

# island scene

well-being, family, and fun for **HMSA** members || summer

race for a covid-19 vaccine

|||||

working for community health || payment transformation || front-line hero

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Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

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**COVER:** Jerome Kim, M.D., of  
the International Vaccine Institute.  
Story on page 6.

## aloha members,



**W**hen I first became the CEO of HMSA, I needed to introduce myself to our employees. Who am I? How do I view the world? What's my attitude when I wake up in the morning? Here's what I told them.

I am an optimist. That's just who I am. I've grown to learn that this can be a wonderful thing and it can be a dangerous thing. Sometimes you get fooled, expecting the best. And often you get disappointed. That being said, I am happy with how I view the world.

That's not to say there's anything wrong with being a realist or a pessimist. Those are equally legitimate ways to view the world and our future.

If an optimist, a realist, and a pessimist are all playing a game of craps where rolling the number 7 makes everyone lose, the optimist thinks the next roll can never be a 7, the pessimist is sure the next roll will be a 7, and the realist calculates that a 7 will appear exactly one-sixth of the time.

The key to the story is that regardless of what each player thinks will happen, all of them are hoping that the next number will not be a 7. It's this hope that makes the game fun to play. Extrapolating to life, it's that hope that makes life worth living.

I am writing this piece before I know how the COVID-19 pandemic will ultimately play out. There are so many unknowns: vaccine development, immunity, economic recovery, new processes to prevent a resurgence, and so much more to figure out.

I know that I feel optimistic that we will figure it out and overcome this. Others are much more pessimistic and are predicting a lot of human and economic suffering that will last a long time. All of us are hoping for the best for ourselves, our families, our communities, and the world.

It's that hope that keeps us fighting and working to beat this thing regardless of the fear and anxiety we may have or how much we might be struggling. We'll keep going because we have hope that we'll win.

Hope is where we find true inner peace and happiness. It makes us believe in ourselves and each other. And if we have that, we can overcome anything together.

My hope is that together we'll find a way to keep Hawai'i safe, healthy, affordable, and, therefore, an attractive and happy place to live. And I am feeling pretty optimistic.

Sincerely,

Mark M. Mugiishi, M.D., F.A.C.S.  
President and Chief Executive Officer





# What to do?

**You need medical care or emotional support, but you'd rather not go out. What should you do?**

## **Call your doctor.**

They'll help determine the best telehealth option for you, whether it's a video visit or email check-in.

## **No doctor? No problem.**

Chat with a doctor on HMSA's Online Care® using a smartphone, tablet, or computer.



**Download the free mobile app  
or visit [hmsaonlinecare.com](https://hmsaonlinecare.com).**



Available for most Apple and Android devices and tablets. You must be in Hawaii to use HMSA's Online Care. Depending on your health plan, you may be charged a copayment.

AmericanWell® is an independent company providing hosting and software services for HMSA's Online Care platform on behalf of HMSA.

# island scene

summer issue : 2020 || islandscene.com

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## publisher's note

### dear friends,

As I'm writing this, it's June and the state is getting back to normal as we carefully make our way.

HMSA was designated an essential business from the start of the pandemic. Our employees continue to work in the office or from home, helping members maintain their health plans, answering questions about benefits related to COVID-19, and sharing information about community and government resources.

*Island Scene* continued during the pandemic in a modified form. This is a smaller issue and articles are related to the pandemic. With people working from home, we had to find new ways to work together during every phase of production. We're planning to be back with our regular issue in October, which will be our happiness issue.

And if my crystal ball isn't working perfectly, I apologize in advance.



Have you been making masks? My cousin learned to sew during the pandemic and made some. Here he is with his son.

We work hard to keep *Island Scene* timely and relevant, but our production timeline is long. It takes about a month to print and distribute the magazine, so what we send to the printer in early June could be out of step with what's happening by the time it reaches your mailbox in July. Please bear with us and visit us online at islandscene.com and hmsa.com for updates.

I hope you and your loved ones are healthy and safe and making the best of our world today. Please take care.

Love,

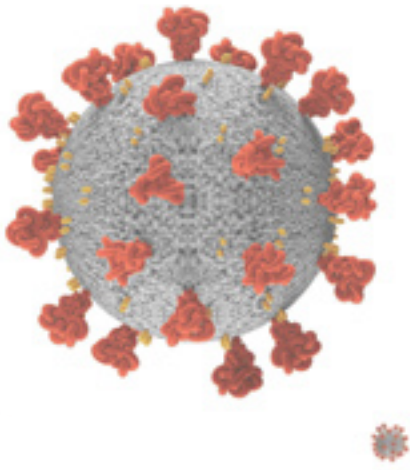
Lisa Maneki Baxa  
Publisher and Editor

# working for community health during the pandemic



COURTESY THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

The emergency department at The Queen's Medical Center on Punchbowl Street.



The first case of COVID-19 in Hawai'i was diagnosed on Feb. 26, 2020. Since then, Hawai'i's health care systems have been working hard to test and treat patients and help contain the spread of the virus.

But that's not all. They're problem-solving and partnering with community organizations and giving everything they can on the front lines. Here's how hospitals are navigating health care during the COVID-19 pandemic.





COURTESY THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

An ICU nurse at Queen's North Hawaii Community Hospital.



COURTESY HAWAII PACIFIC HEALTH

The HPH COVID-19 Virtual Clinic was a trend setter.



COURTESY ADVENTIST HEALTH CASTLE

Adventist Health Castle associates work together to support patients and the community.

## The Queen's Health Systems

The Queen's Health Systems' 7,000 caregivers are working tirelessly to care for patients diagnosed with COVID-19 while simultaneously taking steps to minimize the virus's spread.

To that end, patients with flu-like symptoms are being treated separately from patients seeking care in the emergency department. For those who can, Queen's is encouraging patients to have virtual consultations with their doctors. They've ramped up telehealth services with thousands of visits scheduled weekly and responded to over 15,000 calls on their COVID-19 Infoline, which connects community members with health information.

"I've been so inspired to witness the exceptional and compassionate care that our caregivers have provided to our patients during this critical time," says Jill Hoggard Green, president and CEO of Queen's. "They remain deeply committed to the people of Hawai'i."

*For information about the coronavirus, call the Queen's COVID-19 Infoline at 691-2619 on O'ahu; choose option 2 to speak with a registered nurse.*



## Hawai'i Pacific Health

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Hawai'i Pacific Health (HPH) has worked hard to maintain the health and safety of its patients and employees while putting in place additional telehealth programs to better serve the community now and in the future.

"Telehealth has been a primary focus at Hawai'i Pacific Health for quite some time and we were happy to build on that tradition. Our patients and staff have enthusiastically embraced a more convenient and efficient standard of care. During the first month of the COVID-19 pandemic, we doubled the number of telehealth visits," says Ray Vara, HPH president and CEO.

The opening of the HPH COVID-19 Virtual Clinic, the first of its kind for any local health care provider, proved to be a popular addition to the company's suite of telehealth services. Its purpose is to see patients remotely who may have signs or concerns about COVID-19 and are well enough to be evaluated without coming into the office.


"Providing care to more patients conveniently and safely through telehealth, complemented by a superior clinic experience, will continue to be the norm at Hawai'i Pacific Health," Vara says.

## Adventist Health Castle

As the largest emergency health services provider in Windward O'ahu, Adventist Health Castle's staff and management know the importance of working quickly and efficiently. In March, the hospital opened the area's only drive-through COVID-19 testing site, which served hundreds of people.

As a Seventh-day Adventist hospital, chaplains are available to support patients who need a word of encouragement or prayer. This service was especially appreciated when the hospital adopted a no-visitor policy as a safety precaution. Instead, they provided iPads to patients so that they could safely connect with loved ones during their stay.

Adventist Health Castle also supported community causes during the outbreak, including supplying thousands of low-cost meals to youth and seniors.

The hospital stays focused through trying times. "Our mission remains the same," says Kathryn Raethel, president of Adventist Health Castle. "We will respond appropriately and we'll get through this together." 

 For more on coronavirus in Hawai'i, visit [islandscene.com/more](https://islandscene.com/more).

words Michelle Regan and Lynn Shizumura



COURTESY INTERNATIONAL VACCINE INSTITUTE

# race for a vaccine

**words** Craig DeSilva

Jerome Kim, M.D., knows all too well the important role that vaccines have in saving lives.

The former Kāne'ohe resident has worked to help stop the spread of cholera, typhoid fever, and other diseases worldwide. Now, Dr. Kim is taking on his biggest project yet – developing a vaccine to stop COVID-19, a disease that has led to one of the largest global pandemics in modern times.

“If we’re successful, we’ll spare a lot of lives, including our grandpas and grandpas and aunts and uncles,” says Dr. Kim, a graduate of 'Iolani School and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Dr. Kim is the director general of the International Vaccine Institute (IVI), one of the many organizations worldwide involved in the frantic race for a COVID-19 vaccine.

Speaking from IVI's headquarters in Seoul, Dr. Kim tells *Island Scene* that he's hopeful a vaccine will be available within a year.

“If we’re  
successful,  
we’ll spare a  
lot of lives ...”

Dr. Jerome Kim





COURTESY INTERNATIONAL VACCINE INSTITUTE

## Is it true that it could take up to 18 months for a vaccine?

That's a fast-tracked timeline for any vaccine development. It usually takes five to 10 years. But with COVID-19, we don't have 10 years to wait. This virus has already burned across the country. We need to do all we can to speed this up. We're all working around the clock.

## How big is this project?

It's a huge time and financial investment in such a short amount of time. The failure rate for vaccine development is about 90%. Most vaccines in development never get approved. It's a big risk for vaccine makers. But it's a risk worth taking. The virus has already taken too many lives and caused social and economic damage to our families, friends, and communities.

## Given those odds, what are the chances of getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

There's a good chance. We already have some experience with vaccines for other coronaviruses, such as SARS and MERS. So we're not starting from scratch.

But it's still going to take the cooperation of scientists, governments, and regulatory agencies throughout the world to make sure we have a vaccine that not only works but is also safe. And that's important because vaccines are given to healthy people. We need to keep them healthy. The vaccine can't cause unacceptable side effects and pain.

## What's the process for developing a vaccine?

Vaccines are developed in phases. Research institutes like IVI generally start in the laboratory and then move to animal testing. After thorough review with a regulatory agency such as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, we move to testing phases I, II, and III in humans to make sure the vaccine is safe and works to prevent disease.

There are currently 11 vaccine candidates in pre- or early-stage clinical testing around the world, which is remarkable. Here in South Korea, IVI is gearing up to conduct a phase I and phase II trial of a DNA vaccine from the American biotechnology company INOVIO. We're also working with other partners across academia and industry to push at least one vaccine over the goal line. It's a rare all-hands-on-deck moment. This kind of

international collaboration is crucial for developing a safe, effective vaccine and then proving it, making it, and using it.

## What's your experience in South Korea with this pandemic?

South Korea never shut down because we already had methods from past infections to track the outbreak. We get emergency alerts on our mobile phone when an outbreak occurs that tell us areas to avoid. It's similar to when people in Hawai'i get a flash flood or tsunami warning on their mobile phones. So the U.S. may need this type of contact tracing to help people protect themselves.

## What's your message to people in Hawai'i?

We're in for a bit of a rough ride. Even if we suppress the virus, there are chances for outbreaks. Like a forest fire, the virus could burn through an area much like it did in New York City or it could shift direction. But if or when it comes back, you need to be on your guard and prepared.

Preparation prevents poor performance. That's what I tell my daughter when she's studying for a test. The same applies to COVID-19. **IS**



For more on Dr. Kim and how his Hawai'i background has influenced him, visit [islandscene.com/more](https://islandscene.com/more).

# aloha. hello. konnichiwa. ni hao. hola. anyoung. kumusta.

At HMSA, we believe that getting great care should be easy.

That's why we provide resources like language, translation, and text relay services. Our members are our neighbors and 'ohana and we don't discriminate when it comes to your care. Call us with questions, requests, and complaints. We're here to help.

## Federal law requires HMSA to provide you with this notice.

HMSA complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. HMSA does not exclude people or treat them differently because of things like race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

## Services that HMSA provides

Provides aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:

- Qualified sign language interpreters
- Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)

Provides language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:

- Qualified interpreters
- Information written in other languages
- If you need these services, please call 1 (800) 776-4672 toll-free; TTY 711

## How to file a discrimination-related grievance or complaint

If you believe that we've failed to provide these services or discriminated

against you in some way, you can file a grievance in any of the following ways:

- Phone: 1 (800) 776-4672 toll-free
- TTY: 711
- Email: Compliance\_Ethics@hmsa.com
- Fax: (808) 948-6414 on Oahu
- Mail: 818 Keeaumoku St., Honolulu, HI 96814

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, in any of the following ways:

- Online: [ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf](https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf)
- Phone: 1 (800) 368-1019 toll-free; TDD users, call 1 (800) 537-7697 toll-free
- Mail: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Ave. S.W., Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, DC 20201

For complaint forms, please go to [hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html](https://hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html).

**Hawaiian:** E NĀNĀ MAI: Inā ho'opuka 'oe i ka 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, loa'a ke kōkua manuahi iā 'oe. E kelepona iā 1 (800) 776-4672. TTY 711.

**Bisaya:** ATENSYON: Kung nagsulti ka og Cebuano, aduna kay magamit nga mga serbisyo sa tabang sa lengguwahe, nga walay bayad. Tawag sa 1 (800) 776-4672 nga walay toll. TTY 711.

**Chinese:** 注意: 如果您使用繁體中文, 您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1 (800) 776-4672。TTY 711。

**Ilocano:** PAKDAAR: Nu saritaem ti llocano, ti serbisyo para ti baddang ti lengguahe nga awanan bayadna, ket sidadaan para kenyan. Awagan ti 1 (800) 776-4672 toll-free. TTY 711.

**Japanese:** 注意事項: 日本語を話される場合、無料の言語支援をご利用いただけます。1 (800) 776-4672 をご利用ください。TTY 711。まで、お電話にてご連絡ください。

**Korean:** 주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다.

1 (800) 776-4672 번으로 연락해 주시기 바랍니다. TTY 711 번으로 전화해 주십시오.

**Laotian:** ກະຊວງສັງເກດ: ຖ້າທ່ານເວົ້າພາສາລາວ, ການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອດ້ານພາສາ, ບໍ່ມີຄ່າໃຊ້ຈ່າຍ, ແມ່ນມີໃຫ້ທ່ານ. ໂທ 1 (800) 776-4672 ຟຣີ. TTY 711.

**Marshallese:** LALE: Ñe kwōj kōnono Kajin Majōl, kwomaroñ bōk jerbal in jipañ ilo kajin ñe am ejjelōk wōñāñ. Kaalōk 1 (800) 776-4672 tollfree, enaj ejjelok wonaan. TTY 711.

**Pohnpeian:** Ma ke kin lokaian Pohnpei, ke kak ale sawas in sohte pweine. Kahlda nempe wet 1 (800) 776-4672. Me sohte kak rong call TTY 711.

**Samoaan:** MO LOU SILAFIA: Afai e te tautala Gagana fa'a Sāmoa, o loo iai auaunaga fesoasoan, e fai fua e leai se tofogi, mo oe, Telefoni mai: 1 (800) 776-4672 e leai se tofogi o lenei 'au'aunaga. TTY 711.

**Spanish:** ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1 (800) 776-4672. TTY 711.

**Tagalog:** PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa 1 (800) 776-4672 toll-free. TTY 711.

**Tongan:** FAKATOKANGA'I: Kapau 'oku ke Lea-Fakatonga, ko e kau tokoni fakatonu lea 'oku nau fai atu ha tokoni ta'etotongi, pea teke lava 'o ma'u ia. Telefoni mai 1 (800) 776-4672. TTY 711.

**Trukese:** MEI AUCHEA: Ika iei foosun fonuomw: Foosun Chuuk, iwe en mei tongeni omw kopwe angei aninisin chiakku, ese kamo. Kori 1 (800) 776-4672, ese kamo. TTY 711.

**Vietnamese:** CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 1 (800) 776-4672. TTY 711.

# payment transformation averts a second crisis

words David Frickman

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit Hawai'i earlier this year, it was just the beginning of endless days for front-line workers in our health care industry.

But for thousands of providers who don't work for hospitals or in emergency departments, there was another challenge – how to keep their patients and staff safe and isolated while continuing to deliver care that couldn't be postponed.

For patient and staff safety, doctors began closing their doors to patients in March. "We stopped seeing routine-check patients in the office," says John Houk, M.D., a Honolulu internist. "That would be people who come in for a diabetes check every three to six months or people who come in once a year for a physical exam."

Doctors adapted to the challenge and continued to care for patients by providing services through telehealth – phone, text, email, and other technologies such as Skype and FaceTime. Even so, care requests not related to COVID-19 dropped considerably, causing physician practices to furlough staff while the physicians themselves saw a noticeable drop in income.

However, Dr. Houk and other HMSA participating providers avoided staff furloughs and a big loss of revenue thanks to an innovative physician payment program. The HMSA Payment





John Houk, M.D.

Transformation Program, launched in 2016, gives doctors more flexibility in deciding how to care for patients. It pays them for the number of active patients they have on their panel and how healthy their patients are.

Doctors can focus their efforts on patients who need the most help while continuing to get paid for patients who didn't need an office visit and are monitored through telehealth. Under the old fee-for-service payment system, doctors were paid for each service they performed.

Because of payment transformation, HMSA doctors continued to receive their regular payments during the pandemic, giving them financial security. Dr. Houk saw patients remotely and provided almost all of his staff with full pay, including those who had been sent home when the office closed.

"The paycheck that comes every month is like a salary based on the number of patients you have in your practice," he says. "It's taken the pressure off of needing to bring patients into the office and that's been very good." 

 For information on telehealth, visit [islandscene.com/more](https://islandscene.com/more).





1010-218607

## What you need to know *about breast reconstruction benefits*

In accordance with the Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998, most HMSA health plans cover breast reconstruction when a mastectomy is performed.

### **This includes:**

- Reconstruction of the breast on which the mastectomy was performed.
- Reconstruction of the other breast to produce a symmetrical appearance.
- Treatment of complications of mastectomy, including lymphedema.
- Prostheses.

This coverage will be provided in consultation with the patient and the patient's attending physician and will be subject to the same annual deductible, coinsurance and/or copayment provisions otherwise applicable under the plan.

Call us to find out if your HMSA plan covers mastectomies and reconstructive surgery.

**948-6079** on Oahu

**1 (800) 776-4672** toll-free on the Neighbor Islands



# Notice of Annual Meeting

## Hawai'i Medical Service Association (HMSA)

The Annual Meeting of HMSA will be called to order on Monday, Aug. 24, at noon at the Hawai'i Convention Center, 1801 Kalakaua Ave., Honolulu, Hawaii.

At the meeting, financial and annual reports will be presented. Election results for HMSA Directors will be announced and HMSA Directors will take office.

Current HMSA members are able to attend; proof of HMSA membership required.

To register for the meeting, please call 948-5263 on Oahu.



# front-line hero



COURTESY DR. LINA MIYAKAWA

"I'm built for emergency situations where I'm effective and can contribute. It's what I've trained for and where I thrive."

For Lina Miyakawa, M.D., losing patients to COVID-19 comes with being a doctor in an intensive care unit (ICU) at one of New York City's largest hospitals. But the toughest part is seeing patients who die alone without family and friends by their side.


"It's heartbreaking for them not to have the human connection in their last hours of life," says Dr. Miyakawa, a pulmonologist and deputy director of ICU at Mount Sinai Beth Israel. "The last thing they see is our eyes through goggles and protective masks."

A 2004 Punahou School graduate, Dr. Miyakawa earned her medical degree from the University of Hawai'i John A. Burns School of Medicine and moved to New York. She never imagined she'd be in the epicenter of the largest health crisis to hit the U.S. in over a century. Although the experience has been challenging, she wouldn't want to be anywhere else. "This is what I signed up for," she says. "I'm built for emergency situations where I'm effective and can contribute. It's what I've trained for and where I thrive."

Dr. Miyakawa knew she wanted to be a doctor since kindergarten and even more so when her grandfather died of cancer when she was 8 years old. "It's more than a job now," she says. "It's become my duty."

Typically, Dr. Miyakawa works 12-hour days from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. She's fortunate to have her long-haired dachshund, Thumper, to go home to. On her days off, she does Pilates at home to focus on her health and well-being.

She stays connected to the Islands through texts and social media. She worries for her friends and family back home. "I may be in New York, but my heart is in Hawai'i," she says.

Dr. Miyakawa plans to move back to Hawai'i to practice medicine. Until then, she's looking forward to visiting family and friends when it's safe to travel. "Only this time, instead of the usual hugs and kisses, I'll just shaka them." 

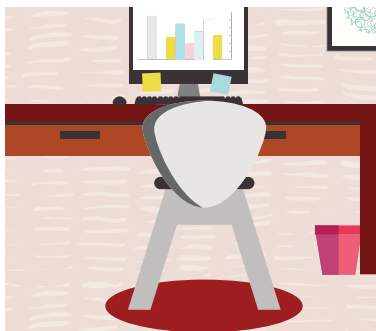


COURTESY DR. LINA MIYAKAWA

words Craig DeSilva

Dr. Lina Miyakawa with her dog, Thumper, in New York City (right) and on duty at Mount Sinai Beth Israel (above).

# health matters



## Work it at home

Everyday life has changed for many of us due to the global pandemic. Stephanie Keiko Kong, a yoga educator and work-from-home guru, suggests going with the flow to reduce stress and increase productivity.



Here are her tips:

- **Take breaks.** Think of this like stretching your legs at the office. Use short breaks to text a friend, get a chore done, or drink a glass of water.

- **Reach out.** Take advantage of technology and connect through emails, direct messages, text messages, FaceTime, video conferencing, and phone calls.
- **Create a virtual workspace.** Kong uses Zoom to host a virtual workspace where her friends can join her. This accountability is great for productivity and can boost your spirits knowing that you're not alone.



For tips on starting a yoga practice at home, visit [islandscene.com/more](https://islandscene.com/more).



## The doctor will see you now

A long time ago, it was common for doctors to make house calls. Now, they can help you in a similar way through telehealth.

What's telehealth? It's electronic health-related services like HMSA's Online Care®, which has connected people in Hawai'i with health care providers for more than a decade. If you're too ill to leave the house, think you might be contagious, or live in a rural area where it's difficult to get care, Online Care and other telehealth services bridge the gap between patients and doctors through video and online chats, emails, and phone calls.

Telehealth stepped into the spotlight during the COVID-19 pandemic, when people had to stay home as much as possible but still needed medical advice. And telehealth is helpful even when you don't need to practice social distancing. If you have questions about which telehealth option is the most appropriate for you, please check with your primary care provider.

*For more on Online Care, see page 2. To use HMSA's Online Care, download it on the App Store or Google Play or visit [hmsaonlinecare.com](https://hmsaonlinecare.com). For telehealth resources and provider hotlines, visit [hmsa.com](https://hmsa.com).*

American Well® is an independent company providing hosting and software services for HMSA's Online Care platform on behalf of HMSA.



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**dis•cov•er**

*verb*

To learn or gain  
knowledge  
of something  
previously unseen  
or unknown.

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# HMSA is here for you



For over 80 years, we've provided quality care for Hawaii families.

Now more than ever, we're here for you when you need us. As we continue to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic, we're working to make sure you have the information and access to care that you need. As always, your health and well-being are top priorities for HMSA.

For COVID-19 information and resources, visit **[hmsa.com](https://hmsa.com)**.

