



Nursing Home Weekly: Recap of LeadingAge Updates

July 22, 2022

LeadingAge COVID Update Calls. How are older people doing at this point in the pandemic? How can providers support their best quality of life? On Monday, July 25 at 3:30 PM ET, we are going to look into the trends and impact of COVID-19 on the cognitive, physical and psycho-social health and well-being of older adults. Dr. Catherine O'Brien from the Mather Institute is going to unpack the results of the Age Well study and show how we can help to improve the quality of life for older adults in aging service settings. 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.

New Nursing Home RoPs Guidance 2022 Resource. On July 21, LeadingAge released another resource for compliance with the new Nursing Home RoPs Guidance 2022. Check out the [Admission, Transfer, and Discharge](#) QuickCast on the LeadingAge Learning Hub. This 12-minute QuickCast provides an overview of revisions related to nursing home requirements in the admission, transfer, and discharge section of the new surveyor guidance. We also highlight strategies for implementation, covered more fully in the associated Implementation Checklists available with the QuickCast and on the [LeadingAge Nursing Home RoPs Tools and Resources](#) page. LeadingAge will continue to release resources on the various sections of the new and updated guidance as we near the October 24 compliance date.

Nursing Home Network Call: The LeadingAge Nursing Home Network will meet next Tuesday, July 26 at 2pm ET. We'll hear from CDC on the new enhanced barrier precautions guidance, plus policy updates from LeadingAge, and member feedback. Register for the Nursing Home Network [here](#) using your LeadingAge login. Don't have a LeadingAge login? Create one [here](#) using your work email address

CMS releases the Beneficiary Protections and Medicaid Drug Coverage, Particularly Under Value Based Purchasing (VBP) Arrangements CMCS Informational Bulletin. This bulletin reminds states and stakeholders of the existing federal beneficiary protections in statute and regulation that must be followed when providing Medicaid pharmacy benefits, especially when states agree to enter into novel payment arrangements with drug manufacturers such as value-based purchasing arrangements. Learn more [here](#).

21st Century CURES Act does NOT apply to long-term care and post-acute care providers. Some LeadingAge members have asked whether the 21st Century CURES Act requirement that health care providers make electronic health records accessible to residents/responsible parties applies to long-term care and post-acute care providers. **IT DOES NOT.** Majd Alwan reports that some vendors are encouraging LTPAC providers to prepare, but it is NOT currently required. Majd shared this [FAQ](#) and link to a LeadingAge Hub [webinar](#) in which he talks with representatives of CMS and the HHS Office of the

National Coordinator for Health IT. Both the FAQ and the HHS representatives explain that CURES does not apply to LTPAC providers.

A Day of Action on the Aging Services Workforce. Get Ready for the July 27 Aging Services Workforce Day of Action! On Wednesday, July 27, join fellow LeadingAge members around the country for a virtual Aging Services Workforce Day of Action, part of the Aging Services Workforce Now campaign, to demand Congress take immediate action to address the workforce crisis in aging services.

On July 27th when we will ask LeadingAge members to:

- Contact your members of Congress and tell them to take action on legislation that will strengthen the workforce and support the aging services infrastructure.
- Share your workforce story with your members of Congress: what staffing challenges do you have and how are they impacting your ability to meet the needs of older Americans.
- Urge others, including residents and staff, to join us on the July 27 Aging Services Day of Action.

Learn more about LeadingAge's [Aging Services Workforce Now](#) campaign.

Congressional Virtual Briefing: Addressing the Workforce Crisis in Aging Services. To coincide with the new coordinated advocacy campaign, "Aging Services Workforce Now," LeadingAge held a Congressional Briefing on July 20, 2022, for Senate and House congressional staff. The briefing was an opportunity to highlight the policy opportunities that would meet the needs of older Americans in the face of persistent and severe workforce shortage for aging services providers.

Katie Smith Sloan served as moderator for the briefing. A few LeadingAge providers were also invited to address their workforce challenges, and House and Senate leaders who focus on addressing workforce challenges across the long-term care continuum. Representative Ann Kuster (D-NH), Co-Chair, of the newly formed bipartisan House 21st Century Long-Term Care Caucus, attended the briefing and shared opening remarks. The Congresswoman also reiterated the caucus' commitment to proactively studying ways to create a better system for older Americans, including the issues that would strengthen the existing workforce challenges facing the long-term care sector.

The LeadingAge panelists included: Mike King, LeadingAge Board Chair and President & CEO of Volunteers of America, Alexandria, VA; Tom Syverson, Director of Government Relations, The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society / Sanford Health, Sioux Falls, SD; Jeff Farber, President & CEO, The New Jewish Home, New York, NY; and, Rob Lahammer, Vice President of Engagement and Advocacy, Presbyterian Homes and Services, Roseville, MN.

Katie also highlighted the top findings in the LeadingAge Workforce snap poll, conducted in June 2022, where respondents reported that their workforce difficulties remain; the pipeline for potential workers has not gotten stronger as people leave the field; and nursing positions are especially difficult to fill. Additionally, LeadingAge provided an overview of the campaign's "[full policy asks](#)" that we are asking Congress and the Administration to take immediate action, which includes:

- Pay aging professionals a living wage.
- Offer incentives to retain and attract qualified staff.
- Expand training and advancement opportunities.
- Build dependable international pipelines of trained caregivers.
- Enact meaningful, equitable long-term care financing.

LeadingAge Plans Meeting with CMS Administrator and Medicare Director to Discuss Deep Concerns with Medicare Advantage. Katie Smith Sloan sent a [letter](#) to CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure and CMS Director of Medicare Meena Seshamani on Monday, July 18th outlining concerns we have related to the future of Medicare and Medicare Advantage and asking to meet to discuss how we might work together to ensure beneficiary access to services through the two programs as well as financial sustainability for providers. Dr. Seshamani quickly responded to the request and a meeting is being scheduled.

MedPAC Releases July Data Book. The Medicare Payment Advisory Commission [released](#) a data book looking at national health care and Medicare spending along with beneficiary demographics and other critical post-acute care spending topics. Section 8 [looks](#) specifically at post-acute care spending in skilled nursing and home health. The report noted a decrease in post-acute care providers between 2020 and 2021 with home health agencies declining by .8% and skilled nursing declining .5%.

White House Summit on Vaccines. The White House announced plans for a Summit on the Future of COVID-19 Vaccines via livestream on Tuesday, July 26 from 11:00 AM – 3:15 PM ET. The program will outline a path towards innovative, next generation COVID-19 vaccines and feature leaders who are on the cutting edge of these discoveries. Interested individuals can [RSVP here](#). The event agenda will be shared closer to the date of the event. Many LeadingAge members have asked about the non-mRNA vaccines and about vaccines that might be more effective in fighting Omicron and its variants. It is possible that these questions will be addressed at this summit.

Long COVID affects nearly 1 in 4 cases, with symptoms that may last for months. A new USC study finds that 23% of people infected with COVID will become “long haulers,” and identifies predictors of who is likely to develop the sometimes-debilitating symptoms that can last for months. The research, which appears in [Scientific Reports](#), is unique because it accounts for preexisting symptoms such as fatigue and sneezing that are common to other conditions and may be mistaken for COVID symptoms. An interdisciplinary study from the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology also reveals predictors of [who might get long COVID](#). [Note: CDC has previously reported that long COVID affects 1 in 5 cases.]

COVID-19 boosters offer good protection against early Omicron subvariants: First and second COVID-19 vaccine booster doses conferred substantial protection against emergency department/urgent care (ED/UC) visits and hospitalizations caused by infections with the Omicron subvariants BA.1, BA.2, and BA.2.12.1, finds a CDC [study](#) of adults in 10 US states published late last week in *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. Analysis of the study by CIDRAP is found [here](#).

House Hearing on Long COVID. The House Select Committee on the Coronavirus Crisis hosted a [hearing on long COVID](#) on July 19 at 10:00 AM ET. Long COVID has affected millions of Americans, sometimes causing serious, long-term health issues that have forced people out of the workforce and interfered with daily life. A recent federal government estimate indicates that [nearly 1 in 5 adults](#) who have previously been infected with the coronavirus are still experiencing symptoms of Long COVID, such as fatigue, shortness of breath, cognitive dysfunction (e.g., “brain fog”), and chronic pain, among others. Approximately [1 million Americans](#) may have been pushed out of work because of the condition, causing them to lose wages and, in some cases, employer-based health insurance. Many Americans face difficulties in receiving a diagnosis and treatment due to a lack of awareness and barriers to care. The hearing can be viewed [here](#).

Roadmap for Investment in Dementia Care: In the next eight years, the number of people living with dementia worldwide could reach 78 million, according to the World Health Organization. On average, people with dementia live five to 10 years after diagnosis and they will need medical, neuropsychological, and social services throughout their care journey. In much of the world, people living with dementia and their caregivers do not receive high-quality, coordinated, comprehensive care. The Milken Institute and Alzheimer’s Society have released a roadmap to address this urgent need.