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UnitedHealth Group will accelerate nearly \$2 billion in payments and financial support to U.S. hospitals and healthcare providers to help address the significant financial pressure many are facing due to COVID-19.

The reduction and elimination of elective procedures in preparation for COVID-19 surges has resulted in massive decreases in private payments to hospitals. Organizations like the American Hospital Association have [called on insurers](#) to accelerate payments while the pandemic continues.

UnitedHealth's initiative, [announced April 7](#), will fast-track claim payments to medical and behavioral care providers in UnitedHealthcare's fully insured commercial, Medicare Advantage and Medicaid networks. The healthcare company will also provide up to \$125 million in small business loans to OptumHealth's clinical operator partners.

"I applaud UnitedHealthcare's actions to improve the liquidity of the health system during these very difficult times for care providers, particularly those dealing with the significant economic consequences caused by this pandemic," Sam Hazen, CEO of HCA Healthcare in Nashville, Tenn., said in a prepared statement. "Many health systems are having to make very difficult decisions due to the cost of preparing and responding to COVID-19 plus the reduction or elimination of elective procedures, so steps like this will meaningfully mitigate the need to make some of these decisions."