

PACE Organization Update

June 4, 2021



Upcoming 3:30 Update Calls: Using everything we learned during COVID and helping staff and residents/consumers live their best lives. Join our Coronavirus Update Calls next week on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday! All calls are at 3:30 PM ET. On Monday, June 7, we'll talk with Terry Spitznagel, Chief Growth Officer for United Church Homes, about their experiences with providing housing plus services...and opportunities to expand from lessons learned from the pandemic. On Wednesday, June 9, Tyler Vanderweele, founder and leader of the Human Flourishing Program at the Harvard Chan School of Public Health will be with us to talk about lessons from his Center's research on using activity to make lives better. If you haven't signed up yet, you can join the call by registering here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/2218416852977539339>

CMS Bulletin on American Rescue Plan and Medicaid: On June 3, CMS issued a bulletin for state Medicaid agencies addressing the changes ARP made to the Medicaid program. Specific provisions covered include coverage of COVID-19 vaccination in Medicaid, the enhanced FMAP for HCBS, and how/why certain federal relief (e.g., the stimulus checks, unemployment insurance, certain tax credits) do not count against a person's financial eligibility for Medicaid. See the bulletin here: <https://www.medicaid.gov/federal-policy-guidance/downloads/cib060321.pdf>

Congress is Back Next Week: Congress will be back in DC this week following a Memorial Day recess/district work period. We expect to learn more about infrastructure negotiations (more on that next) next week. Regardless of district or in-DC work periods, most Congressional offices are taking meetings with constituents and stakeholder groups by Zoom/remotely. If you want to get in front of your member(s) of Congress, please let us know and we can help facilitate that.

Infrastructure Negotiations Update: For much of this week, infrastructure legislation negotiations between the President and the lead Senate Republican negotiator, Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), took center stage. The two met earlier this week at the White House and spoke by phone on June 4. The Senate Republicans are reportedly considered a counteroffer with additional funding, while the President suggested alternative corporate tax measures that do not raise current rates. It is unclear whether a compromise will be reached. Of key interest to PACE organizations is whether all or part of the Biden-proposed \$400 billion for HCBS will be included. Notably, Sen. Capito has not included HCBS in the publicly available counteroffers.

President's Budget Proposal: On May 28, the White House issued its proposed budget for FY 2022. The President normally issues a budget proposal, and then Congress crafts its own budget that often looks different from what the White House proposes, so this document should not be taken as final. The proposal includes support for the American Jobs Plan (which includes \$400 billion for HCBS), and provides some additional detail on how the White House conjectures that money would go to states—\$53 billion in 2022 and \$265 billion through 2026. The outcome of the above-mentioned infrastructure negotiations will have a major impact on these proposed funds. The budget document also proposes increased funding for the health workforce, Older Americans Act programs, and much more. Secretary

Becerra will testify before the Senate Appropriations committee on June 9 about the budget and HHS activity in general.

Read more about the budget proposal here: <https://leadingage.org/legislation/%E2%80%9Cquick-take%E2%80%9D-president%E2%80%99s-health-budget>. Tune into the Becerra hearing here: <https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/hearings/hearing-on-the-presidents-fiscal-year-2022-budget-request-for-the-united-states-department-of-health-and-human-services>

CMS Administrator Update: The Senate confirmed the nomination of Chiquita Brooks-LaSure to be CMS Administrator.

Introduction of the Americans Giving Care to Elders (AGE) Act: On June 3, Rep. Cindy Axne (IA-03), Rep. Jan Schakowsky (IL-09), and Rep. David McKinley (WV-01) unveiled bipartisan legislation that supports Americans who are caring for their older family members by offering tax credits to cover costs of elder care. Approximately one-third of caregivers leave the workforce entirely to provide care for someone in their life. The legislation could help offset expenses related to facilitating care in the community. See more here: <https://axne.house.gov/media/press-releases/axne-schakowsky-and-mckinley-unveils-bipartisan-tax-credit-support>

Updates to CDC guidance: CDC updated 2 pieces of guidance on June 2:

- Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-hospitalized-patients.html>
- Return to Work Criteria for Healthcare Personnel. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html>

The major recommendations continues to be utilizing a symptom-based strategy (or time-based for asymptomatic cases) for determining when to discontinue transmission-based precautions or allow healthcare personnel to return to work. However, if you choose to use a test-based strategy (for example, you are concerned that someone might still be infectious beyond 20 days), here's what you need:

- It has been more than 24 hours since the last fever, without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- Symptoms have improved.
- 2 consecutive negative nucleic acid amplification tests (NAATs) spaced at least 24 hours apart.

The guidance also provides more information on who might be severely immunocompromised, adding to this category individuals who have received hematopoietic stem cell or solid organ transplants, individuals on immunosuppressive drugs to suppress rejection of transplanted organs or to treat rheumatologic conditions, and those who are on prednisone at >20 mg/day for more than 14 days

State by State Face Mask Mandates: The latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) allows people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to forgo masks in most public settings, indoors and out. Several States have modified their masks mandates to align with the federal guidelines while others have relaxed rules in most settings. Fifteen state governments require people to wear face coverings in most indoor public settings to curb the spread of COVID-19. The District of Columbia and Puerto Rico also have mask orders in place. To 4 date, 24 states that had mask orders covering the general public have mostly lifted them. Eleven states did not impose mask mandates at any point during the pandemic. Here is where each state stands on the use of face masks, as of June 2, 2021: <https://leadingage.org/regulation/state-state-face-mask-mandates>

State by State COVID-19 Vaccine Incentives: The National Governors Association updated their information on COVID-19 vaccine incentives used by each state. This memo includes information on state- and city-led incentives. See here: <https://www.nga.org/center/publications/covid-19-vaccine-incentives/>

Commonwealth Fund Brief on Framework for Considering Future of COVID-19 Medicare Waivers: The Commonwealth Fund put out a new issue brief that looks at the over 200 waivers issued during the COVID-19 PHE and how the Biden Administration might frame their thinking about which to keep in place. The brief, including an appendix of which waivers CMS can act on alone and which need Congressional approval, can be found here: <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/issue-briefs/2021/may/which-medicare-changes-should-continue-beyond-covid-19-pandemic>

Free Access to Providers! 2021 Collaborative Care & Health IT Innovations Summit: As members of the collaborative care community, we all know how important it is for long-term and acute care providers to stay current with the very latest technology and innovations that can improve care, reduce costs, and lead to better health outcomes for older adults. But, after a year of struggling with COVID, many of you have shared that your budgets just won't allow you to attend this year's Collaborative Care & Health IT Innovations Summit. That's why LeadingAge is opening up the June 8-10 event by offering free registration to all care providers across the collaborative care continuum. Register here: <https://cvent.me/PWdvOV?RefId=Register>

How Are You Supporting Your Team's Emotional Wellbeing? The last year has taken a toll on your team members, elders, and their families. Are you doing all you can to support their mental health and emotional wellbeing? Join LeadingAge's new virtual shared learning series for expert-led instruction to help you build and sustain strategies for supporting your community's mental health. Led by Kelly O'Shea Carney, PhD, ABPP and LeadingAge's Kirsten Jacobs, the series will explore why emotional wellbeing should be a top concern for your organization. Participation is limited. Learn more and register today: <https://leadingage.org/emotional-wellbeing>

- May 21: <https://leadingage.org/sites/default/files/PACEupdate52121.pdf>
- May 14: <https://leadingage.org/sites/default/files/PACEupdate51421.pdf>
- May 7: <https://leadingage.org/sites/default/files/PACEupdate5721.pdf>
- April 30: <https://leadingage.org/sites/default/files/PACEupdate43021.pdf>
- April 23: <https://leadingage.org/sites/default/files/PACEupdate42321.pdf>
- April 16: <https://leadingage.org/sites/default/files/PACEupdate41621.pdf>
- April 9: <https://leadingage.org/sites/default/files/PACEupdate4921.pdf>
- April 2: <https://leadingage.org/sites/default/files/PACEupdate4221.pdf>
- March 26: <https://leadingage.org/sites/default/files/PACEupdate32621.pdf>