

Medicaid HCBS and PACE Weekly: Recap of Leading Age Updates

September 23, 2022

Coronavirus Update Calls September 26 and 28. Many COVID-positive older adults who would have benefited from palliative care or hospice were not able to receive these key services. On **Monday, September 26, 3:30pm ET, Kerry Hamilton, Chief Innovation Officer, Ohio's Hospice**, will share the results of his organization's study on older adults who missed these end-of-life services and how this impacts long-term services and supports. On **Wednesday, September 28, 3:30pm ET**, we will be joined by **Dr. Pam Davis**, whose research at **Case Western University** has shown that older adults who recovered from COVID-19 now have a higher risk of an Alzheimer's diagnosis. Dr. Davis will provide insights from her research and answer member questions on how the findings can impact care for older adults. If you haven't registered for LeadingAge Update Calls, [you can do so here](#). You can also find previous call recordings [here](#). Note that to access recordings of the calls you need a LeadingAge password. Any staff member of any LeadingAge member organization can set up a password to access previous calls and other "members only" content.

CMS Medicaid Continuous Enrollment Unwinding Series. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is hosting the fifth webinar in the monthly partner education series on Medicaid and CHIP Continuous Enrollment Unwinding Wednesday, September 28, 2022 at 12:00-1:00 PM ET. This month's webinar will highlight the importance of outreach to the Latino community and immigrant families in order to prevent large coverage losses when the public health emergency ends. Featured speakers will include officials from the CMS Office of Minority Health and a guest presentation from UnidosUS. Topics discussed during this month's webinar will include:

- Potential impact that Unwinding may have on the Latino community
- Strategies and best practices on how partners are working to educate individuals and families about Medicaid and CHIP Continuous Enrollment Unwinding
- CMS resources available in additional languages

[Register here.](#)

Flu Vaccines for 65+: For the 2022-2023 flu season, CDC is recommending individuals aged 65 years and older receive different vaccines than the rest of the population. CDC recommends higher dose vaccines or adjuvanted vaccines over standard vaccines based on studies that suggested these vaccines are more effective than standard vaccines in individuals aged 65 years and older. CDC recommends that individuals aged 65 years and older should not get a nasal spray flu vaccine. Read more about these recommendations [here](#).

HRSA Announces Geriatric Academic Career Awards (GACA). The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) released its funding [announcement](#) for the Geriatric Academic Career Awards. The purpose of the GACA program is to support the career development of junior faculty as academic geriatricians or academic geriatrics specialists to provide health care for older adults. Applications are open until November 3, 2022. The award amount for each candidate would be up to \$81,746, per year

and there will be 26 awards for the period July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2027. The GACA program supports the career development of junior faculty as academic geriatricians or academic geriatrics specialists and is open to accredited health professions schools or graduate programs approved by the Secretary including:

- schools of allopathic medicine, osteopathic medicine, nursing, dentistry, pharmacy, allied health, physician assistant programs, chiropractic, podiatric medicine, optometry, public health, and veterinary medicine;
- accredited graduate programs in health administration and behavioral health and mental health practice including clinical psychology, clinical social work, professional counseling, and marriage and family therapy;
- Tribes and tribal organizations are eligible if they otherwise meet the eligibility requirements.

LeadingAge Voting Resources. September 20 was National Voter Registration Day, an important reminder that having a plan to vote is really important for this upcoming election. Coming out of the pandemic, many states are once again changing the way citizens can vote in their communities. Some are expanding opportunities to vote and unfortunately some states are limiting options. LeadingAge has been passionate about ensuring that older adults have access to voting and the ability to register to vote. We have created an easy to use website, www.leadingage.org/votingplan that will allow anyone to look up their registration status, register to vote, request a mail-in ballot, find their polling place and even look up local candidates. Please share this tool with members and help ensure that everyone has a plan for how they are going to vote this election.

ACL Releases National Family Caregiving Strategy. On September 21, ACL released the [2022 National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers](#), which was developed jointly by the RAISE Family Caregivers and the Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren advisory councils. LeadingAge's LTSS Center was involved in developing and providing technical and practical assistance for the strategy. The strategy is open for comments starting October 1 and LeadingAge will be writing an article on its contents in the coming days.

Kaiser Health News Highlights Effects of Pollution on Risk of Dementia. Judith Graham [explores](#) the connection between pollution and the risks of developing dementia. Highlighting a growing body of research, KHN discusses how air pollution affects older adult's brain. One study found in areas with improved air quality, the rate of cognitive decline was delayed by up to 1.6 years. Experts provide tips for those concerned with air quality issues including taking early morning walks when ozone levels are higher which means more protection and for individuals in the American west exposed to wildfires consider wearing a KN95 mask on days when fires affect air quality.

Study Finds Adult Day Closures Linked to Participants' Cognitive Decline. A study [published](#) in the American Journal of Public Health found that pandemic-related closures of adult day services left older adults and caregivers without critical supports and services. Unlike childcare centers, which were deemed essential during the pandemic, adult day centers were not treated the same way. However, the magnitude of the impact of adult day closures on well-being, particularly among members of racial/ethnic minority groups, has yet to be measured with any form of "big data" because large-scale, nationally representative data sets consisting of participant-level information and outcomes associated with adult day center participation do not yet exist. Study authors call on adult day centers to link

rigorous collection of racial and ethnic data to quality measures of access to equitable “age-friendly” care as a means of better supporting diverse community-dwelling older adults beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

KFF Analysis Finds MA Beneficiaries Receive Fewer PAC Services. The Kaiser Family Foundation [released](#) a new literature review of 62 studies which found Medicare Advantage plan enrollees used post-acute care (PAC) less than people with traditional Medicare. While the review could not determine if the lower PAC use was associated with better or worse outcomes, authors theorized that prior authorization denials or better coordination of care could lead to lower PAC use in MA beneficiaries. The review also found that MA beneficiaries were more likely to access skilled nursing homes and home health agencies with lower quality ratings than traditional Medicare beneficiaries.

Ladders and Lattices: Grow the Aging Services Workforce

We’re one week away from our virtual event with aging services thought leaders discussing the importance of aging services providers to develop career ladders and lattices for their workforce. Join us Wednesday, September 28 at 1 p.m. ET. As the sector struggles with a workforce crisis, they urge a focus on practical ways to build formal advancement opportunities and support the personal and professional goals of individual staff members. [Register here.](#)

Call for Sessions Now Open: 2023 LeadingAge Annual Meeting + EXPO

Do you want to drive the conversation forward and contribute to progress in aging services? The sector's most prominent event is coming to Chicago, IL from November 5-8, 2023. Start planning your proposals to present at the 2023 LeadingAge Annual Meeting + EXPO. Session proposals must be submitted by December 5, 2022. [Learn more and submit proposals here.](#)