Medicaid HCBS and PACE Weekly: Recap of Leading Age Updates
August 26, 2022

LeadingAge Coronavirus Update Calls Next Week. Monday, August 29, 3:30 PM ET - Ben Oseroff, co-author of a study on homebound Americans will join us on Monday to discuss his profile of homebound older adults, their needs and ways to address them. On Wednesday, August 31, at 3:30 PM ET, hear from David Putrino, Director of Rehabilitation Innovation for the Mt Sinai Health System, and an Associate Professor of Rehabilitation Medicine at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mt Sinai, who will talk about the dangers of working while having COVID. 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.

CMS releases most recent enrollment figures for Medicare, Medicaid, and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). 88,978,791 individuals were enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP in the 50 states and the District of Columbia that reported enrollment data for May 2022. For a retrospective view of the past 12 months of Medicaid and CHIP enrollment up to the most recent monthly enrollment report, view the Medicaid and CHIP Enrollment Snapshot.

Medicaid Section 1115 Waiver Tracker by State: KFF has revamped this approved and pending Medicaid 1115 waiver tracker to make it easier to see how states are using the waivers to test changes to eligibility and benefits and address social determinants of health.

Congress Considers Strategies To Improve Medicare And Medicaid Integration For Dual-Eligible Individuals. At the end of July, Senators Rob Portman (R-OH) and Sherrod Brown (D-OH) introduced legislation to create a new state option to fully integrate the financing and delivery of care for individuals eligible for full Medicaid and Medicare benefits. This legislation is among the most ambitious of a number of bills introduced this session that seek to improve Medicare and Medicaid integration for dual-eligible individuals. Health Affairs, in this article, highlights the Portman-Brown bill and other recent legislative proposals related to integrated care for dual-eligible individuals, including support for states in undertaking planning and activities to improve the coordination of care, opportunities to expand the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE), and a proposal to create a federal structure for Medicare premium and cost-sharing subsidies for low-income individuals.

CMS Releases Money Follows the Person Annual Report. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the Money Follows the Person (MFP): Updated State Transitions annual report for calendar years 2017 to 2020. The MFP demonstration enables state Medicaid programs to help Medicaid beneficiaries who live in institutions transition into the community. From the time transitions
began in 2008 to the end of 2020, states had transitioned 107,128 people to community living through MFP. The brief shows how MFP transitions varied by state and target population over time, older adults (38,775) were the second highest population of transitions next to people with physical disabilities (41,098).

CMS Awards 5 New Planning Grants for Money Follows the Person. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced new Money Follows the Person (MFP) awards of up to $5 million for Illinois, Kansas, and New Hampshire, as well as for American Samoa and Puerto Rico – the first time MFP grants have been made available to territories. These awards will support the early planning phase for their MFP programs. This includes:

- Establishing partnerships with community stakeholders, including those representing diverse and underserved populations, Tribal entities and governments, key state and local agencies (such as state and local public housing authorities), and community-based organizations;
- Conducting system assessments to better understand how HCBS support local residents;
- Developing community transition programs;
- Establishing or enhancing Medicaid HCBS quality improvement programs; and
- Recruiting HCBS providers as well as expert providers for transition coordination and technical assistance.

This LeadingAge article delves into how HCBS providers can look to be involved in the planning process, and how MFP programs will fit together with new HCBS Quality Measure Set reporting.

Unwinding the Medicaid Continuous Enrollment Provision: Projected Enrollment Effects and Policy Approaches: This ASPE report provides current HHS projections of the number of individuals predicted to lose Medicaid coverage at the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) due to a change in eligibility or due to administrative churning. The report also predicts eligibility for alternative insurance coverage among those predicted to lose Medicaid eligibility and highlights legislative and administrative actions that can help minimize disruptions in coverage, including the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act, which provides enhanced Marketplace subsidies for 3 years that will benefit some individuals leaving Medicaid at the end of the PHE.

Emerging State Innovations in Developing a Medicaid Community-Based Palliative Care Benefit: Providing access to palliative care can promote positive outcomes, and avoid costly, unnecessary, and often unwanted treatment, for people with serious illness—many of whom may be dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid. To advance palliative care, several states are developing a Medicaid community-based palliative care benefit. This benefit can help provide palliative care services outside of hospice and can reimburse for interdisciplinary palliative care teams to support individuals with serious illness throughout the continuum of care and not only at end of life. More information on state strategies are outlined in this NASHP article.
Final Segment of State Policy Roadmap for Family Caregivers Released: On August 25th, the National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) released the final component of the State Policy Roadmap for Family Caregivers. The goal of this publication is to provide a guide for state officials to better understand the state policy landscape for supporting family caregivers, and to identify opportunities for innovation in their states. The sections of this tool for states include:

- Public Awareness and Outreach
- The Direct Care Workforce
- Financial and Workplace Security
- Family Caregiver Services and Supports
- Using Research, Data, and Evidence-Informed Practices to Support Family Caregivers
- Engagement of Family Caregivers in Health Care Systems

View the entire roadmap.

Taking Public Health Action for Family Caregivers Webinar. The National Alliance for Caregiving and the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors will host a webinar, Taking Public Health Action for Family Caregivers, to share insights into caregiving issues relevant to public health and outline actions public health professionals can take to protect the health of family caregivers. This webinar will also act as a release for their new report, Chronic Disease Family Caregiving Through a Public Health Lens: The Framework for Family Caregiving and Public Health. This webinar will be held on Wednesday, September 14, 2022 from 10:00 a.m to 11:00 a.m ET. Click here to register.

Sanford Health Hosts Rural Health Care Summit. Sanford Health convened leaders from around the country and various walks of life from health care to educational institutions to Congressional leaders to technology organizations for a Rural Health Care Summit in Sioux Falls, SD on Tuesday, August 23. The Summit examined the current situation and needs for maintaining access to health care in rural America. Much of the discussion was on the lessons learned from the pandemic highlighting the need and opportunity to improve access for all through telehealth services. This approach showed promise during the pandemic by eliminating the need for long hours of travel for patients and exposure to COVID in waiting rooms, while broadening access to specialists. The importance of high-speed, broadband internet access to ensure this access was underscored by speakers. Senator John Thune noted that addressing workforce needs was “job #1” and would likely require a public-private partnership. He said he had heard from many nursing and long-term care facilities on the challenges they are facing and acknowledged that reimbursement issues must be addressed. Few solutions were offered though most speakers believe that telehealth will be critical to the future but that the current FFS reimbursement system structure isn’t designed for this approach to care. Most felt that rural America should lead the way in transforming the future of health care delivery and addressing access, instead of waiting to follow. LeadingAge was in attendance at the event.

Study Finds Discrimination Barrier to Advance Care Planning for Sexual, Gender Minorities. Investigators at the University of Colorado School of Medicine utilized the Advance Care Planning Engagement Survey to capture experiences of discrimination within sexual and gender minority (SMG) adults. Results found most SGM participants already talked to someone about their end-of-life wishes or were planning to do so, but further interviews found those conversations occurred outside the clinical setting. Those who did not have or plan to have these conversations did not feel they were
necessary or felt discriminated against. Researchers recommended health systems could support clinician sensitivity training including guidance on documentation and requirements.

**Drug Deaths Spiked Among Seniors in Last Decade.** The 10th annual America’s Health Ranking’s Senior Report from UnitedHealth Foundation found drug deaths among Americans over age 65 soared 100% during the decade, suicide rates increased 13% and depression increased 9%. The report also highlights disparities for older adults of color. Between 2019 and 2020, the early death rate for Americans of color rose more sharply than the national average of 17% (48% for Hispanic populations, 32% for American Indian/Alaska Native populations, 31% for Asian populations, and 29% for Black populations). The report notes that decades of progress to reduce early deaths by race were upended by the COVID-19 pandemic with COVID becoming the third leading cause of death among older adults in 2020. The report also ranks the healthiest and least healthy states for older adults. Utah, Vermont, Minnesota, Connecticut and Colorado top the list for healthiest states with Oklahoma, West Virginia, Kentucky, Louisiana, and Mississippi bringing up the rear for least healthy states.

**FROM CDC:**

1. **Healthcare Workers – Health, Stress, and Mental Health.** CDC’s National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has launched a multi-year initiative to improve the mental health and well-being of the nation’s health workforce. For many of the 20 million health workers in the U.S., already challenging work conditions (long work hours, heavy workloads, and exposure to human suffering and death) have intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic. These conditions have led to new and worsening mental health concerns, including burnout, compassion fatigue, depression, anxiety, substance use disorders, and suicidal ideation. This initiative emphasizes the importance of intervening before work stress negatively impacts mental health. NIOSH Director Dr. John Howard and U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy kicked-off the initiative with the webinar Protecting Health Worker Mental Health: A Call-to-Action. Resources:
   - Healthcare Workers: Work Stress & Mental Health—Why health workers are more likely to experience mental health problems
   - Healthcare Workers: Work Stress & Mental Health Resources—Resources for stress, fatigue, burnout, substance use and suicide

2. **CDC COVID-19 All-State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial (STLT) Update Call:** The CDC COVID-19 All-STLT Update Call will occur on the third Monday of each month from 2:00–2:30 PM ET. The next call will be on Monday, September 19th, from 2:00–2:30 PM ET. If you have any questions, please contact eocevent382@cdc.gov. Upcoming Calls: September 19th, October 17th, November 21st, and December 19th. Register now for this call series.

3. **Vaccine Planning for the Fall.** On August 16th, CDC released the CDC Fall COVID-19 Vaccination Operational Planning Guide on the COVID-19 Vaccination Program Operational Guidance webpage. This operational planning guide includes details about the anticipated bivalent COVID-19 booster. NEW