



COVID-19 Policy Solutions

A POSITION STATEMENT
from the Alliance for Patient Access

OVERVIEW

The COVID-19 pandemic has stretched America's health care system to the breaking point. It has overwhelmed hospitals and exhausted supplies of basic medications, life-saving devices and personal protective equipment for frontline caregivers.

As policymakers look for solutions, they should also examine existing health care policies that could exacerbate the situation. Cost-cutting measures and insurer red tape can increase the likelihood of people with chronic conditions ending up in the emergency room or hospital, consuming caregivers' time and medical resources needed for the COVID-19 pandemic.

POSITION

The Alliance for Patient Access offers the following suggestions for policy change amid COVID-19.

- 1 Ensure COVID-19 testing and treatment does not cost patients.**
Cost sharing should be eliminated to allow patients to seek testing and treatment for COVID-19 without fear of financial burden.
- 2 Lift utilization management barriers.**
Paperwork requirements take health care providers' time when it's needed for critical patient care. Barriers such as prior authorization, non-medical switching and step therapy can also undermine treatment for non-COVID patients, further straining overburdened hospitals and clinics.
- 3 Promote telehealth use to encourage patient-centered care.** Using modern communications technology to provide medical services can limit exposure to contagious diseases while maintaining care for patients with chronic diseases.
- 4 Protect access to preventive care.** By allowing patients to maintain their health, preventive care eases the burden on emergency rooms, reduces unplanned doctor visits and frees up resources needed for critical care.