



## Home Health and Hospice Weekly: Recap of LeadingAge Updates

August 27, 2021

**COVID Update Calls – how to handle breakthrough COVID cases. And, do any of us really need boosters? All update calls are at 3:30 PM, ET.** Next week, our Coronavirus calls will focus on breakthrough COVID-19 cases and expert analysis of the Delta Variant, as well as other hot topics like booster shots and what the return to schools for children means for families. On **Monday, August 30**, we will welcome fellow LeadingAge member **Barbara Thomas, CEO of Kendal at Oberlin** who will talk about her recent experience with breakthrough COVID-19 cases and the lessons learned from the experience. On **Wednesday, September 1**, **Dr. Monica Gandhi, a perennial favorite speaker on our update calls**, will outline her thinking and rationale about whether boosters are needed and provide candid advice on what is happening with COVID-19. If you haven't registered for the calls on Mondays and Wednesdays at 3:30pm ET, you can do so [here](#).

**Town Hall Summary: Member Concerns about Vaccine Mandates.** Thursday at 3:00 PM Eastern, LeadingAge hosted an all-member Town Hall to discuss the recent CMS vaccine mandate announcement, as well as LeadingAge's policy position and advocacy on the issue. A summary article of the event will be available [here](#).

**More Details: Additional Payments for Vaccinations in a Home Setting.** We reported that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) said it is providing additional payments to healthcare providers who administer doses to multiple residents at home, a move that is intended to incentivize equitable vaccine access for older adults in smaller and rural group home settings. We now have an article summarizing the details [here](#).

**State Vaccination Mandates Article Updated.** We have updated this article as of August 25, 2021; states added to the list of those who have vaccination mandates for healthcare workers include Colorado, District of Columbia, Nevada, New Mexico, and North Carolina. States added to the list of those with vaccination mandate bans are Georgia and Indiana. Check out the updated [article](#) and [spreadsheet](#) for more detail.

New York joined a growing list of states Thursday mandating COVID-19 vaccinations for **licensed home healthcare and home care agencies**. The New York State Health Department's Public Health and Health Planning Council unanimously passed an [emergency regulation](#) that will require workers at those agencies to have their first shots by Oct. 7.

**House-Passed Budget Resolution Paves Way for Affordable Housing, Services Investments.** The House of Representatives passed the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Resolution, which sets the stage for Congress to consider \$3.5 trillion in "care economy" infrastructure investments. Included for consideration are billions for affordable housing and home and community based services (HCBS) investments benefitting older adults. The effort could also advance key policy changes for the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit

(LIHTC) program, which funds the majority of new affordable housing development across the country. The House committees plan to complete their work after Labor Day, which leaves only a small window for advocacy on behalf of older adults. LeadingAge is advocating for bold investments in housing, services, and other priorities, and LeadingAge members can easily add their voice during this critical time. More info [here](#).

**Possibility of COVID-19 Illness After Vaccination.** Earlier this week, CDC [updated the page on the possibility of COVID-19 illness](#) after vaccination . COVID-19 vaccines protect people against severe illness, including disease caused by Delta and other variants circulating in the U.S. COVID-19 vaccines protect people from getting infected and severely ill, and significantly reduce the likelihood of hospitalization and death.

**Comments submitted on home health rule:** Comments were submitted to the federal register today on the Home Health Prospective Payment System proposed rule. Access the rule [here](#). Submit comments [here](#) referencing CMS-1747-P. Read the LeadingAge comments [here](#). Comments were due by 5pm ET this Friday, August 27.

**Hill Update: House Approves Budget Resolution, Sets Deadline for Infrastructure Vote.** Tuesday, the House advanced a budget resolution setting the stage for a \$3.5 trillion infrastructure and economic recovery package, including significant investments in aging services and affordable housing. After much internal wrangling, House Democrats united to pass the budget resolution authorizing the “care infrastructure” legislation to proceed by reconciliation (so that only 51 votes are needed in the Senate), and to set up a vote on the floor Sept. 27 on the bipartisan infrastructure legislation passed by the Senate (bricks and roads and broadband). While the House and Senate are now technically in recess until Sept. 20, critical work is still happening at the committee level. Both House and Senate committees of jurisdiction (Senate Finance, House Ways & Means, Senate Banking, House Financial Services, etc.) now must develop the legislation that the budget committees in both houses will merge into one bill; target date in the resolution is September 15. We note that the 10 moderate Democrats that wanted the vote on the Senate-passed bill to move before reconciliation was completed have also raised questions about supporting the full \$3.5T authorized by the budget resolution as have some Democratic senators despite voting to proceed using that bottom line. What this means for us is that we must continue advocating for the HCBS, nursing home and HUD housing programs and dollars we want because everything is on the table. Our advocacy priorities are available [here](#).

**Provider Relief Fund Website updates and new resources:** The Provider Relief Fund website can now be found [here](#) on the HRSA website and has been redesigned. The FAQs are now searchable but there is no longer a single document that contains all of the FAQs. In addition, HRSA has added a new resource [guide](#) on Lost Revenues. Members should note that they should select their method of calculating lost revenues carefully as HRSA has clarified that the same method must be used for every reporting period. For more details on this topic and other questions LeadingAge posed to HRSA about PRF reporting, here is an [article](#) we published last week with new information from HRSA that is not in the current FAQs. Finally, providers can now [sign up](#) for a notification about future PRF payment opportunities. No word on if future payment opportunities are imminent but we can hope this is a sign of good things to come.

**CMS Webinar on FY 2022 Hospice Final Rule: What Hospices Need to Know.** CMS will host a webinar on Tuesday, August 31 from 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET to educate providers about the changes in the Hospice Quality Reporting Program resulting from the Hospice Final Rule. The webinar will offer an overview of

the rule, detail changes, and describe the public reporting of quality measures (QMs). Here is the [link](#) to register and to receive an email notification when the recorded version of the webinar is available, sign up [here](#).

**Real Opportunity for Historic Federal Investment in Aging Services.** Congress is crafting the FY22 budget bill in a process called reconciliation. Under consideration are much-needed major investments for home and community-based services (HCBS) and affordable housing for older adults. We must raise our voices to ensure these allocations are included in the final bill. Please do two things this week: 1) speak out publicly, using the [tools and templates](#) LeadingAge created 2) ask others to raise their voices—share this [Action Alert](#). Members of Congress are in their home districts this week. Please let them hear your voice!

**Important Safety Updates for LeadingAge Annual Meeting + EXPO.** After a uniquely difficult time for our field, we are ready to welcome our community of aging services leaders back to LeadingAge Annual Meeting + EXPO—and we want to do that as safely as possible. In order to best protect our attendees, exhibitors, and event staff, all participants will be required to present proof of full vaccination against COVID-19, through a HIPPA-compliant online process. We will be making accommodations for those with religious and medical exemptions. If you have already registered for your conference badge, you will be sent an email with specific instructions in the next two weeks on how to upload your vaccine verification. For more information and the latest updates, please [visit our dedicated webpage](#). We appreciate your continued support and assistance in helping us create a safe, comfortable environment for all. If you have questions, please reach out at [sales@leadingage.org](mailto:sales@leadingage.org). We can't wait to see you!