>.

II. New or Revised Practice Policies and Processes

Practices are encouraged to educate and train physicians and practice staff on new or revised processes and the reopening of the practice or increase in in-person appointments. Education and training should include:

- Date of reopening and any changes in office hours
- CDC guidelines and related changes to the office's physical environment
- CDC guidelines and related changes to work-flow, for example, who may or may not accompany the patient to the office, how patients will check in for appointments, and how patients will schedule follow up appointments
- Telemedicine-related changes
- Monitoring staff for signs of illness; staff illness, absences, and/or quarantine; screening employees before returning to work
- Contingency plans for physicians and practice staff at higher risk for COVID-19
- If applicable, workers' compensation and employee health benefits
- How to screen patients and determine the need for and priority of an in-office or telemedicine appointment
- Transporting patients from the practice to a hospital or health care facility
- Procedure for quickly alerting physicians and staff about known or suspected COVID-19 patients who have come into the office or practice
- Cleaning and disinfecting patient and waiting areas, equipment, and restrooms prior to, during, and after patient appointments
- Management plan for dissatisfied/disgruntled patients and family members or others accompanying the patient
- Communicating changes in practice processes to patients

Listen to Arizona practices share their adaptations to COVID-19 in the Risk Management Minute podcast.

- Internal Medicine and COVID-19 at <https://soundcloud.com/user-886689936/a-few-minutes-with-mica-practice-perspectives-internal-medicine-and-covid-19/s-UZstx6Oqz0j>
- Internal Medicine/Nuclear Cardiology and COVID-19 at <https://soundcloud.com/user-886689936/a-few-minutes-with-mica-practice-perspectives-internal-medicinenuclear-cardiology-and-covid-19/s-5KA7g69uFYv>

III. Stress Management

MICA has podcast episodes and webinars on stress management and burnout prevention. Physicians and their practices may listen at their convenience.

- Management Stress and Anxiety During COVID-19 at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GS3U_ZJUUXA&feature=youtu.be
- Preparing Your Practice for Post-COVID-19 Patient Care at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hozmx5c5yvg&feature=youtu.be>
- Embracing a Positive Lifestyle - Having a Sense of Purpose at <https://soundcloud.com/user-886689936/embracing-a-positive-lifestyle-e1-having-a-sense-of-purpose/s-eYfm1S5JT1G>
- Embracing a Positive Lifestyle - Lifestyle Choices and Wellness at <https://soundcloud.com/user-886689936/embracing-a-positive-lifestyle-lifestyle-choices-and-wellness/s-hFx3etluDPs>
- Embracing a Positive Lifestyle - Social Engagement at <https://soundcloud.com/user-886689936/embracing-a-positive-lifestyle-e3-social-engagement/s-9GFETyE0u0g>

IV. Communicating with Patients, Families, and Members of the Health Care Team

Physicians and practices may consider listening to Conflict, Anger, and Difficult Conversations in the Medical Office at <https://soundcloud.com/user-886689936/lunch-learn-conflict-anger-and-difficult-conversations-in-the-medical-office-february-2020/s-XZ89q> or completing an online CME course from MICA's course library at <https://www.mica-insurance.com/WhyChooseMICA/FreeCMECourses>.

For more information, contact the MICA Risk Management Services Hotline at 602.808.2137, 800.352.0402 x2137 or rm_info@mica-insurance.com, or read our latest Risk Resource, Medical Professional Liability Risk Management For Reopening a Medical Practice or Reinstating In-Office Appointments During the COVID-19 Pandemic at https://www.mica-insurance.com/assets/anonymous/Reopening_a_Medical_Practice_During_the_Pandemic.pdf.

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