

LPC Weekly Report

Friday, May 20 2022



Highlights for LPCs:

Save the Date: LPC May Member Network Call Our next Network call will be on **Thursday, May 26 at 1:00 PM ET**. **Please note the time adjustment for this month only. The topic of our meeting is behavioral and mental health interventions for older adults, and our panelists will be Kathleen Cameron, Senior Director of the National Center for Healthy Aging, Joel Miller, Vice Chair of the National Coalition of Mental Health and Aging, and Dr. Bill Mansbach, Founder and CEO of Counterpoint and the BCAT, research organizations that specialize in mental health in aging services. If you haven't already registered for the LPC Member Network calls, email Dee at dpekruhn@leadinage.org.

Ziegler/ NIC Analysis on LPC Pandemic Occupancy Trends. Today, Ziegler featured a co-authored [analysis](#) with the National Investment Center on occupancy trends in LPC and non-LPC organizations during the pandemic, from Q1 2020 to Q1 2022. Overall, LPCs maintained and regained occupancy at a higher rate than non-LPCs, recovering to 85.8% and 79.1%, respectively. Non-LPCs 'bounced back' at a faster rate than LPCs, at a rate of 3.9% to 1.2%, respectively. This was explained by three primary factors: 1) non-LPCs had a greater loss to recover from; 2) industry-wide, most recovery gains in occupancy were seen in nursing and assisted living, care settings that are proportionately larger in non-LPCs than LPCs; 3) demand for these higher care settings was driven by a 'post-pandemic' influx of persons requiring more acute care. Within the LPC category, entry-fee providers generally fared better in occupancy than rental-fee providers, ending Q1 2022 at 87.6% and 82.5% respectively. Unit mix was the reason given for this difference; entrance fee LPCs tended to have more IL units that, overall, had greater stability in occupancy than rental-fee LPC IL units had. Although none of the LPC and non-LPC occupancy segments analyzed have returned to pre-pandemic levels, proportionate demand recovery in all areas is promising and expected to continue. For greater detail, please review the NIC [report](#).

New [Provider Relief Fund page](#) on LeadingAge website. LeadingAge has co-located all articles, tools, letters and resources on Provider Relief Funds on a single web page to make it easier for members to find the key dates and information they need. Members can find a [link](#) to the page on the Coronavirus Resources page under Provider Resources in the left-hand column.

Another Batch of PRF Phase 4 Payments Distributed: Some members are reporting that they have received their long-awaited Phase 4 payments. We have seen no official confirmation from HRSA or HHS on how much was sent out or to how many providers but we know that prior to today, \$3B of the Phase 4 funds remained and roughly 6% of applications were still pending review. We will share additional information when we receive confirmation. In the meantime, members who have not yet received a Phase 4 payment should check their bank account to see if they were included in this latest distribution.

Financial resources for consumers in multiple languages. Limited English proficiency and lack of familiarity with the US financial system can make it hard to navigate the financial marketplace. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau released [consumer materials](#) suitable for sharing with residents/clients/consumers or staff in multiple languages this month. Some of the documents are targeted to older adults, including Money Smart for Older Adults; Placemats for use in meal programs; Before you Claim Social Security – calculator; and Reverse Mortgages, a Discussion Guide. All of these

particular documents are available in both English and Spanish. Other materials from CFPB are in Chinese, Haitian Creole, Tagalog, Korean, Vietnamese, Russian, and Arabic.

Grantmakers in Aging (GIA) webinar on empathy in delivery of telehealth. Grantmakers in Aging (GIA) invites all interested individuals to a free webinar on May 26 at 1:00 PM ET. “Conversations with GIA: Conveying Empathy from a Distance: Using E-empathy in Goals of Care Conversations” will feature details about a training program on conveying empathy while using telehealth. The training focuses on evidence based practices and patient feedback to provide health care professionals concrete skills and examples scenarios to build empathic, trusting relationships when communicating with seriously ill individuals via telehealth. For registration and more details, click [here](#)

U.S. News “Best of Senior Living” Report Now LIVE. On Monday, U.S. News and World Report published a "[Best of Senior Living](#)" report that lists and rates aging services providers in Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Care and Continuing Care Retirement Community categories. We wrote an [article](#) that reviews important components of that study, ranging from how the data is gathered, to the listings and ratings process, and shares the key fact that all providers - regardless of participation - will have webpages for their organization hosted with U.S. News. These webpages will lead the potential consumer either to a third-party consumer broker, or to the provider organization itself, depending on whether that provider participated in the report. All members are encouraged to seek out their webpages and check the accuracy of the information found there.

What the Research Says: Tenant Screening With Criminal Background Checks. This [piece](#) from Calvin Johnson, deputy assistant secretary for the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Monitoring discusses the use of criminal background checks during tenant screening processes. Information about past criminal history is not always an accurate predictor of housing success and, historically, criminal background checks conducted by housing providers disproportionately screen out people of color, he writes. Johnson notes that “predicting future criminal involvement is a complicated business. Even using the best assessment and screening tools that undergo regular validations and enhancements, predictions are often wrong.” Johnson highlights how refined screening tools can add context to an applicant’s record and ensure equitable access to housing and services. LeadingAge is preparing input to HUD as it undertakes an agency-wide, [Secretary-directed review](#) of programs to increase inclusivity of individuals with criminal histories.

COVID-19 Related Updates:

Public Health Emergency likely to continue beyond July 16. The current extension of the Public Health Emergency (PHE) is due to end on July 16. When it does end there are implications for Medicare, Medicaid and the CHIP program – for states, providers, and beneficiaries. However, HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra committed to giving states and others 60 days notice if the PHE is not going to be renewed. Since May 16 passed with no notice, it is reasonable to expect that it will be renewed once again.

Additional Free At-Home, Rapid COVID-19 Tests. The Biden Administration is announcing that www.COVIDTests.gov is now open for a third round of ordering. People who have difficulty accessing the internet or need additional support placing an order can call 1-800-232-0233 (TTY 1-888-720-7489) to get help in English, Spanish, and more than 150 other languages—8am to midnight ET, 7 days a week. For more information, people can visit: <https://www.covid.gov/tests/faq>.

Advocacy Updates and Hill News:

COVID-19 Funding Action Alert For Members. Congress Must Pass New COVID-19 Funding Now! With COVID-19 cases, test positivity rates, and hospitalizations again on the rise, the country is not past the pandemic. Now is the time to ask Congress to fully fund additional support for the nation's ongoing efforts to fight COVID-19—especially for older adults who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Experts are predicting new surges in the late Summer and Fall but additional funding is needed to make sure the country has enough vaccines, boosters, tests, and treatments to meet projected needs. We know the tools we need to confront COVID-19; Congress must act now so communities across the nation are prepared to deal with the coming surges.

We must ensure that test kits and testing locations remain available and accessible to everyone who needs them and that vaccines (including boosters) are readily available and robustly promoted. Treatments and therapeutics must also be easy to find and access, while research to find new tests, vaccines, and treatments continue. Please take two minutes to write to your members of Congress now and advocate for more COVID-19 relief. Link:

<https://www.votervoices.net/LeadingAge/campaigns/94910/respond> Thank you!

White House Announces Housing Supply Action Plan. On May 16, the White House announced a Housing Supply Action Plan, a mix of actions the Administration will take “immediately” on its own and policy changes and funding that need Congressional approval. All told, the White House says these efforts will help close the nation's housing supply shortfall in five years “starting with the creation and preservation of hundreds of thousands of affordable housing units in the next three years.” The housing shortfall drives inflation, maintains residential segregation, and burdens family budgets, the White House says. An article on the new Housing Supply Action Plan is [here](#).

Additional resources related to the National Academies Nursing Home Quality report. During the discussion on Monday's Coronavirus Update Call, David Grabowski shared two articles about the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine report on nursing home quality. The first is an [article](#) that appeared April 6 in STAT; this article describes the report and provides a high level summary of the recommendations. The second appeared in the New England Journal of Medicine on May 14: [Reforming Nursing Home Financing, Payment, and Oversight](#). (You'll need to create an account – it's free – to have access to the article.) The first point Grabowski and coauthors make in the NEJM article is that “we need a more robust, coordinated, and sustainable funding system for long-term care provided across a range of home and community based and congregate settings, including nursing homes.” David spoke today about the next steps, how the NASEM report intersects with the Administration's nursing home initiative, and how the media and public are reacting to the report. Above all, he emphasized that “the current way the US finances, delivers, and regulates care in nursing homes is ineffective, inefficient, inequitable, fragmented and unsustainable.”

Plans announced for capacity building center to help LTC providers care for people with behavioral health conditions. Today, HHS's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) published a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for a cooperative agreement to establish and run a national [Center of Excellence for Building Capacity in Nursing Facilities to Care for Residents with Behavioral Health Conditions](#). SAMHSA anticipates funding one center for three years, for approximately \$15 million (\$5 million per year). Responses are due June 20. Webinars and other additional information about what HHS is looking for are provided in the announcement. Eligible applicants include states, Indian Tribes, health facilities, programs operated by or in accordance with the Indian Health Service, or other public or private nonprofit entities.

New publications on support programs for caregivers of veterans. The Veteran’s Administration released two new publications about caregiver support programs. The first is the Program of General Caregiver Support Services, a clinical program that empowers caregivers by offering resources that sharpen their caregiving skills and support their personal growth, health, and well-being. The second is the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, that offers enhanced clinical support to family caregivers of eligible veterans who have a serious injury or illness and require in person personal care services. More information and links to the new publications are [here](#).

LTQA Briefing on Non-Medical Supplemental Benefits in MA. The Long-Term Care Quality Alliance hosted a webinar to share the ATI Advisory [insights](#) about the trends in non-medical health-related supplemental benefits and special supplemental benefits for the chronically ill (SSBCI) being offered by Medicare Advantage and Special Needs Plans. Roughly 24% of MA/SNP plans nationally are now offering these SSBCI benefits with the most commonly-offered benefits being in-home support services, food and produce, Meals (beyond a limited basis), non-medical transportation and pest control. LTQA also shared its [policy recommendations](#) which include seeking to expand eligibility criteria for these supplemental benefits to include individuals with functional limitations and social risk factors; implement requirements and incentives for plans to report on SSBCI utilization and fund a required evaluation of non-medical benefits looking at which benefits are being utilized and by whom, and the effect the benefits are having on enrollee outcomes and overall cost. The webinar participants also heard from several speakers and panelists, including Dr. Meena Seshamani, CMS Director of Medicare; and LeadingAge LTSS Center at UMASS Boston’s own, Mark Cohen.

News from LeadingAge:

Eight Steps to Achieving the Impossible. How do you tackle what may seem to others as impossible, daunting, and overwhelming? LeadingAge CAST’s Majd Alwan [shares his thoughts](#) on how LeadingAge members have persevered through challenges like the pandemic, the “great resignation,” and significant shortage of workers—and have achieved the impossible: kept residents safe, healthy, well taken care of, engaged, and happy leading their lives. [Read Majd’s message](#).

Webinar: Challenges for America’s Older Adults to “Age My Way” Join fellow leaders in the aging services field for an hour-long exploration of the two barriers facing older adults’ ability to “Age My Way”: lack of awareness of existing aging services and the crisis in access to care and support. [Join us to hear from experts](#) in home and community-based care, the aging services workforce, affordable housing, and federal policy—and to be part of our online discussion of the way forward. We are bringing dynamic, insightful solutions to the table – and we need to work together to generate the political will for change. [Join the conversation!](#)

CAST Updates Social Connectedness and Engagement Tech Tool. Tap even more products and case studies to help you choose the best engagement tech solutions for your organization. LeadingAge CAST has released updates to its Social Connectedness and Engagement Technology Selection Tool. The matrix and online selection tool now include updated information on 39 products. [Access these new products and seven new case studies](#).