Health care providers should inform their patients of the preferred intake process for the evaluation of possible Coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms and have a process in place when patients present with suspected COVID-19 symptoms. Here are some recommendations for testing patients for COVID-19.

**Codes for clinical diagnostic laboratory testing**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has created two new HCPCS codes for use by providers who are testing patients for COVID-19. Providers can submit these codes to Medicare on April 1, 2020, for dates of service on or after Feb. 4, 2020, and to Blue Cross and BCN on March 13, 2020, for dates of service on or after Feb. 4, 2020.

- **U0001** – The CDC 2019 Novel Coronavirus Real Time RT-PCR Diagnostic Test Panel (for CDC labs)
- **U0002** – 2019-nCoV Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2/2019-nCoV (COVID-19) using any technique, multiple types or subtypes (includes all targets) (for non-CDC labs)

The American Medical Association has developed a new CPT* code that providers can submit to Blue Cross and BCN on March 13, 2020, for dates of service on or after March 13, 2020:

- **87635** - Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Coronavirus disease [COVID-19]), amplified probe technique

**Priorities for testing**

The following patients should receive priority for testing for COVID-19, according to the CDC:

- Hospitalized patients who have signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19
- Other symptomatic individuals such as, older than 65 years of age and individuals with chronic medical conditions
- Any individuals (including health care professionals) who have had close contact with a suspected or known COVID-19 patient or travelled from an affected geographic area within 14 days of symptom onset.

Health care providers should use their judgement to determine if a patient has signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and should be tested.

*CPT codes, descriptions and two-digit numeric modifiers only are copyright 2019 American Medical Association. All rights reserved.*
Recommended lab testing processes

Health care providers should work with their local and state health departments. However, COVID-19 testing can be performed by private laboratories or through the state’s Bureau of Laboratories in Lansing.

If you are working with a private laboratory, contact the lab you normally work with to inquire about their processes and obtain test kits. The laboratory may allow COVID-19 tests to be submitted before a person under investigation, or PUI, number is assigned. If the result is positive, a PUI number is needed.

For COVID-19 testing only, Blue Cross PPO (commercial), Medicare Plus BlueSM PPO, BCN HMOSM (commercial) and BCN AdvantageSM will pay for testing from any laboratory provider in Michigan, regardless of network status. Here’s some contact information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lab Name and Phone Number</th>
<th>Testing Instructions</th>
<th>Additional COVID-19 information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bioreference Laboratories 1-800-229-5227</td>
<td>COVID-19 Information for Healthcare Providers</td>
<td>Coronavirus COVID-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JVHL Network 1-800-445-4979</td>
<td>Contact individual network laboratories</td>
<td>JVHL.org Under What’s New, click Learn More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LabCorp 1-888-522-2677</td>
<td>Specimen Collection Instructions</td>
<td>Information from LabCorp about Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Register for a LabCorp account</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quest Diagnostics™ 1-866-697-8378</td>
<td>COVID-19 Information for Healthcare Professionals</td>
<td>Our Response to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Quest order form (for those without an online account)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services recommends the following process when evaluating potential cases of COVID-19:

1. Provider considers COVID-19

   If the patient meets criteria for testing, provider calls the local health department and advises patient according to patient triage recommendations below
2. Local health department
   - Performs initial review
   - Interview and lab forms
   - MDSS entry

3. State health department
   - Assesses data on person under investigation, or PUI
   - If PUI – assigns number and alerts lab
   - If not PUI – explains reason

4. Local health department informs provider
   - If PUI, provider includes PUI number on specimens and completes PUI form
   - If PUI, provider sends samples via courier to state health lab

5. State health lab
   - Reviews specimen quality
   - Runs tests
   - Develops report for submitter
   - Reports results to state/local public health department and provider

6. Provider contacts patient with care instructions

**Patient triage**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the following guidelines for triaging patients:

- Mildly ill patients should remain at home and follow home care instructions by telephone or through telehealth services (virtual visits).

- Older patients or individuals with underlying medical conditions or who are immunocompromised should contact their physician early in the course of mild illness (preferably by phone).

- Patients with severe symptoms like difficulty breathing, need to seek care immediately. They should contact the facility before arrival so the facility can
implement infection control procedures. The patient should wear a surgical mask when leaving home.

**Help educate your patients**

Provide facts to all of your patients to reduce their fear and teach them how to stay safe. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services has a patient handout that explains COVID-19 including the symptoms, how it spreads, who’s at risk and how to protect oneself from the virus. You may want to provide this information to your patients.

**Where to find more information**

More information is available:

- **MDHHS**: [COVID-19 Information for Medical Professional & Staff presentation from March 5, 2020](#)
- **Michigan State Medical Society**: [2019 Novel Coronavirus and Patient Safety in the Medical Office](#)
- **The latest CDC recommendations**: [Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens from Persons Under Investigation (PUIs) for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)](#)
- **Michigan Coronavirus Resources for Health Professionals**
- **PUI Form**: [Michigan Interim 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Person Under Investigation (PUI)/Case Report Form Cover Sheet and Case Report Form](#)
- **Health departments**: [Directory of Local Health Departments](#)
- **Quest Diagnostics**: [Our Response to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)](#)