



Senior Housing Weekly December 10, 2021

Services in Housing Deep Dive on Monday's Housing Advisory Group Call. Join LeadingAge's regular weekly Housing Advisory Group call on Monday, December 13, at 12:30pm ET for a deep dive on Services and Service Coordination at affordable housing communities. The call will feature a discussion with Terry Spitznagel and Dan Fagan from United Church Homes. Discussion topics include the scope of UCH's Service Coordinator program; new efforts to conduct Quality Assurance over Service Coordinator programs; and strategies for adding new services at communities, including by requesting the \$15 PUPM Supportive Services fee for PRAC properties. The call will also feature a discussion for housing providers on adding a Service Coordinator to PRAC budgets, as well as general updates from HUD and the Hill. Any LeadingAge member can join our weekly calls by emailing Linda (lcouch@leadingage.org) or Juliana (jbilowich@leadingage.org).

Join the Housing Advisory Group December 12 Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84570353262?pwd=bnJldWdxRGFIOTRtcGQzRENHQzIHdz09>

Meeting ID: 845 7035 3262

Passcode: 167226

LeadingAge Coronavirus Update Calls. All Update Calls are at 3:30pm ET. Hear from a LeadingAge member who wrote a book about his pandemic experience! And, learn about LeadingAge's Leaders of Color Network. **On Monday, December 13**, Deke Cateau, CEO of AG Rhodes in Georgia and a LeadingAge Board Member, will join the call to talk about his book *Brush Fire* and share an update on activities related to the Leaders of Color Network. **On Wednesday, December 15**, we will dive more into some workforce solutions for our members and we are excited that Krish O'Mara Vignarajah, President & CEO, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), will join us to talk about workforce opportunities in the aging services field. Ms. Vignarajah will discuss the LIRS publication, *U.S. Employers' Guide to Hiring Refugees*, and highlight potential opportunities for LeadingAge members to hire Afghan refugees. If you haven't registered for LeadingAge Update Calls, [you can do so here](#).

Housing Survey Results: Vaccinations, Internet, and Resident Mental Health. Results from the most recent LeadingAge quarterly survey of affordable housing members sheds light on how providers are faring and key issues they see on the horizon. Vaccination rates are up, providers do not have the resources to install needed internet access, and resident mental health is a key concern. Read a LeadingAge article about the survey results [here](#).

A conversation with Dr. Katelyn Jetelina on the Omicron Variant: On December 6, 2021, Dr. Katelyn Jetelina, Assistant Professor at University of Texas Health and Founder of "Your Local Epidemiologist" joined us on the LeadingAge Coronavirus Update Call. Dr. Katelyn Jetelina provided updates and analysis on the new treatments for COVID-19 and how Omicron may impact vaccines and boosters. The interview summarized is [here](#).

HUD and HHS Announce Housing and Services Resource Center. HHS and HUD have announced a new Housing and Services Resource center to improve access to affordable, accessible housing and the critical services that make community living possible. HHS's Administration on Community Living is

leading the effort for HHS. Other HHS partners include the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE). The Housing and Services Resource Center also aims to facilitate state and local partnerships between housing and service systems and assist communities in leveraging new housing and service resources available through the American Rescue Plan and, when it passes, through the Build Back Better Act. The Build Back Better Act includes \$15 million to HUD to provide technical assistance to support State-level efforts to integrate housing assistance and voluntary supportive services for residents of housing receiving such assistance. The bill also includes \$150 billion for Medicaid Home and Community Based Services. Read more in this [LeadingAge article](#).

HUD Piece of Senate’s Build Back Better Released, Scored. Following a process laid out by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY), the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs released its [portion](#) of the Senate’s Build Back Better Act on December 9. Also on December 9, the Congressional Budget Office released its score (or cost estimate) of the Banking Committee’s portion of the bill. The bill mirrors the House Committee on Financial Services portion of the House-passed Build Back Better Act. These bills would provide \$157 billion to various HUD housing and community development programs, including funds for new project-based rental assistance, new Section 202 housing, new housing through the Housing Trust Fund and HOME programs, and preservation funding for both public housing and privately-owned multifamily housing. Other Senate committees, which have jurisdiction over other portions of the large bill, are still finalizing their pieces to ensure they comply with the arcane reconciliation process being used to enact the package without any Republican support. Majority Leader Schumer [said](#) he’s hopeful for a Senate floor vote on the entire package before Christmas. Read the CBO score of the Banking Committee’s portion of Build Back Better [here](#).

LeadingAge Keeps Up Pressure on Build Back Better. In a December 7 press conference, LeadingAge, Volunteers of America, National Caucus and Center on Black Aging, National Council on Aging, Lutheran Services in America, and PHI expounded on the myriad benefits of the Build Back Better Act. “The Senate’s job is clear: to adopt these investments without shaving off one dollar, and indeed to increase them,” said Katie Smith Sloan, President & CEO of LeadingAge. “What happens in the next few weeks will determine whether millions of Americans can access the care they need as they grow older... care that includes everything from remaining in their own homes as their needs change, to getting quality 24/7 care if they need that help in a local nursing home, to finding affordable places to live.” Mike King, President & CEO of Volunteers of America and incoming Board Chair of LeadingAge, said, “Build Back Better has the potential to change the lives of older adults and their caregivers. It is essential that the American people and policymakers understand how and why. Build Back Better would provide more affordable housing for low-income older adults, it would increase wages of direct care staff, and fund programs to recruit, retain and train workers in aging services.” Read LeadingAge’s press release [here](#).

LeadingAge Urges FCC to Target Senior Housing Communities for Discount Internet Program. As the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) transitions between broadband discount programs, LeadingAge urged the federal body to specifically target internet access for households receiving federal rental subsidy. The Commission has announced a 60-day transition period between the Emergency Broadband Benefit, and short-term discount on internet services and connected devices, to the

Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), authorized by Congress at a lower monthly discount amount but without pandemic restrictions, which turns the short-term benefit into an established, long-term program. LeadingAge called on the FCC to utilize the implementation of the ACP to fix barriers to participation for HUD-assisted households, including lack of data-sharing between HUD and the FCC, no path for automatic eligibility verification for HUD Multifamily tenants, and challenges with bulk internet provision throughout HUD communities utilizing the discount. LeadingAge will continue to work with HUD and the FCC to increase internet access at senior housing communities; our ACP comments are available [here](#).

HUD Quarterly Data Show Major Rent Increases, Continuing Housing Instability. During a quarterly update event on December 9, coordinated by HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R), panelists shared alarming trends in rents, with the average nationwide rent in September 2021 rising 12.5% compared with rents in September 2020. These drastic rent increases in the apartment market compare to previous year increases in the low single digits. The nationwide average encompasses differences among rural/metropolitan areas, as well as regional differences: In the Southeast and West regions, rents increased by 19.3% and 14.6%, respectively, while rents in the Northwest rose 10.9%. The increase in rent costs reflects widening housing instability as the country navigates the end of the federal eviction moratorium and a slow roll-out of emergency rental assistance funding. Also during HUD's update, a panel of experts, including Peggy Bailey, Senior Advisor in HUD's Office of the Secretary, and Margaret S. Salazar, Executive Director of the Oregon Housing and Community Services Department, discussed ongoing eviction prevention efforts. The panel discussion covered HUD policy changes to prevent evictions, and the state and local administration of rent relief.

LeadingAge Featured on National Church Residences Service Coordinator Podcast! Check out National Church Residences' latest episode of The Service Coordinator Podcast, which featured an interview with Juliana Bilowich, Director of Housing Operations and Policy at LeadingAge. Juliana talks about her role at LeadingAge and how she helps Service Coordinators and Operators in Senior Affordable Housing. The podcast covers Service Coordinator programming at HUD and what the future might hold. Juliana suggests ways for Service Coordinators to get involved with LeadingAge and ways to better serve your residents. The podcast is available [here](#).

ACL Webinar with Surgeon General Vivek Murthy on COVID-19 Booster Shots. U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy and Administration for Community Living Principal Deputy Administrator Alison Barkoff will hold a webinar on Tuesday, December 14 at 11am ET, on COVID-19 vaccine boosters for people with disabilities and older adults. Register for the webinar [here](#).