



COVID-19 UPDATE | April 8, 2020

What you need to know

As we continue to manage through the battle against COVID-19, Kaiser Permanente is committed to making sure our customers have all the latest information. As we receive updates, we will ensure you receive any information that may impact KP members. We will email you weekly with updates as the situation evolves. This is a challenging time for everyone and Kaiser Permanente is here to support you with news and information to help manage your Kaiser Permanente plan.

Waiving Treatment Costs

Kaiser Permanente will waive all member out-of-pocket costs for the treatment of COVID-19 related inpatient and outpatient services, as of April 1, 2020. This is intended to alleviate the cost burden and stress of paying for care of impacted members. Kaiser Permanente's elimination of member out-of-pocket costs will apply to all fully insured benefit plans, in all lines of business, in all markets, unless prohibited or modified by law or regulation. It will apply for all dates of service (admissions) from April 1 through May 31, 2020, unless superseded by government action or extended by Kaiser Permanente. This waiver does not automatically apply to self-funded customers, but Kaiser Permanente will begin contacting all self-funded customers to encourage them to adopt this change. To read more: <https://about.kaiserpermanente.org/our-story/news/our-perspective/costs-waived-for-members-receiving-covid-19-treatment>.

Connecting with our Members

Keeping our members apprised of changes throughout the Kaiser Permanente delivery system is a top priority for us. Understanding how to get care and support means updating more than 9 million members statewide weekly, if not daily. The attached documents showcase what was shared with Kaiser Permanente members in both Northern and Southern California this past week.

Surge Planning – Partnering with the State of California and County of Los Angeles

Governor Gavin Newsom announced on Monday, April 6th the establishment of the Los Angeles Surge Hospital, a temporary facility in Los Angeles that will expand access to additional beds and expand ICU capacity for patients who contract Covid-19. Kaiser Permanente and Dignity Health will partner with the State of California and the County of Los Angeles to open and oversee management of the facility at the former St. Vincent Medical Center in central Los Angeles. Operational support will not diminish either healthcare system's existing frontline capacity. For more details:

<https://about.kaiserpermanente.org/our-story/news/announcements/innovative-partnership-creates-los-angeles-surge-hospital>.

News and Views

Vaccine Trials: On March 16, 2020, Kaiser Permanente Washington Health Research Institute gave the first-ever injection of an investigational vaccine for the 2019 novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, to volunteers participating in phase one of the federally sponsored clinical trials. This is the first vaccine trial for this virus, which causes COVID-19, in humans. The KPWHRI trial began recruiting participants on March 3 for the first phase of a 3-phase process necessary to determine whether a vaccine works. KPWHRI's vaccine research team has expertise in conducting these kinds of trials, including testing other investigational vaccines against "swine" (H1N1) and "bird" (influenza A) flu. You can read more about this here: <https://www.kpashingtonresearch.org/news-and-events/recent-news/news-2020/kaiser-permanente-launches-coronavirus-vaccine-study-seattle>.

Solving a Need: As COVID-19 continues to spread across many communities, our equipment and supply needs have increased significantly and so have our efforts. Facing a shortage of face shields for nurses and doctors, Kaiser Permanente converted a carpentry shop into a factory to make its own. When Paula Dickson got a message from a senior leader asking if her Kaiser Permanente carpenters could fabricate and produce a face shield to protect Northern California clinicians on the front line of the COVID-19 pandemic, she didn't hesitate.

Supplies of the critically important piece of protective gear were running low and hard to find on the market. Her 16 Berkeley-based carpenters were used to making all kinds of furniture and cabinetry in hospitals and medical offices across the region. In the first 2 weeks, the Berkeley carpenters and others they trained delivered 11,800 face shields that went into immediate use across Northern California and continue to deliver weekly throughout the region.

Kp.org is a valuable resource for information and member communications, as well as their link to any telehealth services. Encourage your employees who are KP members to register on kp.org. <https://healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/register>.

For **facility updates** and temporary closures, see <https://healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/southern-california/health-wellness/coronavirus-information>

Requests for Testing: Members should call the Appointment and Advice Call Center prior to visiting a facility for testing. They will be instructed to the most appropriate care.