



Senior Housing Weekly

November 12, 2021

LeadingAge Housing Advisory Group Call. Join us on Monday, November 15, at 12:30 PM ET for our regular Housing Advisory Group call. We'll check in about COVID-19 Supplemental Payments ahead of the November 19 request deadline; we'll also review the latest about staff vaccine mandates and have a group discussion on homelessness and other efforts to meet the country's worst case housing needs. Any LeadingAge member can join the Housing Advisory Group or submit advance questions by emailing Linda (lcouch@leadingage.org) or Juliana (jbilowich@leadingage.org).

LeadingAge Coronavirus Update Calls next week. Interested in hearing how LeadingAge members do advocacy on Capitol Hill and with the executive branch? Maybe you're on the line to submit your first report on how you used your Provider Relief funds and could use a little support? What's the very latest science and medical advice on vaccines and boosters? Join the LeadingAge Update calls next week as we cover all these topics as well as the most recent policy updates available. On **Monday, November 15 at 3:30 PM ET, Erica Thrash-Sall and Roger Myers from Presbyterian Villages Michigan** will discuss how they are working with their local congressional office to help move the aging services agenda. They'll also tell us about their experience hosting US Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Marcia Fudge at one of their senior housing communities. On **Wednesday, November 17 at 3:30 PM ET**, we'll hear from **Dr. David Fairchild, Associate Chief Medical Officer of CVS Health** who will talk about the latest updates on COVID-19 boosters and answer your questions related to vaccinations for residents, staff and children. If you haven't registered for LeadingAge Update Calls, [you can do so here](#).

LeadingAge member briefing on the vaccine mandate rules. On November 11, Policy staff presented an overview for LeadingAge members of the [CMS Interim Final Omnibus COVID-19 Health Care Staff Vaccination rule](#) and the [OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard on Vaccination and Testing](#). [Here](#) is a link to the slides from the briefing. A recording of the virtual update is [here on the Learning Hub](#).

Resources on Vaccine Mandates. Pending legal review, housing providers and other private employers will be subject to new staff vaccine requirements starting in December. [Here](#) is an update with vaccine resources in one place regarding the OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS), Federal Contractor rules, the CMS Interim Final Rule, and information from the Health Action Alliance including templates.

Letter to House and Senate leaders. On November 10, LeadingAge President & CEO Katie Sloan sent [a letter](#) to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House, and Charles Schumer, Majority Leader of the Senate, urging that they strengthen the Build Back Better Act so that older adults' needs are addressed to the greatest extent possible. The letter reviews LeadingAge's request that the Section 202 funding from \$500 million to \$1 billion, and asks leadership to preserve the HCBS and workforce related provisions of the current draft. In addition, the letter asks for adequate funding and resources to implement two key nursing home provisions in the current House bill.

- The House bill includes a requirement that HHS conduct a "nurse staffing requirements" study to determine whether there is evidence to support a link between staffing ratios and quality

(section 30720). Currently the provision in Build Back Better also directs HHS to implement the findings of the study. In the letter to leadership, we say clearly that Congress must include provisions to adequately fund any new staff costs. In addition, we ask for assurances that nursing homes that demonstrate they are unable to meet any minimum staffing ratios will not be penalized.

- We ask that similar funding increases and protections be added to the House bill provision requiring registered nurse coverage on site 24/7 (section 132000).

Build Back Better Provides More Than \$1.8 Billion to Support Older Americans Act Programs. The November 3, 2021 version of the Build Back Better Act continues to invest more than \$1.8 billion in services for older Americans that are carried out by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), particularly through Older American Act programs. It would allocate funds to ACL to support a few additional aging network and infrastructure initiatives, which includes \$20 million for the Technical Assistance Center for Supporting Direct Care and Caregiving and \$40 million, for FY 2022, that would be available to support unpaid caregivers behavioral health needs. You can access an article [here](#) that provides an overview of these initiatives.

ACTION ALERT! Build Back Better Infrastructure Must Include More Funding for Older Adults. Congressional leaders are moving quickly to enact a pared-down \$1.75 trillion dollar Build Back Better bill. We appreciate the funding for programs that support older adults included in the Build Back Better Act; we urge that the final bill include these provisions but also expand the funding available for older adults. Please Help us ask Congress to include stronger supports for older Americans and their families!

The funding for programs included in the Build Back Better Act framework are an historic step—but we urge that the final bill also include expanded support that millions of older adults need. As negotiations continue, please reach out to ask Congress NOW to enhance the Build Back Better Act.

Congress must:

- **Increase to at least \$1 billion**, the bill’s current \$500 million for HUD’s Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly funding program. . Without more Section 202 housing, the bill’s Home and Community Based Services and Money Follows the Person investments cannot be realized and low income older adults will continue to languish on the growing waiting lists for service-connected, affordable housing.
- **Preserve or increase the bill’s \$150 billion for Home and Community Based Services.** Older adults must be able to get the help they need to age in place wherever they call home. This minimum investment will help ensure access to services as well as bolster wages of the direct care professionals (primarily of low income women of color), who deliver that care.
- **Preserve or increase the bill’s key workforce investments:**
 - \$150 billion Medicaid HCBS Expansion
 - \$1.6 billion for Nursing Home Workforce Training Grants.
 - \$1 billion for grants to support the Direct Care Workforce
 - \$425 million to expand the Health Profession Opportunity Grants.
 - \$20 million for Technical Assistance Centers for Supporting Direct Care and Caregiving.

- \$40 million in Funding to Support Unpaid Caregivers Behavioral Health Needs.
- \$30 million in funding for Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training.
- \$20 million for Hospice and Palliative Nursing.
- \$350 million for individuals to carry out nontraditional apprenticeship programs.

We can't let up now! Without these investments in our aging services infrastructure, too many older adults will not have their basic needs met. Send a message to your U.S. Representative and Senators today: LINK: <https://mobilize4change.org/IWjumyT>

USDA Names Joaquin Altoro as Rural Housing Service Administrator. The Rural Housing Service has a new leader. Administrator Altoro was the CEO and executive director of the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority, the state's agency for administering low income housing tax credits and other federal and state housing resources. The Rural Housing Service's portfolio serves millions of households across its single- and multi-family programs. RHS's Section 515 Rural Rental Housing program alone serves more than 222,000 older adults, about 51% of its population. See the USDA's press release [here](#).

Virtual event on Medicare Supplemental Services. LTQA and ATI Advisory will release new insights and policy recommendations from two years of research on non-medical Medicare benefits at a virtual event on November 16 from 1:00 – 2:00pm ET. Panelists from the Administration on Community Living, Centene, and healthAlign will discuss opportunities to advance non-medical benefits and how providers are engaging with plans. You can register for the event [here](#).

New manual on serving older adults with serious mental illness. The HHS Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) released a clinical manual, *Psychosocial Interventions for Older Adults with Serious Mental Illness*. The manual provides considerations and strategies for interdisciplinary teams, peer specialists, clinicians, RNs, behavioral health organizations, and policy makers to understand, select, and implement evidence based interventions that support older adults with serious mental illness. Download the new manual [here](#).

Congratulations to 2Life Communities' Amy Schectman. On November 8, the Citizen's Housing & Planning Association (CHAPA) awarded LeadingAge member 2Live Communities' president & CEO Amy Schectman its Outstanding Impact Award. The award was presented by Amy's first boss, former Governor Michael Dukakis. "Amy was part of a remarkable team of people that really got the state moving on affordable housing," Governor Dukakis said. "My hat's off!" CHAPA serves as a nonprofit umbrella organization for affordable housing and community development activities in Massachusetts. LeadingAge congratulates Amy on her tremendous work for 2Life and across her affordable housing career. Watch the award ceremony [here](#).