



## Nursing Home Weekly: Recap of LeadingAge Updates

September 30, 2022

**Coronavirus Update Calls October 3 and 5. All calls are at 3:30 PM.** The aging services direct care workforce is evolving and we all wish we had a crystal ball to see what the future holds and how organizations can adapt to meet the changing demographics of our workforce. On **Monday, October 3, Dr. Kezia Scales, Senior Director of Policy Research, PHI**, will share the results of [PHI's annual report](#) on direct care workers and will talk about job quality challenges and projected openings, and provide overviews of different segments of the direct care workforce. On **Wednesday, October 5**, we will be joined by **Richard Quartarone**, a health communicator in the Immunization Services Division at the CDC, to discuss the new bivalent vaccines, the importance of talking about all vaccines, and how LeadingAge providers can prepare for the upcoming flu season and also stay vigilant with COVID-19. 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.

**Older Adults in Florida Need Our Help.** Hurricane Ian continues to cause damage, severe flooding, and critical situations for LeadingAge member communities as it blows through Florida, now a tropical storm building momentum again.

*"To our members in Florida: We're here for you. We know the impact of disasters can be far-reaching and long-lasting, and your LeadingAge community will support you in every way possible as many older adults and families in the communities you serve rely on your care."*

- Katie Smith Sloan, LeadingAge president and CEO

Our thoughts are also with members up the coast as we watch the storm path and hope there is no further impact. [Please consider a donation to the LeadingAge Disaster Relief Fund](#), as 100% of all donations will go directly to members and their staff. The need for food, water, and other supplies is immense and is likely to worsen in the coming days.

**November 9, 2:00 PM ET – SAVE THE DATE for a Webinar on the new MDS draft.** LeadingAge will offer a webinar on the new MDS draft which was released on September 1, with an effective date of October 1, 2023. Additional information will be available soon.

**Flu Vaccination Reporting.** The 2022/2023 Flu Season officially (for CMS) begins October 1. This year, nursing homes will be reporting Influenza Vaccination Coverage Among Healthcare Personnel through NHSN for the SNF QRP program. The specifications of the measure require nursing homes to make a least one report on flu vaccination coverage of all staff who worked at least one day during the flu season (October 1 – March 31) by the reporting deadline May 15. In order to qualify for the SNF QRP, data must be reported through the Healthcare Personnel Safety Component. Reporting through the Long-Term Care Facility component will not qualify for SNF QRP. NHSN hosted a webinar on this

reporting on September 27 and will repeat the webinar on October 19. Register [here](#). We are working to obtain more information on this reporting and any associated requirements from CMS.

**MedPAC Commissioners Discuss Nursing Home Staffing Ratios.** MedPAC held its October public meeting and the agenda included a discussion on nursing facility staffing. MedPAC staff presented these [background slides](#), including a data analysis pulled from 2019-2021 PBJ submissions. The analysis showed that agency use increased and CNA care decreased since 2019. In the discussion that followed, some Commissioners pointed to the need for immigration reform; others suggested staffing should be a higher weighted equation in the Five Star; and the topic of payment adequacy from Medicare to Medicaid was mentioned. MedPAC will analyze the findings and make recommendations in the near future.

**Government Shutdown Likely to be Averted. Senate Sends Short Term Funding Bill to House.** On September 29, the Senate voted 72 – 25 to pass a short-term funding bill or Continuing Resolution (CR) to keep federally appropriated programs funded at FY22 levels absent enactment of any of the FY23 appropriations bills. The House is expected to pass the CR and President Biden is expected to sign it before midnight September 30 to avoid a government shutdown. The CR would keep federal programs funded at FY22 levels until December 16, several weeks into FY23, which begins October 1. The CR also includes \$12 billion for Ukraine but does not include any of the \$22.4 billion requested by the Biden Administration to meet COVID-related short-term domestic needs, including testing, to accelerate the research and development of next-generation vaccines and therapeutics, to prepare for future variants,

**Nursing Homes Frequently Cited F Tags - Top 10.** LeadingAge has tabulated the frequently cited F Tags for calendar year 2022, by state. In this report, each state has its top 10 F tags listed. Please click on the link [here](#) to see your state. The highlighted F tags are specific to your state and do not compare with the top 10 F tags in calendar year 2022 nationally. Email [jfinck-boyle@leadingage.org](mailto:jfinck-boyle@leadingage.org) or [jevigor@leadingage.org](mailto:jevigor@leadingage.org) for follow up or any questions.

**CDC Updates Recommendations for Healthcare Settings, Including Nursing Homes.** The healthcare setting recommendations on which we have waited nearly 6 months were released September 23. CMS moved quickly to update sub-regulatory guidance (testing and visitation) to reflect the changes. Updates include changes to screening, screening testing, source control, quarantine and work restriction, and designated COVID units. Most notably, recommendations for infection control and mitigation measures are no longer based on vaccination status. This means that the status of being “up to date” with COVID-19 vaccination no longer impacts things like testing and quarantine, though we urge members to continue working to keep residents and staff up to date to prevent severe illness, hospitalization, death, and further updates to the existing CMS vaccine mandate. Access the full CDC recommendations [here](#). Read the LeadingAge highlights [here](#).

**CMS Announces Lower 2023 Medicare Premiums and Deductibles.** On September 27 the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services released a [Fact Sheet](#) with 2023 premiums, deductibles, and coinsurance amounts for Medicare Part A and Part B, among other information.

- **Medicare Part B Premiums/Deductibles:** The standard monthly premium for Medicare Part B enrollees will be \$164.90 for 2023, a decrease of \$5.20 from \$170.10 in 2022. The annual

deductible for all Medicare Part B beneficiaries is \$226 in 2023, a decrease of \$7 from the annual deductible of \$233 in 2022.

- **Medicare Part A Premiums/Deductibles:** The Medicare Part A inpatient hospital deductible that beneficiaries pay if admitted to the hospital will be \$1,600 in 2023, an increase of \$44 from \$1,556 in 2022. In 2023, beneficiaries must pay a coinsurance amount of \$400 per day for the 61st through 90th day of a hospitalization (\$389 in 2022) in a benefit period and \$800 per day for lifetime reserve days (\$778 in 2022). For beneficiaries in skilled nursing facilities, the daily coinsurance for days 21 through 100 of extended care services in a benefit period will be \$200.00 in 2023 (\$194.50 in 2022).

See the CMS [Fact Sheet](#) for additional information, including income-based adjustments to Part B premiums and the Medicare Part D income-related monthly adjustment amounts.

**CLA Survey on Budgeting in Volatile Times.** Our partners at CLA are in the process of gathering data on how organizations are budgeting in the COVID-era, especially in response to the pressures of changing governmental regulations and of inflation. If you wish to participate, you can do so [here](#), and you will receive a full, complimentary report of the findings.

**Ziegler's CFO Hotline: Resident Monthly Fee Increases.** Every year, Ziegler surveys nearly 300 CFOs of senior living organizations on the ever-tumultuous topic of resident monthly fee increases. This year's [report](#) revealed an average 2023 projected fee increase of 5.38%, up from an average 4.70% in 2022. (The maximum reported projected increase was a jaw-dropping 22.0%.) Next year, operators in the southern region of the U.S. reported the highest-average increase (6.15%) while the northeast reported the lowest (4.40%.) Type C and B contracts saw the highest-reported projected increases (5.81% and 5.39% respectively.) For all contract types, and for Independent Living, this will be the highest-average increase within the last 5 and within the last 12 years, respectively. The two top primary drivers of these increases were, not surprisingly, wages/ labor costs, and inflation. Given the magnitude of this coming year's fee increase, the majority of CFOs were giving serious thought to also installing a mid-year fee adjustment in 2023.

**Research from the LeadingAge LTSS Center @UMass Boston and Weill Cornell Medicine Links Job Satisfaction and Nursing Home Turnover Intent.** A new article in [Geriatric Nursing](#) by Verena R. Cimarolli, Natasha S. Bryant, and Robyn Stone, researchers at the LeadingAge LTSS Center @UMass Boston, and Francesca Falzarano, a researcher at Weill Cornell Medicine's Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine, suggests that the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on direct care professionals increased the high turnover and staff shortages in nursing homes that were already prevalent before the pandemic. The authors sought to identify factors associated with intent to remain on the job among direct care professionals in nursing homes. They concluded that "the only factor directly associated with intent to remain was higher job satisfaction. There were no significant direct associations between intent to remain and COVID-19-related work stress, quality of communication, and preparedness." The level of job satisfaction among direct care professionals in the study sample was driven by how well their organizations communicated with them and how well prepared they felt to care for residents during COVID-19, write the authors. Read the full text of "[Factors Associated with Nursing Home Direct Care Professionals' Turnover Intent During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)" which is offered free of charge through October 30, and can be accessed [here](#).

**Kaiser Health News Holding Event on COVID and Older Adults:** Kaiser Health News in partnership with the John A Hartford Foundation is hosting a web event entitled "The Long Shadow of Covid: Older

People and the Ongoing Pandemic” on October 11. It features a panel of guests including one speaker from LeadingAge member Hebrew Senior Life. Register [here](#).

**CMS Releases Access to Data on Ownership of Nursing Homes.** Making good on the Biden Administration’s pledge to improve transparency on ownership of nursing homes, yesterday CMS released data giving state licensing officials, state and federal law enforcement, researchers, and the public an enhanced ability to identify common owners of nursing homes across nursing home locations. This information can be linked to other data sources to identify the performance of facilities under common ownership, such as owners affiliated with multiple nursing homes with a record of poor performance. The data is available on nursing home ownership will be posted to [data.cms.gov](https://data.cms.gov) and updated monthly.

**FAQs on the Employee Retention Credit.** Following the LeadingAge [webinar](#) on the IRS Employee Retention Credit, we gathered responses on frequent member questions. [Here](#), we have organized them by topic area for quick reference. These FAQs have been written for LeadingAge by Christopher N. Moran, Esq. of Venable LLP, the legal expert for the webinar.

**New Article on Hearing Examining the Impact of the Coronavirus in Nursing Homes.** On September 21, the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis held a hearing titled, “Examining Long-Term Care in America: The Impact of the Coronavirus in Nursing Homes.” The hearing explored a wide range of topics, from the dire conditions inside for-profit nursing home chains during the early months of the pandemic to what improvements might be needed to ensure residents and staff are protected from the coronavirus and other public health risks moving forward. Hearing witnesses included: Dr. Alice Bonner, Senior Advisor for Aging, Chair, Institute for Healthcare Improvement, Moving Forward Nursing Home Quality Coalition; Dr. David Grabowski, Professor of Health Care Policy, Department of Health Care Policy, Harvard Medical School; Adelina Ramos, Certified Nursing Assistant, Greenville, RI; Dr. Jasmine Travers MHS, RN, Assistant Professor of Nursing, New York University Rory Meyers College of Nursing; and, Daniel Arbeeny, son of a nursing home resident. For an overview of the hearing, you can read the newly published article [here](#). You can also see a webcast of the hearing [here](#).

**Dementia Patients Have Fewer Hospitalizations in SNF But Access Hospice Less.** A new study [published](#) in the Journal of Palliative Care found that in the last year of life, 70.7% of people living with dementia in the community (defined as either their home or an assisted living facility, ALF) had at least 1 hospitalization versus 50.8% of individuals with living with dementia in skilled nursing facilities (SNF). SNF residents also had more practitioner visits than home/ALF residents. However, only 57% of SNF residents were enrolled in hospice versus 68.3% at home/ALFs and the median length of stay in hospice was 26.5 days in SNFs versus 30.0 days at home/ALFs.

**NIC Releases Wave 45 Survey Results.** The National Investment Center has released the results of its latest [Executive Survey](#), which follows trends in staffing, retention, occupancy and operational costs for senior housing providers. The pace of move-ins for IL, AL and SNF reportedly slowed down during this survey period, and for AL, this was the third consecutive survey that did so. Memory Support, however, demonstrated a 12% acceleration in move-ins when compared to Wave 44, attributed again to the release of pent-up demand during the pandemic. Two-thirds of respondents (67%) reported that their staffing shortages were “moderate,” and 19% reported “severe” shortages, an overall improvement over previous surveys. Most respondents (53%) anticipated that staffing challenges would improve in 2023; 16% felt that challenges will not improve until 2024, and 9% not until 2025 or beyond. Staff retention was evaluated in this survey, and compared to previous surveys, new-hire retention rates are

declining. At the 12-month mark, new-hire retention in this survey was 46.7%, down from 51.8% in Wave 44 and 57.3% in Wave 39. A similar trend was seen in new-hire retention at three months; only retention after one month of employment improved this survey as compared to previous, to 67.2%. Participating providers also predominantly felt that their use of agency staff would remain the same (57%) or increase (8.5%) over the next six months, and this is a huge driver of the overall increase in operational costs for participating organizations. Other drivers of increasing costs included vendor pricing, raw food costs, overtime, utilities, and insurance, as well as industry-specific compensation increases that exceed inflation rates. Overall, 21% of respondents have seen their operating expenses increase more than 20% since the start of the pandemic, and 41% have seen expenses increase between 10-19% in that same period. Want to add your data to this important industry benchmark? You can participate by clicking [here](#) for Wave 46, and you can sign up to get regular invites by emailing Ryan Brooks at [rbrooks@nic.org](mailto:rbrooks@nic.org).

**Ziegler Summary of Senior Living Finance & Strategy Conference.** Weren't able to attend Ziegler's 25<sup>th</sup> Annual F&S Conference this year? You can catch up on the popular sessions by reading a quick summary in their latest [newsletter](#). The best-attended sessions were on new campus development and expansions, single-site communities, dynamic sales and marketing tactics, growth through revenue diversification, and advancing strategic technology solutions. Additional summaries will be forthcoming in future newsletters.



