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CU Health Plan, Anthem and Kaiser respond to COVID-19 with increased access to diagnostic testing [1]

March 12, 2020 by Employee Services [2]

The University of Colorado Health Plan is closely monitoring developments related to the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). The health and safety of CU Health Plan members is our highest priority and remains at the forefront of our attention as updates regarding this dynamic health concern continue to progress. In addition to regular consultation with university leaders and resources provided by Governor Polis and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the CU Health Plan is working diligently with plan carriers to coordinate and execute COVID-19 response measures.

In a press release dated March 6, 2020, Anthem announced its efforts to provide access to coronavirus screening tests for fully-insured, individual, Medicaid and Medicare plan members at no out-of-pocket-cost when medically necessary. Testing similar to what is offered now from the Centers for Disease Control will soon be offered more broadly. The CU Health Plan continues to work closely with Anthem as Anthem develops its operational processes for delivering these diagnostic services at no cost to eligible plan members.

On March 10, 2020, Kaiser Permanente informed the CU Health Plan that cost sharing (deductibles, copayments and coinsurance) will be reduced to zero dollars ($0.00) for medically necessary screening and testing for COVID-19 including the visit, associated lab testing, and radiology services in a plan hospital, emergency or urgent care setting, or medical office.

The CU Health Plan will communicate updates regarding Anthem’s and Kaiser’s coronavirus diagnostic services as they progress.

“In alignment with Governor Polis’ declaration of Colorado’s state of emergency, the CU Health Plan is exploring extensive emergency response measures with its plan carriers to meet the healthcare needs of our members,” said Chief Plan Administrator Tony DeCrosta. “Waiver of costs for COVID-19 testing reduces barriers to critical services, making access to care more attainable to members who may need it most. We are considering many ways to mitigate cost of healthcare resources in high-demand during this critical time. Working with Anthem and Kaiser to alleviate out-of-pocket-cost for coronavirusrelated testing is a step in the right direction.”

Ensuring plan members have access to the care necessary to combat the threat of the coronavirus is a goal shared by the entire University of Colorado community. As such, the CU Health Plan is committed to engaging experts inside and outside of the university as we plan for the implications of this ongoing pandemic.

CU community members are encouraged to prioritize their wellness and safety during this period of heightened awareness. If you develop symptoms (fever, cough, trouble breathing) or believe you have been exposed, contact your medical provider with questions or health concerns.

Additional Resources

- President Mark Kennedy's statements [3] regarding university-wide coronavirus safety measures are available for reference online.
- The University of Colorado is regularly updating the following campus-specific webpages for coronavirus information:
    - CU Boulder [4]
    - CU Colorado Springs [5]
    - CU Denver [6]
    - CU Anschutz Medical Campus [7]
    - CU System [8]

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