

# SpecialAlert

Volume Sixteen, Issue Three

March 2020

## COVID-19 AND HIGH DEDUCTIBLE HEALTH PLANS

COVID-19 is commonly referred to as the Coronavirus. The World Health Organization (WHO) recently declared the Coronavirus outbreak a pandemic based on its prevalence in countries around the world. Employers have been working to modify their emergency plans to accommodate employee needs as a result of the community spread of the virus.

Health insurers and health plans are stepping up and offering to cover COVID-19 screening at 100% with no employee cost-sharing. This ensures that individuals would not have any financial barriers to getting the screening if it is needed. This could cause issues if qualifying high deductible health plans (HDHPs) covered the screening prior to the deductible being met if it is not considered a preventive care under the HDHP rules.

The IRS just released IRS Notice 2020-15 to address the issue. Part of the government response to COVID-19 is removing barriers to testing for and treatment of COVID-19. Due to the nature

of this public health emergency, and to avoid administrative delays or financial disincentives that might otherwise impede testing for and treatment of COVID-19 for participants in HDHPs, this notice provides that all medical care services received and items purchased associated with testing for and treatment of COVID-19 that are provided by a health plan without a deductible, or with a deductible below the minimum annual deductible otherwise required under IRS rules for an HDHP, will be disregarded for purposes of determining the status of the plan as an HDHP.

With this guidance, most health plans will likely extend the 100% of COVID-19 screenings to HDHPs. Check with your health plan vendor to confirm how they will handle coverage for this important treatment. MMA

*We welcome your comments and suggestions regarding this issue of our Special Alert. For more information, please contact your Account Manager or visit our website at [www.mma-mi.com](http://www.mma-mi.com).*

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