



## Nursing Home Weekly: Recap of LeadingAge Updates

September 2, 2022

**LeadingAge Coronavirus Update Call Next Week. NO CALL ON MONDAY, LABOR DAY. LeadingAge is closed.** Older workers (those over age 50) are leaving their jobs in far greater numbers than younger workers. What's going on and what does it mean for aging services providers? On **Wednesday, September 7** at 3:30 PM ET we'll talk with **Kaifeng Jiang** a professor of management and human resources at the Ohio state university about some research on this topic, as well as other workforce issues. . 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.

**CNA Training Waiver Updates.** On August 29, CMS released an update related to the CNA training waiver that was terminated in June. CMS memo [QSO-22-15-NH&NLTC&LSC](#) was revised to provide more detail on waivers available for temporary nurse aides who are unable to meet requirements for certification prior to the October deadline due to NATCEP backlogs within their state. Two types of waivers will be available for these individuals: in situations where the backlog is widespread throughout the state or county, the state or county may apply for a waiver. In situations where the backlog is localized, the individual nursing home may apply for a waiver. Waiver requests for both types of waivers should be submitted through the [1135 Waiver portal](#). Documentation is required for each type of waiver, including a plan for remedying the situation. CMS notes that waivers are time-limited and may not be extended past the duration of the PHE. This includes waivers that are granted with a timeframe that exceeds the PHE. When the PHE ends, the waiver ends regardless of any time remaining from the approval of the waiver.

**Nursing Home Staffing Study Listening Session.** A public listening session was held on August 29 on the Nursing Home Staff Study. Abt Associates, the CMS contractor conducting the study, gave a brief overview of study components, then used the majority of the 90-minute session for stakeholder feedback. Stakeholders providing feedback included families of nursing home residents, consumer advocacy groups, union representatives, providers, and provider associations including LeadingAge. Workforce was a top concern noted by many commenters and there was a resounding message that residents deserve quality care that can't be provided when the people aren't there. A few commenters noted the importance of funding staffing requirements through improved reimbursement, while many more noted that if the Biden Administration and CMS are truly committed to quality staffing, more collaboration is needed to produce a viable workforce from which to draw.

**SNF VBP Webinar:** On September 28, 2022, at 2:00 PM ET, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will host an educational webinar: Overview of Finalized SNF VBP Policies from the FY 2023 SNF PPS Final Rule. The educational webinar will provide an overview of the major policies in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Skilled Nursing Facility Prospective Payment System (SNF PPS) Final Rule for the

SNF VBP Program. You may register for the webinar here:

[https://globalmeetwebinar.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1567348&tp\\_key=5891f3c008](https://globalmeetwebinar.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1567348&tp_key=5891f3c008)

The webinar's slides and recording will be available after the presentation on the SNF VBP Program Archived Events page of QualityReportingCenter.com: <https://www.qualityreportingcenter.com/en/snf-vbp/archived-events/>.

**Supporting Technology-Enabled Innovation in Medicaid Managed Care to Improve Quality and Equity.**

The Center for Health Care Strategies is hosting a webinar on September 20<sup>th</sup> from 1:00pm to 2:00pm ET to explore the opportunity of tech-enabled innovation to improve care for Medicaid populations. [Click here](#) to register.

**LeadingAge Comments on CMS RFI on Medicare Advantage.** On August 31, LeadingAge submitted extensive, detailed [comments](#) to CMS on how our members experience the MA program today, what must be improved with the program, and the importance of considering these decisions carefully as they impact the entire health care system. Our comments incorporated input that came directly from members, states leaders and state provider network leaders. Together, they painted the picture of struggling with declining MA plan rates, prior authorizations, and audits while being burdened with significant administrative tasks associated with caring for and advocating for MA plan enrollees. We are grateful to all members who contributed their time to this process.

**Biden-Harris Administration Proposes to Make Medicaid Enrollment and Retention Easier.** In a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM), CMS is working to reduce red tape and simplify application and verification processes to make it easier for children, older adults, and people with lower incomes with Medicaid and CHIP coverage to enroll in and retain vital health insurance. This rule, if finalized, would standardize commonsense eligibility and enrollment policies, such as limiting renewals to once every 12 months, allowing applicants 30 days to respond to information requests, requiring prepopulated renewal forms, and establishing clear, consistent renewal processes across states.

- The NPRM proposes simplifications that would increase enrollment and retention for people age 65 and older, as well as those who have blindness or a disability. The proposed rule, if finalized, would streamline the application process for these programs by removing unnecessary administrative hurdles for people who do not have – but are eligible for – Medicaid, CHIP, or BHP coverage.
- The proposed rule also includes policies that would improve access to programs that help make health coverage more affordable for older adults and individuals with disabilities. It offers ways to [simplify enrollment for Medicare Savings Programs](#). The proposed rule would also allow for automatic enrollment in Medicare Savings Programs for certain individuals receiving the Social Security Administration's Supplemental Security Income – a key goal for streamlining connections to care for those who need them most.

For more information on the NPRM, consult the fact sheet available at <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/streamlining-eligibility-enrollment-notice-propose-rulemaking-nprm>. LeadingAge will have an article available on this NPRM on September 1.

**Medicare Advantage Spending Outpaces Traditional Medicare Spending.** A new [study](#) from the Kaiser Family Foundation found that while 48% of Medicare beneficiaries are enrolled in Medicare Advantage (MA) plans, the plans account for 55% of federal Medicare spending. Additionally, KFF found that 1 in 5 MA enrolled beneficiaries are part of plans sponsored by employers or a labor union and the number of individuals in Special Needs Plans or SNPs has increased 20% in the last year. The report found that UnitedHealthcare and Humana together account for nearly half of all MA plans and have for multiple years. Both companies have invested in home health and hospice entities in recent years. KFF's work includes maps of plan enrollment by state and county, telling a story of access barriers in rural areas across the country.

**Developing Successful Volunteer Opportunities in Dementia Programs.** Volunteers can provide valuable support for adult day providers and organizations across the continuum serving people who are living with dementia and their caregivers, by enabling organizations to expand their capacity and plan for long-term sustainability. The webinar, which was offered on August 30 by ACL and the National Alzheimer's and Dementia Resource Center, focused on how selected dementia programs recruit, train, and retain volunteers, by providing volunteers with meaningful work with evidence-based programs, intergenerational programs, and marketing programs. **View the slides** [here](#).

**National Telehealth Resource Center for Policy 10 Year Anniversary Report.** This [report](#) from the Center for Connected Health Policy (CCHP) provides context on how telehealth policy came to be where it is today, particularly for those who may be newer to the field. This document is not only a report of what has transpired, but a means of setting the stage for the next chapter in state and federal policy, while the pandemic continues, and after the end of the PHE.

**From HHS. Guidance for Prescribers on Paxlovid therapy for COVID-19.** FDA provided additional guidance to help prescribers evaluate potential drug interactions when using Paxlovid therapy for COVID-19. Prescribers should review each patient's full list of medications and use other resources to evaluate for potential drug interactions in patients who take medications that are not included on the Fact Sheet or checklist at this time (a listing of additional resources is provided at the end of the checklist). Please see the updated [Prescriber Patient Eligibility Screening Checklist](#) for more information.

**September 1 Starts National Workforce Development Month!** LeadingAge is excited to kick off [National Workforce Development Month](#) tomorrow. All month long, we're celebrating our dedicated aging services workforce and supporting its development through new resources. We encourage members to support Workforce Development Month and spotlight your teams with our [toolkit of turnkey member resources](#) developed specifically for you! [Read our member stories](#) for inspiration, explore the [LeadingAge Career Center](#), and [access training and education](#) for your workforce initiatives and growth.

**Workforce Wednesday: Learning Hub Resources** As we enter National Workforce Development Month, stay up-to-date on the most [recent workforce education from the LeadingAge Learning Hub](#).

With several QuickCasts and Spotlights, you can access short, easy to use content as well as longer, in-depth topics.

- [Re-Ignite Your Organizational Culture](#): A 32-minute QuickCast detailing eight recruitment and retention strategies to strengthen your workforce culture in today's environment.
- [The Unspoken Exodus of Women from the Workforce](#): A 50-minute Spotlight exploring the shift in workforce participation among women and what organizations can do to recruit and retain this vital segment of our employee population.
- [Unconventional Retention Strategies](#): A 19-minute QuickCast discussing how various financial stewardship programs can help build a more engaged workforce.