



Nursing Home Weekly: Recap of LeadingAge Updates

September 16, 2022

LeadingAge Coronavirus Update Call Monday. COVID-19 has changed the way that we think of how we help those we serve on the journey to end of life and how advance care planning and discussions can improve quality of care. While these are tough conversations to have, it can have a tremendous impact on how those we care for get the best care in their final time of need. On **Monday, September 19, at 3:30 PM ET, Brynn Bowman**, President and CEO of the Center to Advance Palliative Care will join us to provide lessons learned from COVID and tools to help deliver palliative and end of life care. 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.

Bipartisan, bicameral bill on nursing workforce introduced. Senators Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Thom Tillis (R-NC) and Representatives Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE) and Young Kim (R-CA) introduced the *National Nursing Workforce Center Act* on September 14. The bill would establish a 3-year pilot program through HRSA to support state-based nursing workforce centers. It would also broaden HRSA's authority to establish Health Workforce Research Centers on any program under the Public Health Service Act rather than just under Title VII programs as mandated by current authorities. It also gives HRSA clear authority and a mandate to focus on nursing issues by requiring the agency to establish a nursing focused research and technical assistance center under the Health Workforce Research Center Program. More information about the bill can be found [here](#)

Legislation Introduced to Improve Public Disclosure of Nursing Home Medical Directors. On September 15, U.S. Representatives Mike Levin (D-CA) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) introduced the *Nursing Home Disclosure Act*, legislation that would require nursing homes to disclose their medical directors to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to be published on the Medicare Care Compare website. While nursing homes are required to report all "managing employees," some do not provide information about their medical directors. This bill aims to increase nursing home transparency by making the disclosure and reporting of medical directors an explicit requirement in law. For more information, you can view [Representative Levin's press release](#).

CMS Listening Session on Emergency Preparedness. CMS Clinical Standards Group (CSG) hosted a listening session on emergency preparedness requirements on September 13. LeadingAge participated in the listening session, contributing feedback on behalf of LeadingAge members subject to emergency preparedness requirements. Read a summary of the listening session [here](#). LeadingAge will also be submitting written feedback to CMS. Please email Jodi Eyigor jeygior@leadingage.org by Friday, September 23 if you wish to contribute feedback on any of the following:

- Barriers you have experienced in implementing emergency preparedness requirements.
- Resources you use in emergency planning and resources you would like to see developed.
- How your community stands down / recovers following an emergency, including how you assess and correct any issues identified during the emergency.

- Waivers and flexibilities that have been most helpful and least helpful during the current COVID-19 public health emergency.

CMS Seeking Feedback from Individual Healthcare Staff on Emergency Preparedness: CMS will host a listening session on September 27 at 1pm to solicit feedback from [individual healthcare staff](#) on emergency preparedness requirements. LeadingAge previously attended a listening session on emergency preparedness and encourages members to [register here](#) to participate in and provide direct feedback to CMS on the following questions:

- How has the extended duration of the COVID-19 public health emergency affected the workforce at your facility/employer? How has your facility/employer addressed any staffing shortages? How has your facility/employer approached the delivery of patient/resident care in light of staffing shortages?
- What are some innovative approaches that your facility/employer has taken to address the impacts of emergency situations on health care staff?
- What resources are available in your community to support health care workers during and after emergency events?
- How often (if at all) do you participate in emergency preparedness exercises, and what do those exercises entail? How did the exercises prepare you to address actual emergency situations?
- What can CMS do to ensure a more resilient healthcare workforce to withstand future emergencies?

NHSN Webinar September 21. NHSN will be hosting a webinar on Wednesday, September 21 at 1pm ET to review upcoming changes to the definition of “Up to Date” in COVID-19 vaccination reporting. Remember that CDC updated the definition of “up to date” in early September to include the updated bivalent COVID-19 boosters for individuals aged 12 years and older; however, the definition of “up to date” for NHSN reporting purposes will not change until September 26. Register [here](#) for the webinar to learn more.

GAO Report on Nursing Home Infection Control. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report on September 14 recommending strengthened oversight on infection prevention and control in nursing homes. Recommendations included establishing minimum training standards for infection preventionists, collecting infection preventionist staffing data to determine if current requirements are sufficient, and improving guidance to surveyors on citing scope and severity of infection control deficiencies. Access the report and recommendations [here](#).

House introduction of the CNA training lockout bill. On September 13, Representatives Gerry Connolly (D-VA) and Ron Estes (R-KS) introduced the *Ensuring Seniors’ Access to Quality Care Act* (H.R. 8805), the House version of Senate legislation by the same name to address the two-year Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training lockout. This legislation modifies the CNA training lockout mandated by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1987 (OBRA). It eliminates the statute’s rigid provisions and grants CMS greater flexibility in reinstating providers’ valuable CNA training programs. It would also allow nursing home operators access to the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) to give employers a greater ability to screen potential candidates. As LeadingAge President and CEO Katie Smith Sloan noted in her statement, “CNAs are integral to the quality care that nursing homes provide. Strong training programs are a necessity to both ensure these valuable professionals have the foundation needed to

serve older adults and to help fill a pipeline that is in dire need of replenishment.” To access Katie’s full statement and additional information, see [LeadingAge’s press release](#) and the [House bill text](#).

Provider Relief Fund Updates. Here’s a LeadingAge [article](#) on all the latest developments in Provider Relief Funds including the 10th distribution of Phase 4 funding, the addition of a new Reporting Period, and a reminder about Reporting Period 3 Sept 30 submission deadline.

New App Helps Clinicians Fight Antimicrobial Resistance. A new free tool called Bugs + Drugs [released](#) by Epocrates on their mobile app shows bacterium varieties based on ZIP code. This will help clinicians better choose antibiotics and avoid worsening antimicrobial resistance. The new tool uses bacteria found in urine, skin and other sample types based on geographic region. Clinicians can also find relevant antibiotic drug options, dosing, possible interactions and safety information through the platform.