Small Business Loans: Applications open Friday, April 3

Small businesses, including physician practices, with no more than 500 employees are eligible to apply for the Small Business Administration’s (SBA) Payroll Protection Program.

Small businesses with more than one physical location are eligible for each location as long as it has no more than 500 employees per physical location.

You can apply through any existing SBA lender. Visit www.sba.gov for a list of SBA lenders.

CARE ACT INCLUDES ENHANCED FUNDING FOR PPE

$16 billion for the Strategic National Stockpile for critical medical supplies, personal protective equipment, and life-saving machines.

INCREASED RURAL HEALTH OUTREACH

Rural health care services outreach, rural health network development, and small health care provider quality improvement grant programs.

GRANTS FOR CARE CENTERS

Funding to health centers specifically for the detection, treatment, prevention and diagnosis of COVID-19

The SBA has not determined guidelines for approval and funding.
Provisions expand telehealth

Telehealth network and telehealth centers grant programs

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant programs that promote the use of telehealth technologies for health care delivery, education, and health information services are included with a specific emphasis on rural health centers. The use of telehealth in rural or medically underserved communities offers providers more flexibility to screen, monitor care, or treat their patients with, or at risk of contracting, COVID-19 while avoiding exposure to others.

Exemption for telehealth services. A high deductible health plan may include telehealth services for free and continue to be characterized as a high deductible health plan.

Increasing Medicare Telehealth Flexibilities During Emergency Period. The HHS Secretary has the authority to waive requirements during a national emergency and has allowed for increased Medicare telehealth flexibility and uses during COVID-19 pandemic.

Enhancing Medicare Telehealth Services for Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics during Emergency Period. The Secretary allows for enhanced use of telehealth in Medicare for federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) and rural health clinics during the emergency period. Payment for these services can be determined by the Secretary or can be comparable to the telehealth rates currently paid for similar services.

Temporary Telehealth Provisions. There is also a temporary waiver of the requirement for face-to-face visits between home dialysis patients and physicians. Telehealth may be used to conduct face-to-face encounters prior to recertification of eligibility for hospice care.

PROVISIONS FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS

Defers student loan payments and interest. Defers student loan payments, principals, and interests through September 30, 2020. Additionally, during this time, involuntary collection related to student loans will be suspended.

Federal Student Loan Flexibility. Allows students who withdraw from school as a result of COVID-19 to not return Pell grants, other grants and loans.

Use of Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants for Emergency Aid. Schools are allowed to use Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants as emergency financial aid grants to assist graduate students with unexpected expenses and unmet financial needs that arise as the result of COVID-19.

Federal Work-Study Flexibility During a Qualifying Emergency. Institutions are allowed to transfer unused work-study funds to be used for supplemental grants. Additionally, it would give institutions the ability to issue work-study payments to student who are unable to work due to work-place closures, as a result of COVID-19, as a lump sum or in payments similar to paychecks.