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Dear Clinician:

Thank you for your continued dedication and tireless efforts to combat the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) within your communities, and for ensuring that patients remain safe and cared for during this unprecedented time. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is encouraging the many clinicians, including physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, and others, who participate in the Quality Payment Program (QPP) to contribute to scientific research and evidence through clinical trials to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Clinicians who participate in a clinical trial and report their findings to a clinical data repository or registry may now earn credit in the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) for the 2020 Performance Period by attesting to the new [COVID-19 Clinical Trials](#) improvement activity.

MIPS is comprised of four performance categories that contribute to a clinician's overall final score each year. The MIPS Improvement Activities performance category is worth 15 percent of the overall MIPS final score and assesses a clinician's ability to improve clinical practice or care delivery, which likely results in improved outcomes. Many improvement activities are designed to enhance patient engagement, increase access to care, and strengthen outcomes. To receive credit for the new *COVID-19 Clinical Trials* (IA_ERP_3) improvement activity, clinicians must attest to participation in a COVID-19 clinical trial utilizing a drug or biological product to treat a patient with a COVID-19 infection and report their findings through a clinical data repository or clinical data registry for the duration of their study.

The new improvement activity provides flexibility in the type of clinical trial, which could include designs ranging from the traditional double-blinded placebo-controlled trial to an adaptive design, or pragmatic design that flexes to workflow and clinical practice context. The goal is to support innovation and improve the collection of COVID-19 related data that clinicians have available to them and develop best practices that can drive improvements in patient care as clinicians monitor and manage the spread of COVID-19 in their practices.

We intend for this improvement activity to be applicable to clinicians who are participating in clinical trials such as those being conducted by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as well as those currently available on the [U.S. National Library of Medicine's Clinical Trials website](#). Additionally, clinicians reporting their COVID-19 related patient data to a clinical data repository, such as Oracle's [COVID-19 Therapeutic Learning System](#), could also attest to this improvement activity. Oracle has developed and donated a system to the U.S. government that allows clinicians and patients at no cost to record the effectiveness of promising COVID-19 drug therapies. Encouraging clinicians to use an open source data collection tool will bring the results of their research to the forefront of healthcare much faster, leading to improvements in care delivery and most importantly the health of COVID-19 patients.

The *COVID-19 Clinical Trials* improvement activity is high-weighted from a scoring perspective. Generally speaking, MIPS eligible clinicians who report this improvement activity will earn 20 points, or half of the total 40 points needed to receive a maximum score in the MIPS Improvement Activities performance category. Clinicians could then attest to either one additional high-weighted or two medium-weighted activities to receive full credit in the performance category. For example, clinicians could attest to both the new *COVID-19 Clinical Trials* activity and the *Participation in a 60-Day or Greater Effort to Support Domestic or International Humanitarian Needs (IA_ERP_2)* activity, which is also high-weighted, to fulfill the requirements of the performance category and earn a maximum score.

After fulfilling the requirements of the *COVID-19 Clinical Trials* improvement activity, clinicians may submit data directly to CMS or simply log-in to the QPP portal during the 2020 MIPS data submission period and attest “yes” to performing the activity. For help along the way or for additional information on this improvement activity, we urge all clinicians to reach out to the QPP Service Center. We also offer customized assistance, known as Small, Underserved, and Rural Support, to clinicians in small practices who are interested in participating in this improvement activity, but would like to learn more.

CMS, in coordination with the White House Coronavirus Task Force, is committed to continuing its public-private partnership by working closely with clinicians, researchers, and stakeholders to gather information on this unique virus and identify innovative medical solutions to enhance patient care and prevent further spread. We believe that no scientific discovery is too small, so we urge all clinicians to participate in clinical trials, share their findings, and help the nation advance the fight against COVID-19.

Finally, to keep up with the important work the Task Force is doing in response to COVID-19, we encourage clinicians to visit www.coronavirus.gov. For information specific to CMS, please visit the [Current Emergencies Website](#).