FYI:

Public Health Emergency (PHE) Extended

HOME HEALTH FUNDAMENTALS SUBSCRIBER EMAILS — AUGUST 2022

The Least You Need to Know:

The Public Health Emergency (PHE) was extended for another 90 days on July 15th, 2022. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 PHE, CMS has provided blanket waivers to provide flexibilities to meet the needs of the patients being served while facing a health and staffing crisis. The PHE will continue until at least October 13th, 2022, and the flexibilities of all of the federal waivers will continue at minimum at least 60 days after the end of the PHE.

Waivers include flexibilities such as:

- Ability to perform "initial assessment" of home bound status and immediate care needs telephonically to meet the timeframe of two days, per the Conditions of Participation (COPs).

  HHF Hint — Currently, these remote visits do NOT go to the claim, nor is there payment by Medicare for remote visits/telehealth

- Waive onsite visits for the home health aide supervisory visits every two weeks per 484.80(h).

- Waive the 12 hours of yearly education for home health aides

- Extension of the timeframe for provision of medical records upon request to 10 days, instead of the four days required in the COPs.

- Allowance to narrow the scope of Quality Assessment Performance Improvement (QAPI) program to focus on items impacted during PHE, such as infection control.

Actions of a Prudent Home Health Agency™

ONE. Know the waivers available to you. The prudent home health will continue to leverage these flexibilities when there are staffing shortages, cases of quarantining, etc.

TWO. Review your current use, if any, of these flexibilities. Are you using consistently? Could you return to "normal compliance"? What are the barriers?

THREE. Create a plan to transition back to the traditional COPs without flexibilities by December 12th—just in case the PHE is not extended and CMS is looking to resume "business as usual" within the 60 day window.

Links to More Information

COVID-19 Declaration Waivers - https://www.cms.gov/files/document/covid-19-emergency-declaration-waivers.pdf

CHECK IT OUT

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