



Senior Housing Weekly

February 4, 2021

LeadingAge Housing Advisory Group Call. Join us on Monday, February 7, at 12:30pm ET for our regular Housing Advisory Group call. We'll be joined by Natasha Bryant, LeadingAge's Senior Director of Workforce Research & Strategy. Together, we'll discuss workforce challenges in housing and across aging services. We'll also share housing updates from HUD and the Hill. 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 Call, Monday, February 7, 3:30 PM ET. In the quest for the most reliable data and trends to track the pandemic, Dr. Ali Mokdad and his team at the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation has been proven right time and again. He will return to the LeadingAge Update Call on Monday to talk about where we are and what's next. His recent public remarks are pointing to an optimistic trend. Join us Monday to hear the details. If you haven't registered for LeadingAge Update Calls, [you can do so here](#).

HUD Releases 2021 Annual Homeless Assessment Report Showing Decline in Sheltered Homelessness.

On February 4, HUD released its *2021 Annual Homeless Assessment Report Part 1* to Congress. However, the number of sheltered individuals with chronic patterns of homelessness increased by 20% between 2020 and 2021. Between 2020 and 2021, the number of sheltered chronically homeless individuals increased in 29 states and the District of Columbia. "Chronically Homeless Individual" refers to an individual with a disability who has been continuously homeless for one year or more or has experienced at least four episodes of homelessness in the last three years where the combined length of time homeless on those occasions is at least 12 months. The report found that more than 326,000 people experienced sheltered homelessness in the US on a single night in January ("sheltered homelessness" refers to people experiencing homelessness in emergency shelters, transitional housing, or other temporary settings; the annual HUD requirement to report on unsheltered homelessness was waived for 2021 due to the pandemic). The report found that the number of families with children experiencing sheltered homelessness declined considerably between 2020 and 2021. The number of veterans experiencing homelessness declined by 10%, while the number of individuals remained flat. The data in this report do not provide age-specific information beyond "over 24." The report and more information is available [here](#).

Sign On Letter for FY22 Funding. This week, LeadingAge joined a national letter calling on Congress to enact an omnibus fiscal year 2022 bill as soon as possible. The current Continuing Resolution (CR) is funding all federal programs at FY21 levels until February 18. If Congress cannot agree to FY22 appropriations bills, it is possible the CR could be in effect for all of FY22. This would be [disastrous for HUD affordable housing](#) and other agency's programs, which require increased funding from one year to the next to simply serve the same number of households. "Whether serving health, education and training, child welfare, nutrition, substance use disorders, housing or other needs, appropriated programs cannot meet today's demands with yesterday's inadequate funding," the letter signed onto by LeadingAge says. Aging services stakeholders are [urged to also join the letter](#). The letter is coordinated by the Coalition on Human Needs and has a sign on deadline of February 9.

LeadingAge to Host Discussion on Insurance Rates at Affordable Housing Properties. Join us on Tuesday, February 8th at 1pm ET for a discussion and brainstorm session on the rising cost of insurance for affordable housing properties. Since the start of the pandemic, many LeadingAge members have reported double-digit rate increases for property insurance premiums, as well as spikes in deductibles. During the call, we'll hear from housing provider members who are implementing innovative strategies to keep insurance-related costs down in senior housing, and we'll hear from the insurance community about loss control measures and expectations. We'll also review HUD requirements for insuring HUD-assisted properties and brainstorm operational solutions for housing providers and policy solutions for HUD. To register for the call on February 8th at 1pm ET, click [here](#). Send advance questions to Juliana at jbilowich@leadingage.org.

HUD Notice on Carbon Monoxide Alarms and Detectors. On January 31, HUD issued [Notice H 2022-01](#) on carbon monoxide alarms or detectors in housing with fuel-fired/burning appliance(s) or an attached garage. This notice clarifies that HUD will enforce the requirements of the [HUD FY21 appropriations bill](#) requiring that all Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, Project Based Voucher, Project Based Rental Assistance, Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly, and Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities comply with the International Fire Code 2018 standards on the installation of CO alarms or detectors by December 27, 2022. PHAs and Owners are on notice that these requirements will be enforced by HUD after the effective date of December 27, 2022. The Notice implements a provision in the FY21 HUD appropriations bill. The Notice also identifies resources for the types of devices to install, ideal placement, maintenance, and monitoring; and is applicable to housing with fuel-fired/burning appliance(s) or an attached garage. Owners of properties receiving assistance through the PBRA, Section 202, and/or Section 811 program may utilize the property's reserve for replacement account, residual receipts, general operating reserves, owner contributions, or secondary financing to fund the purchase, installation, and maintenance of CO alarms and detectors. These expenditures may be subject to a standard approval process where applicable, but the purchase, installation, and maintenance of CO alarms and detectors are deemed eligible expenses. The Notice includes links to educational materials about carbon monoxide and states that HUD is developing additional materials. Additional information is in this LeadingAge [article](#).

New Bills on Fire Safety in HUD Buildings. Representative Ritchie Torres (D-NY) has introduced legislation to require HUD-assisted owners and public housing authorities to certify to HUD monthly that all doors that provide access to stairwells are self-closing and are maintained. The bill, [HR 6529](#), would also require HUD to include the existence and self-closure of doors in its inspections. Representative Torres has also introduced a bill to require HUD-assisted owners and public housing authorities to install temperature sensors on each floor. According to the bill, [HR 6528](#), these sensors must include an internet-capable temperature reporting device able to track the ambient air temperature. This bill would also authorize "such sums as may be necessary" to carry out the bill; HR 6529 as drafted does not include any funding to carry out its goals. Congressman Torres and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) [announced plans](#) to introduce such bills after a recent fire in the Bronx where 17 people died of smoke inhalation.

HUD Profiles Newest Section 202 Awardees. HUD has produced [profiles](#) of the latest round of organizations to receive awards to build and operate new Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly

Housing. By law, awardees must be nonprofit organizations and the Section 202-funded affordable housing communities must serve older adults 62+ with very low incomes (that is, incomes less than 50% of the area median income) and meet a long list of other requirements, including aging in community supports and strategies. The newest Section 202 awardees were announced in September 2021. LeadingAge's top housing policy priority is to expand the supply of affordable senior housing. Congress is currently negotiating a final fiscal year 2022 HUD spending bill. The House and Senate bills include dramatically different funding levels for new Section 202 housing, \$205 million vs. \$44 million, respectively. Nonprofit providers and developers await HUD's next round of competition for new Section 202 funds, which is expected sometime in the next few months.

Rural Multifamily Update Presentation. On January 20, 2022, Rural Development Multifamily Housing leadership held a meeting providing a quarterly update to its external partners. The update included information about emergency management notifications, annual financial reports, preservation strategy for Section 515 portfolio, and other pertinent information and updates. The next partnership meeting tentatively scheduled for April 20, at 3pm ET. To receive direct announcements about that meeting, [join a mailing list to receive future updates via GovDelivery](#) from Rural Development Multifamily Housing. [Here's a copy of the presentation](#) from January 20.

HUD Fire Safety Webinar. On February 22, HUD's Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes is hosting a 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET webinar, Making Investments in Fire Safety a Top Priority, with a team of fire prevention specialists from the Johns Hopkins Center for Injury Research and Policy. Register [here for the webinar](#).

New Service Coordination Research. A new research brief from the LeadingAge LTSS Center @UMass Boston, *Enhancing Service Coordination in HUD-Assisted Senior Housing Communities: Lessons for Implementation*, looks at enhanced service coordination in federally-assisted housing. The brief describes efforts by housing organizations have moved beyond offering "basic service coordination" to a more proactive "enhanced service coordination" approach, which involves identifying resident needs, connecting residents with responsive services, and helping to ensure residents obtain and maintain needed supports. The brief describes how enhanced service coordination components include service coordinator availability and capacity, resident assessments, data utilization, partnerships organizational supports. Read the new research brief [here](#).

New Director for Interagency Homelessness Council. The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) Council approved Jeff Olivet as its new executive director. USICH is in the process of creating a new Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, which received more than 1500 comments last fall, including from LeadingAge. Nineteen federal agencies, including HUD, comprise the USICH. "Jeff brings more than two decades of experience in working to eradicate homelessness. His experience has spanned direct service as a street outreach worker and case manager to serving as CEO of the Center on Social Innovation to consulting both independently and as a founding member of Racial Equity Partners. Beyond what is reflected in his resume, Jeff also stood out among the highly competitive field of candidates we interviewed for his thoughtfulness in understanding and tackling the crisis of homelessness as a complex, multi-faceted issue—rooted in systemic racism and discrimination

against people with disabilities—requiring an interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach centered on advancing equity and justice,” HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge, the current chair of [USICH](#), said.

Medicare to Cover At-Home COVID Tests. People in either original Medicare or Medicare Advantage will be able to get over-the-counter COVID-19 tests at no cost starting in early spring. Under the new initiative, Medicare beneficiaries will be able to access up to eight over-the-counter COVID-19 tests per month for free. Tests will be available through eligible pharmacies and other participating entities. This is the first time that Medicare has covered an over-the-counter test at no cost to beneficiaries and follows January announcements that private insurance and Medicare programs must pay for monthly rapid tests. “This new initiative will enable payment from Medicare directly to participating pharmacies and other participating entities to allow Medicare beneficiaries to pick up tests at no cost. CMS anticipates that this option will be available to people with Medicare in the early spring,” the CMS announcement says. Read the full CMS statement [here](#).

Are we heading toward endemicity? Dr. Monica Gandhi thinks it is looking good for the US. England and Denmark have already moved to calling COVID an endemic. Read all her informative and mostly optimistic comments in this [article](#), summarizing our interview with her on our February 2 Update Call.

Reimagining Long-Term Care. To inform the evolving discussion and improve long-term care, [the entire February 2022 issue of the Journal of Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine](#) will be available and downloadable without cost throughout 2022. The February issue is devoted to evidence-based papers and recommendations to guide reimagination of the long-term care workforce, societal issues, models of care, financing, payment, regulation, and services. Check out the article co-written by Robyn Stone, LeadingAge’s Senior Vice President of Research and Co-Director of the LeadingAge LTSS Center @UMass Boston, “[The Inevitability of Reimagining Long-Term Care.](#)”

Member Solutions Savings. Finding quality services and solutions shouldn’t require that you spend precious time scouring the internet. That’s why we give members exclusive access to the [LeadingAge Member Solutions program](#). It’s full of innovative products and services that come with pre-negotiated savings and special terms. Learn more and take advantage of this valuable member benefit today.