



Home Health and Hospice Weekly: Recap of LeadingAge Updates

August 5, 2022

COVID Calls Next Week: Workforce, workforce, workforce! On **Monday, August 8 at 3:30 PM ET**, Joshua Smith, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at LeadingAge California will join us to talk about DEI, workforce and LeadingAge California's efforts in these areas including the Gateway-In Project. On **Wednesday August 10**, Ron Hetrick from EMSI will talk about workforce changes and how demographics are shaping these new trends. If you haven't registered for LeadingAge Update Calls, [you can do so here](#). You can also find previous call recordings [here](#). Note that to access recordings of the calls you need a LeadingAge password. Any staff member of any LeadingAge member organization can set up a password to access previous calls and other "members only" content.

LeadingAge Hospice Member Network Call. Join us on Tuesday, August 9, at 2:00 PM ET, for the Hospice Member Network call. Members will be joined by staff from the Abt Associates to discuss HOPE beta testing. We'll also review and discuss the FY2023 Hospice Wage Index Final Rule. Any LeadingAge member can join the [Hospice Member Network](#) or submit advance questions by emailing Katy (kbarnett@leadingage.org) or Mollie (mgurian@leadingage.org).

CMS Home Health, Hospice, and DME Open Door Forum Announced. On Wednesday, August 10, 2 – 3pm ET, CMS will host an Open Door Forum for Home Health, Hospice and Durable Medical Equipment (DME) providers. On the agenda is the FY2023 Hospice Final Rule, Hospice Quality Reporting updates, Hospice CAHPS Survey updates, Home Health CAPHS updates, CY2023 Home Health Rule, and home health value-based purchasing. To participate by phone: Dial: 1-888-455-1397 & Reference Conference Passcode: 5109694

HQRP: Hospice Care Index Measure (HCI) Informational Video. CMS [released](#) a video describing the Hospice Care Index (HCI) measure. This video provides an overview of the new HCI claims-based measure, which combines several quality indicators into a single index score that patients and families can readily use to compare their hospice options. With the inclusion of this measure, the Medicare Hospice Quality Reporting Program offers patients, families, and caregivers a more comprehensive and holistic view when making decisions about hospice care.

Hospice Quality Reporting Program (HQRP) Explanatory Video. CMS [released](#) a new video resource providing an overview of the HQRP. The video introduces the purpose of the HQRP, how data is collected for use in HQRP, and the quality measures included in HQRP.

Podcast: OIG's Nationwide Review of Hospice Eligibility. The Office of Inspector General's (OIG) recently launched nationwide review of hospice beneficiary eligibility. In January 2022, OIG [announced](#) in their workplan a national review of hospice beneficiary eligibility. This review is based on several compliance audits performed by the Office of Audit Services for individual hospice providers. Each of those audit reports identified findings related to beneficiary eligibility. OIG will perform a nationwide review of hospice eligibility, focusing on those hospice beneficiaries that **have not** had an inpatient

hospital stay or an emergency room visit in certain periods prior to their start of hospice care. The OIG has begun sending out [requests for records](#) to hospices across the country. The hospice team at Husch Blackwell's Meg Pekarske, Bryan Nowicki and Erin Burns [released](#) a podcast on what hospices can expect and what they should do.

Hospice Visits in the Last Days of Life Endorsed by NQF. The National Quality Forum (NQF) endorsed the claims-based measure, Hospice Visits in the Last Days of Life, or HVLDL as NQF #3645. NQF is a not-for-profit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization that facilitates an evidence- and consensus-based approach to endorsing quality measures. NQF is CMS' contractor for the Measure Application Partnership which reviews measures for addition (or deletion) from Medicare quality programs. HVLDL reflects the proportion of hospice patients who received in-person visits from a registered nurse or a medical social worker on at least 2 of the final 3 days of life. HVLDL is the re-specified measure replacing the HIS-based measure Hospice Visits When Death is Imminent (HVWDII). Public reporting for HVLDL will begin in August 2022 and will replace public reporting of HVWDII.

Home Health Action Alert and Article: An article on the *Preserving Home Health Access of 2022* can be found [here](#). An accompanying action alert to encourage your legislators to join the bill as co-sponsors can be found [here](#).

Updates on Congressional telehealth policy: An article explaining the *Advancing Telehealth Beyond COVID-19 Act of 2021* (H.R. 4040) which passed the House last week can be found [here](#).

Update on the Senate Labor HHS appropriations bill for hospice providers: [Here](#) is an article on provisions related to grief and bereavement care that LeadingAge worked on for inclusion in the Senate Labor HHS explanatory statement.

CY2023 Home Health PPS Proposed Rule Advocacy. LeadingAge has released the [Tips for Commenting](#) resource to assist members in submitting comments to the federal register on the CY2023 Home Health Proposed Rule. We strongly encourage members to take part in this advocacy opportunity. Your agency specific data will be the most persuasive arguments to turn the tide of this rule. Please email Katy (kbarnett@leadingage.org) with any questions or feedback on the rule.

Opportunity to be Heard on Medicare Advantage: As we noted last week, CMS has published its [Request for Information](#) regarding the Medicare Advantage program. We have heard from members about the challenges MA poses and this is a rare opportunity for us and members to share our experiences and recommend changes for improvements to the program. LeadingAge has developed numerous suggestions to date based upon members' experiences and state staff input. We have been sharing these ideas with Congress and are currently scheduling a meeting on this exact topic with Dr. Seshamani. We have posted an [article](#) on the website about the RFI and includes a link to [questions for members to consider](#) and provide feedback on to assist us in our comments. Comments are due to CMS on August 31.

Manatt Summary of telehealth provisions in the proposed Medicare Physician Fee Schedule: A summary of the telehealth provisions in the proposed Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Final Rule can be found [here](#).

In response to President Biden's April 5, 2022, [Memorandum on Addressing the Long-Term Effects of COVID-19](#), HSS delivered these two reports:

- [The Services and Supports for Longer-Term Impacts of COVID-19 Report \(Services Report\)](#) outlines federally funded support and services that can help individuals experiencing the longer-term effects of COVID-19, including Long COVID and its associated conditions, mental health, substance use, and bereavement.
- [The National Research Action Plan on Long COVID \(the Research Plan\)](#) proposes a comprehensive and equitable research strategy to inform our national response to Long COVID.

What are the Implications of Long COVID for Employment and Health Coverage? It is too early to have comprehensive data or a clear picture of employment outcomes, but there are reports that claims associated with long COVID are rising for disability insurance, workers compensation, and group health insurance. This KFF [policy watch](#) reviews what we know and outlines key questions regarding employment and coverage outcomes.

Statement of Support for the Inflation Reduction Act. As a member of the Leadership Council on Aging Organizations (LCAO), LeadingAge joined the coalition of 68 national organizations in expressing its support for the Senate budget reconciliation proposals contained in the Inflation Reduction Act to reduce Medicare prescription drug costs and continue expiring Affordable Care Act (ACA) premium subsidies. LCAO also urged the Senate to include an investment in Medicaid home and community-based services, which has not been included in the current proposal. The full statement can be found [here](#).

Aging Services Workforce Now Campaign. The workforce crisis in our sector requires immediate action. LeadingAge's ongoing federal government advocacy is culminating in this new coordinated advocacy campaign—[join us to take action for the aging services workforce—now!](#)

Evusheld More Available to help Immunocompromised Avoid Covid-19: [NPR](#) reports that the federal government is trying to make it easier for immunocompromised patients to access a treatment that can protect them against COVID-19 by allowing individual health care providers to order small amounts — up to three patient courses at a time.

Kaiser Health News Writes on Private Equity in Hospice Care. A new story from Kaiser Health News looks at private equity firms seeing opportunities for profit in hospice care, once the domain of nonprofit organizations. The investment companies are transforming the industry — and might be jeopardizing patient care — in the process. [Hospices Have Become Big Business for Private Equity Firms, Raising Concerns About End-of-Life Care.](#)

Expanded HHVBP Model Sample Reports Available in iQIES. For learning purposes only, CMS is providing two sample reports— one for the Interim Performance Report (IPR) and one for the Annual Performance Report (APR). These sample reports do not include actual home health agency (HHA) performance data. The content of the sample reports is based on the same scoring methodologies and other policies as presented in the [Calendar Year \(CY\) 2022 Home Health Prospective Payment System \(HH PPS\) final rule](#). Information in the sample reports includes:

- An overview of the IPR and APR;
- Achievement, Improvement, Care Points, Measure Scorecard, and TNC Change Reference tabs;
- Annual Payment Adjustment tab in the APR;
- Formulas and Notes to explain the calculations of the Total Performance Score (TPS) in both reports, and the Final TPS-adjusted payment percentage in the APR; and
- Sample percentile rankings reflecting the agency’s performance relative to the performance of other CCNs in their cohort.

Instructions on how to access the sample reports is available on the [Expanded HHVBP Model webpage](#), in the “*Expanded HHVBP Model Reports – Access Instructions*” document. For questions about the sample reports, please contact the HHVBP Help Desk at HHVBPquestions@lewin.com.

Sign Up for HHVBP Live Event on Understanding Reports. In August, the HHVBP TA Team will host a live event, *Navigating Interim Performance Reports (IPRs) and the Annual Total Performance Score and Payment Adjustment Report (Annual Report)*. This event will assist HHAs with understanding the format and content of the reports specific to the expanded HHVBP Model. Registration available at the following link: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_SpSWv54gTCedb3azUWl4eA

OASIS Vendor Call. CMS will host an OASIS technical informational call for Software Vendors and Developers on Thursday, August 25, 2022 from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. (ET). The [OASIS Data Specifications V3.00.1](#) were made available earlier this month and will be effective January 1, 2023. Home health agencies should ensure their EMR/EHR are aware of this call. This vendor call will cover topics such as:

- OASIS-E Guidance Manual changes
- OASIS-E Data Specifications (V3.00.1) effective January 1, 2023
- System and Validation Utility Tool (VUT) updates
- Patient Driven Groupings Model (PDGM) updates
- Submitted Questions & Answers

Zoom: 1-833-568-8864

Meeting ID: 161 024 8691

Vendors may submit questions to the iQIES@cms.hhs.gov. Please include "OASIS VENDOR CALL" in the subject line. Questions must be e-mailed prior to 6:00 pm ET on Monday, August 22, 2022.

CMS Releases Hospice Quality Reporting Program Quarterly Update for 2nd Quarter of 2022. The [Hospice Quarterly Update](#) for the second quarter of 2022 is now available. This update includes Hospice Quality Reporting Program highlights from April 2022 to June 2022, events and engagement

opportunities for the third quarter of 2022 (July – September 2022),. Of note the next two Home Health, Hospice & DME Open Door Forums for the HQRP are scheduled for the following dates at 2 PM ET:

- August 10, 2022
- September 21, 2022

The Quarterly Update also includes selected questions and answers from the Hospice Quality Help Desk on: HIS Submission: Change in Payer Source, HCI Indicators # 3 and #4: Early and Late Live Discharges, Exclusions for Hospice Visits in the Last Days of Life (HVLDL), and Public Reporting of New Hospice Claims-based Quality Measures (HVLDL and HCI).