

# IN THE KNOW

Bulletins for Benefits & HR Professionals



September 16, 2020

## Health Care Costs for 2020 Likely to Be Lower Than Expected

“Direct costs related to COVID-19 varied widely among plans, but a significant amount of care was delayed or cancelled in the first half of the year. Even accounting for unplanned expenses due to COVID-19 testing and treatment, overall health care costs are likely to be lower in 2020 than was projected prior to the pandemic.” [Full Article](#)

*Wolters Kluwer*



## Impact of the COBRA Extension Interim Final Rule

“Under the temporary rule, once the administration declares the national emergency over, COBRA beneficiaries can keep their COBRA options open for 120 days -- 60 days after the national emergency is declared over, with another 60 days allowed as part of the existing COBRA rule. During the outbreak period, there are no deadlines for beneficiaries to elect COBRA.” [Full Article](#)

*International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans*

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## HIPAA Covered Entities and Business Associates Need an IT Asset Inventory List, OCR Recommends

“While the creation of an IT asset inventory list is not required under the HIPAA Security Rule, it could be helpful in the development of a risk analysis, and in turn and implementing appropriate safeguards -- which are HIPAA Security Rule requirements. Essentially, if an organization doesn't know what IT assets it has or where its ePHI is, how can it effectively assess the risks associated with those assets and information and protect them?” [Full Article](#)

*Jackson Lewis*



## Compendium of State Regulatory Materials for Health Insurance Operations and Coverage Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic (PDF)

“A 15-page hyperlinked list of administrative materials, organized by state jurisdiction, issued by state insurance departments to provide guidance to both the insurance industry, health plans, and consumers relating to health insurance coverage and COVID-19.” [Full Article](#)

*Sidley Austin LLP*



## COVID-19 Could Prompt More Employers to Offer Telemedicine Health Benefit (PDF)

“Many insurers have automatically waived copays for telemedicine provided by in-network providers under their policies. Self-insured employers have the power to choose how they want to handle cost-sharing, although many have already been defaulted into waiving cost-sharing unless they affirmatively opted out. While these opportunities have been available in one form or another for years, their value in the workplace has become much more apparent as a result of the pandemic.” [Full Article](#)

*Nelson Mullins*