



Highlights for LPCs:

LeadingAge's Workforce Now Advocacy Campaign Rolls Out. The [press release](#) announcing the launch of the Workforce Now Advocacy Campaign went out this afternoon. The release ties our rollout to today's White House American Rescue Plan Workforce Development Summit, with LeadingAge president and CEO Katie Smith Sloan calling on the Biden Administration and our country's elected leaders to make staffing in the aging services sector a top priority. Our campaign lays out the action needed from Congress and the Administration around issues older adults and their families face. "Too many older adults and their families face challenges in accessing essential care and services to remain independent, safe and healthy because of a lack of qualified workers. Without sufficient staff in nursing homes, hospices, life plan communities, home health agencies, affordable senior housing, and other community-based services, there is no care," said Katie Smith Sloan, president and CEO, [LeadingAge](#), the association of nonprofit providers of aging services. "We appreciate the Administration's commitment to workforce investments, and applaud the efforts to strengthen funding for vital home and community-based services. But our country must learn from past mistakes. Chronic underinvestment in and longstanding disregard for aging services—and primarily the valuable workers who are its core—created an opportunity for COVID to wreak havoc. That must not continue. We've got to repair, rebuild and reinvigorate this sector."

The strategic deployment of ARPA funds for states and local governments is a step worth celebrating but Congress and the Administration have their own work to do to ensure older adults are not left behind. Our new advocacy campaign, Aging Services Workforce Now, lays out action needed around the issues older adults and their families face."

NIC Intra-Quarterly Occupancy and Market Fundamentals Reports: Good News. The National Investment Center released its latest Intra-Quarterly [Report](#) today, and overall occupancy for both IL and AL improved this quarter over last, to 83.9% and 78.8% respectively. Additionally, across all senior housing settings surveyed, all-occupancy improved to 81.4% this quarter, up from 78% in June 2021. Generally speaking, the improvements in occupancy this quarter, and year over year, were attributed to the fact that overall demand for IL and AL residences has outpaced the release of new available units in the marketplaces surveyed. The slowdown of 'new inventory' of residences was due to both construction delays and limited access to debt financing to fund new construction projects during the pandemic. Of the selected markets surveyed, Sacramento, CA showed the greatest improvement in total IL occupancy, while Denver, CO showed the greatest quarterly decline. Similarly, Miami, FL showed the greatest improvement in total AL occupancy, while Seattle, WA showed the greatest decline. While the overall recovery trends are very promising, overall IL and AL occupancy rates were 5.7 and 5.9 percentage points below the reported levels in March 2020, the "pre-pandemic" levels.

In a Complimentary Market Fundamentals [Report](#), NIC MAP Vision data also showed a promising improvement in nursing home occupancy over last quarter. Specifically, "the occupancy rate for SNF providers grew to 78.5% in Q2, up from 77.6% in Q1 and an improvement of 90 basis points. Notably, and keeping with trends in our sector, annual inventory of SNF residences declined year over year, by - 0.7% since June 2021. AL had the highest annual percentage rent growth, at 4.6%, followed by IL at 3.0% and SNF by 2.6%."

Another Batch of Phase 4 Provider Relief Funds Distributed. Last week, 151 providers received deposits of their Phase 4 PRF payment. These providers received a total of \$142 million. HRSA indicates it is working to finish processing the remaining 2% of Phase 4 applications as soon as possible and that about \$3B of the Phase 4 pot remains available for that purpose.

Reminder - HRSA hosting PRF Reporting Webinars – July 12 & 13. HRSA will host technical assistance webinars for new and returning reporting entities. Providers must register to attend and can do so using the links below:

- [New Reporting Entities: PRF Reporting Requirements Introduction](#): July 12, 2022, 3 – 4pm ET.
- [Information for Returning Reporters](#): July 13, 2022, 3 – 4pm ET.

New PRF Reporting Resources: Provider Relief Fund Reporting Period 3 opened on July 1 and HRSA has updated two key documents that assist providers in completing this reporting. The updated documents include:

- [PRF Reporting Portal User's Guide \(June 30, 2022\)](#).
- [Latest PRF FAQs](#).

LTQA Webinar: A Fresh Look at Caregiving: Direct Care Workforce Solutions. Join the Long-Term Quality Alliance (LTQA) on July 26, 2022, from 2-3 pm ET for an interactive webinar, “A Fresh Look at Caregiving: Direct Care Workforce Solutions.” The webinar will address how the long-term care sector is facing a crisis in the supply of direct care workers, worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, how increased need and demand for services in the home is fueling a workforce shortage, which is having a direct effect on the ability of those in need to access services and for organizations to deliver needed care and support. There will be an opportunity to address a need to think differently about the compensation, skills development, mobility, and value placed on this workforce, which provides critical services to a diverse and complex population. Speakers include: Carol Raphael (Manatt), Carrie Amero (AARP), Robyn Stone (LeadingAge), and Joe MacBeth (NADSP). Registration is available [here](#).

July 19 National Stakeholder Call with CMS Administrator. On this July 19, 1 – 2pm ET call, CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure, CMS Principal Deputy Administrator and Chief Operating Officer Jon Blum, and other members of the CMS leadership team will provide an update on “CMS’ recent accomplishments and how [its] cross-cutting initiatives are advancing CMS’ Strategic Plan.” This call will provide an opportunity to learn more about how stakeholders can partner with CMS to help implement its Strategic Plan and key initiatives. RSVP [here](#).

USC study reveals that everyday stressors, traumatic events, job strain & discrimination prematurely weaken immune cells, potentially increasing a person’s risk of disease. “As the world’s population of older adults increases, understanding disparities in age-related health is essential. Age-related changes in the immune system play a critical role in declining health,” said lead study author Eric Klopach, a postdoctoral scholar in the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology. Improving diet and exercise behaviors in older adults may help offset the immune aging associated with stress. Review the study and associated article [here](#) and [here](#).

COVID-19 Related Updates:

New PHI Report Addresses State Hazard Pay and Sick Leave Policies for Direct Care Workers During COVID-19. Today, PHI released a new research report, “[Essential Support: State Hazard Pay and Sick Leave Policies for Direct Care Workers During COVID-19](#).” This report details findings from a recent study on hazard pay and paid sick leave policies enacted across all 50 states and Washington, D.C., from March 2020 to August 2021 (the first 18 months of the COVID-19 pandemic). The purpose of the study was to document how states responded to the challenges faced by direct care workers and other

essential workers during one of the most devastating health crises in recent history, and to generate lessons for the future. As well as developing a comprehensive catalogue of relevant state policies, PHI explored their impact on the direct care workforce through a modest set of quantitative analyses using publicly available data from the Current Population Survey. Overall, this review found that:

- 17 states implemented at least one hazard pay policy and four states implemented a new paid sick leave policy during the study period.
- Of the 14 states that already had an existing paid sick leave policy in place, four made amendments or issued supplementary policies.
- Just 10 states implemented both types of policies: California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington State.

Read the full report [here](#).

FDA Authorizes Pharmacists to Prescribe PAXLOVID with Certain Limits: The FDA issued an [emergency use authorization \(EUA\) for PAXLOVID \(nirmatrelvir co-packaged with ritonavir\)](#) for the treatment of mild-to-moderate COVID-19 in certain adults and pediatric patients at high risk for progression to severe COVID-19, including hospitalization or death. On July 6, the [FDA revised the EUA](#) to let pharmacists prescribe and dispense PAXLOVID to eligible patients without seeing a doctor or other clinician.

Global COVID-19 Tracker updated as of July 14: This [tracker](#) provides the cumulative number of confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths, as well as the rate of daily COVID-19 cases and deaths by country, income, region, and globally.

Advocacy Updates and Hill News:

White House Summit on the American Rescue Plan: More than \$40 Billion Committed to Strengthening Our Workforce. On Wednesday, July 13, 2022, LeadingAge participated virtually in the “White House Summit on the American Rescue Plan and the Workforce” hosted by Vice President Kamala Harris. The event, co-hosted by the White House American Rescue Plan Implementation Team and the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, featured state and local leaders from across the country and announced how over \$40 Billion in American Rescue Plan (ARP) fund investments have been committed to strengthening our workforce. The Summit highlighted ARP investments across the areas of “care and public health, expanding access to the workforce for underserved populations and expanding the workforce.” A [White House Fact Sheet](#) provides the official Summit highlights and an overview of the initiatives that panelist highlighted during their remarks. And [here](#) is an article on the White House Summit.

Impact of Institutional Housing Investors Focus of Hearing. Today, the House Committee on Ways and Means held a hearing, “Nowhere to Live: Profits, Disinvestment, and The American Housing Crisis.” The wide-ranging hearing included a deep-dive into the impacts of institutional investors in single family homes (one to four unit homes). Institutional single family investors purchase primarily in moderate income, homeownership communities of color. These purchases crowd out homeownership, increase evictions, drive gentrification and displacement, and reduce affordability, one witness testified. An article on the hearing is [here](#).

American College of Physicians Recommends LTC Financing Reform! In a position paper published in the [Annals of Internal Medicine](#), Ryan Crowley, senior associate for health policy at the ACP described the aging of the population, the need for long-term services and supports (LTSS) and called for financing reform to support the increased number of people who will be needing help. “Along with demand,” he wrote, “the cost for LTSS is expected to increase considerably over the coming decades, but policymakers have struggled to develop ways to ensure this need is met.” He mentions workforce challenges as a top concern. This article is especially notable because it was not written by experts steeped in long-term care, but rather put out by a physicians’ group.

Action Needed Now to Shore Up Aging Services Workforce: Findings from LeadingAge Snap Poll. The workforce situation for aging services providers across the continuum is not improving. This was the top finding in a recent snap poll of LeadingAge members. High level takeaways from the snap poll, conducted late June 2022, include: more than 60% of respondents reported that their workforce difficulties remain; the staffing shortage is severe in multiple settings across the continuum; the pipeline for potential workers has not gotten stronger as people leave the field; nursing positions are especially difficult to fill; almost all nursing homes count on agency staff to cover some percentage of shifts but one out of ten respondents rely on temporary staff for nearly half of all shifts; and, if staff leave, the most commonly cited reasons are seeking better pay or burnout. Read more about the snap poll results and policy opportunities to address the aging services workforce shortage [here](#).

The Biden administration is introducing a first-ever Airline Passengers with Disabilities “bill of rights” aimed at helping ensure people with disabilities have a smoother experience when flying. The 16-page [document](#) issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation this month is described as an “easy-to-use summary of the fundamental rights of air travelers with disabilities under the Air Carrier Access Act.” It is designed to “empower air travelers with disabilities to understand and assert their rights and help ensure that U.S. and foreign air carriers and their contractors uphold those rights,” the Transportation Department said.

Senate to Move on Appropriations. Senate Democrats are planning to release FY23 appropriations bills by the end of July, regardless of whether these bills are the result of bi-partisan negotiations. This would be a break from the Senate’s FY22 process when Democrats and Republicans worked together to develop the Senate FY22 bills before they were released. The House is expected to vote its HUD FY23 appropriations bill, as part of a six-bill package, the week of July 18. Aging services stakeholders are strongly encouraged [to urge their Senators and Representatives to support the strongest possible FY23 HUD funding](#) bill and, in particular, to expand funding to expand the supply of affordable senior housing and other LeadingAge priorities.

News from LeadingAge:

Three Can’t-Miss Education Opportunities. LeadingAge’s Learning Hub has several new learning events related to timely topics in our sector:

- **Telehealth in Practice: Driving Efficiencies & Improving Outcomes** - This webinar on Thursday, July 21 at 2:00 p.m. ET will focus on the application of Telehealth/RPM in different care settings. [Join us to learn from two provider use cases](#).
- **PDPM, OBRA, and Case-Mix: Considerations for Using the MDS** - This webinar on Wednesday, July 27 at 2:00 p.m. ET offers skilled nursing providers valuable insights and best practices for the RAI/MDS process and workflow. [Register today](#).
- **RoPs Compliance Update** - This virtual update on August 2 at 2:00 p.m. ET will help nursing home providers prepare to meet Requirements of Participation (RoPs) compliance requirements ahead of the October implementation date. Free to LeadingAge members, [join the LeadingAge policy experts for this live update](#) (will not be recorded).