



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

September 29, 2021

Re: RSV Clinical Update #2

Dear Colleague:

This letter is intended to alert you to the current atypical Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) activity in Maryland, to inform you of the interim guidance for use of Palivizumab prophylaxis released by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and to share the subsequent earlier start date for Palivizumab prior authorization requests to the Maryland Medicaid Program.

Maryland is currently experiencing atypical interseasonal RSV activity.

- Minimal RSV activity was seen in Maryland from October 2020 through April 2021, including in children <2 years old. The typical RSV season begins in October and lasts through April.
- Since early June 2021, there have been over 200 RSV hospitalizations for Maryland children <2 years old. This represents approximately 24% of total RSV hospitalizations in this age range during typical RSV seasons.

According to AAP guidance, children <2 years old with risk factors for severe RSV infection may be candidates for Palivizumab (Synagis®), a monoclonal antibody that provides passive immunity to RSV infection.

On August 8, 2021, in response to similar increases in incidence across the United States, the [AAP recommended](#) that pediatricians consider administering Palivizumab to eligible patients outside of the typical RSV season.

On September 13, 2021, the [Maryland Medicaid Office of Pharmacy Services \(OPS\) announced](#) that preauthorization requests for Palivizumab would begin being accepted immediately.

Previous OPS Preauthorization Date	Current OPS Preauthorization Date
November 2021	<b>September 13, 2021</b>

In light of the significant interseasonal RSV activity in Maryland, clinicians are encouraged to:

- Consider Palivizumab prophylaxis for their eligible patients.
- Consider testing for RSV if clinically indicated, as during a typical RSV season. This includes consideration of RSV testing in patients with a negative SARS-CoV-2 test and acute respiratory illness or age-specific symptoms, in accordance with the June 15, 2021 [clinician letter](#) and per Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations. Real-time reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR) is the preferred method for testing for respiratory viruses.

Sincerely,



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Jed Miller, MD, MPH  
Director, Office for Genetics and People with Special Health Care Needs  
Maryland Department of Health



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Attachment:

1. 2021- 2022 RSV Season Clinical and Service Prior-Authorizations from the Maryland Medicaid Office of Pharmacy Services