

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is disrupting the lives of millions of Americans.  APA is working with federal and state lawmakers to ensure psychiatrists have the tools and resources you need to provide the highest quality mental health care to your patients during this time.

On March 27, 2020, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 748, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) Act. This is the third in a series of stimulus packages designed to bring support to our economy and public health systems that have been impacted by this pandemic.

APA worked with its congressional champions and coalition partners to ensure the legislation addresses the nation's mental health needs. As a result of these efforts, we have included some highlights of provisions included in H.R. 748 below:

* Increased stockpile of Personal Protective Equipment, ventilators and other essential medical supplies.
* $425 million for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) programs, including:
	+ $250 million for Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics
	+ $50 million for suicide prevention programs
	+ $100 million for mental health and substance use disorder emergency grants
* $4 billion for community health centers, which is $1.32 billion over current fiscal year 2020 funding levels.
* Allows Medicare reimbursement for telemedicine for new patients, not just those seen within the last three years.
* Improvements to patient safety by modernizing patient privacy regulation 42 CFR Part 2, so that an individual's history of SUD can be shared with their other providers.
* A special enrollment period for patients to enroll in health insurance through the federally facilitated health insurance marketplace.
* Suspension of the 2 percent Medicare sequester cut through December 2020.

The inclusion of these provisions built upon APA's previous success in the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act that was signed into law on March 6, 2020. This law authorized the U.S. Health and Human Services to temporarily lift restrictions on Medicare access and coverage of telehealth services, such as live videoconference consultations with doctors. You can learn more about the changes to telemedicine [here](http://cqrcengage.com/psychorg/app/thru?ep=AAAAC2Flc0NpcGhlcjAxn2lB5cjLLAByKZ2ArMw_tK3IEZ1FywsGLV3lmK--52QSMR_1U_K8sV-DyfieWM2U1hNV8KvehYlhgd8cUENU5PA3C8NDM_nsY3EqIRKWusx3KxzK5_sZJW8Yp-ddyE0SspO3_e8DnocEOzS3ArPs_x_JjTR6SeIxJ3sLvpxXl1fLkXPoQ3Os3B3IyxwOsKdCrBPj-xqWqMpNfUjLALKUGRta2iIgH3aE9dB7hXVRyf-p-QsvOUaCFMCgxTRt26ekzBcwZbtDPT7SUussq0ei70OyhlVLJZXPPAzX-ZjrACUAv12x2K4FsMCVOESNcq5Ag-o4JKoGj2NXZB5G77iArC3WRN-pbgn_rHSkBSzq0T8&lp=0). Additionally, APA has a coronavirus information hub [here](http://cqrcengage.com/psychorg/app/thru?ep=AAAAC2Flc0NpcGhlcjAx2d0uLwsavxDtPnUvlg933rTRiG22s0Lr-J7PbQ4GXMAuOAkWApJPM1Yu8UVzI3ZEE1Mx9J5RlBoD57HK8gdro0DlX4ieX4g95v-UWqK7Gl8VeHHBMWR6HW5dYj21PDUHGenyEhfIOWFnkWD1Q2jXIB35JLEeY_T2w30xUrAxS8NEN-H_f_4E486iQFI7GRYVh75GmKh7KAWS1_N1W77KQDcGyZpDbo7c1nuw0pMLOQondfKTDfMph-O1h7VfUmvQ3vu0dFgEch9sEN65tTuxdA&lp=0). We are continuously updating these pages so you have the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 related changes to your practices.

What you can do to help:

* **You are our boots on the ground during this crisis**. [Keep us informed](http://cqrcengage.com/psychorg/app/take-action?engagementId=507360&ep=AAAAC2Flc0NpcGhlcjAxUTF4Tj676IBVt5N4z-z28YOxrjLujBdWwfO3b3Gzo6f6-AI2bb1xKlL6ddHOZcykJtE0t6z0UAeTTSQ_o0rfmjoPXB_5NMX_yyTkhhRk5KA&lp=0) of what's happening in your community - let us know if these new regulations are working or not working for you, and where the gaps in access or provision of care are. We will use these stories to shape our legislative strategies and share your story with lawmakers when appropriate.
* **Get others involved and informed**. Now more than ever, APA will need your voice in Washington, DC, to support its advocacy efforts. However, not everyone is signed up to receive our alerts and Newsletter. Please forward this email to your colleagues and encourage them to [sign up](http://cqrcengage.com/psychorg/app/thru?ep=AAAAC2Flc0NpcGhlcjAxX-PwL5cFz9gp26_Aq-bIPzTu6yhRGIO2VhzerjPPgwLbgxmOc7CdUwkD1FVCl15otZZMSzFwmyzYifLn57xEUM__POSxEq_OAG37aqGQ8KG58NSUneW3HCV13vIHuo7wTwiSFp1kbJdThPfAwOAColIeYyhDFmLe9CRuCzhiKuv-NTH6ii0Q_kkhfFP5IZ16&lp=0) to receive these alert emails.

As physicians, you are on the frontline of this pandemic. APA is inspired by your efforts and is hard at work in Washington, DC, and in your states' capitals to ensure that you, your colleagues and your patients have the resources necessary to combat this pandemic.