

Highlights for LPCs:

LeadingAge Voting Resources. Yesterday 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 that 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](#), 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.

Employee Retention Credit FAQs Available: As we mentioned several times at Annual Meeting, we have produced an FAQ document for members with the help of our Venable Law Firm attorney, Chris Moran. In case you haven't found it yet on the LeadingAge website, here is the link: <https://leadingage.org/irs-employee-retention-credit-erc-faqs/>

PRF Deadlines Looming for Returning Funds and Late Report Requests: Here is an [article](#) with more details on the two PRF deadlines that certain providers must meet this week. October 28 – to submit a late reporting request and October 30 is the deadline to return funds from reporting period 3. These deadlines were shared on the Monday Coronavirus Member Call.

1 in 10 Older Adults Has Dementia. A new nationally representative [study](#) from the Columbia University found that 10% of older adults ages 65 and older in the United States have dementia and another 22% have mild cognitive impairments. This is the first nationally representative study of cognitive impairment prevalence in more than 20 years. The study used data on 3,500 individuals from the Health and Retirement Study who completed a comprehensive neuropsychological test and in-depth interview between 2016 and 2017. The data were used to create an algorithm for diagnosing dementia or mild cognitive impairment. Researchers found that dementia rose sharply with age. Only 3% of people between 65 and 69 had dementia while 35% of people aged 90 and over had dementia. The study also highlighted disparities in cognitive impairment with a disproportionate burden of dementia among older adults who self-identified as Black or African American.

Medical / COVID-19 Related Updates:

White House announces additional efforts to get treatments, vaccines to the public this fall, especially older adults. The White House released a new fact sheet on October 25 on accessing the COVID 19 vaccine this fall as well as treatments. This effort includes a partnership with Walgreens, DoorDash, and Uber to deliver treatment to vulnerable populations, a playbook for businesses, and efforts with other vaccination partners like grocery stores and pharmacies. CMS will also do direct outreach to Medicare beneficiaries regarding getting the booster and the availability of treatment. The fact sheet can be found [here](#).

Survey Finds Family Caregivers Feeling Strained. Survey research from Homethrive [found](#) that on average, 20% or more of employees are acting as unpaid caregivers for loved ones. In their second annual survey on the subject, of the 200 adults who were working while providing caregiving support to loved ones 60% were female and 75% were supporting loved ones who were aging and/or have a disability. Survey results found caregiving is taking up more time than previously with a 79% increase in the number of employees spending 5 or more hours per week on caregiving. There has also been a marked impact on work with more than a third of caregivers leaving work early, missing days of work, or rearranging work schedules due to their caregiving responsibilities. Many respondents worried that caregiving would negatively impact their job performance. Only a third of respondents had access to caregiving support benefits but 80% said they would take advantage of the benefit if their employer offered one and would even consider switching jobs if it meant access to the benefit.

OIG Report Finds HHA Used Multiple Strategies to Respond to COVID. A new [report](#) from the Office of Inspector General found that home health agencies (HHAs) developed strategies to respond to challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. OIG surveyed a nationally representative sample of 400 HHAs in the fall of 2021. HHAs benefited from support from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), such as regulatory flexibilities and expanded telehealth allowances. Long standing staffing challenges from prior to the pandemic persisted and worsened with new requirements for quarantine and isolation, despite efforts to address issues staffing challenges persist. Expanded use of telehealth helped HHAs provide care while reducing COVID-19 exposure and dealing with staffing shortages. OIG raised issues about HHAs' challenges with telehealth and its future role in home health care especially given CMS' limited insight into HHAs' telehealth use. Finally, the emergency preparedness plans required by CMS guided HHAs' responses to the pandemic but fell short of fully addressing a global emergency such as COVID-19.

Advocacy Updates and Hill News:

LeadingAge LTC Coalition Letter to Congress: Prioritize Aging Services Workforce. On October 18, LeadingAge joined Argentum and the American Senior Housing Association (ASHA) in co-signing a letter to the Senate and House Congressional leadership, and to the co-chairs of the House 21st Century Long-Term Care Task Force, to ask for help in addressing the historic workforce shortage crisis, that has significantly impacted the aging services workforce. The LTC Workforce Coalition letters ask for a robust and targeted federal investment, to develop in-demand career paths and help train a workforce to care for older adults in their greatest need. Additionally, the letters specifically ask Congress to:

- Expand federal incentives to allow aging services providers to retain and attract qualified staff;
- Expand existing federal workforce funding allocated to states, and prioritize long-term care workforce shortages;
- Increase funding for senior living and geriatric care in academic settings;
- Expand and incentivize the Registered Apprenticeship Programs to develop career pathways for aging services providers and stakeholder partnerships; and
- Enact common-sense immigration programs that build dependable international pipelines of trained caregivers.

Here's the link to the letter: <https://leadingage.org/leadingage-workforce-coalition-letter/>

ACL Launches National Center to Strengthen the Direct Care Workforce. The Administration for Community Living (ACL) has awarded a five-year grant totaling over \$6 million to establish a national center to expand and strengthen the direct care workforce across the country. Led by the National Council on Aging (NCOA), with several partners, including PHI, National Alliance for Caregiving, and the Green House Project.

The national “Direct Care Workforce Capacity Building Center” will serve as a hub, providing tools, resources, and training to assist state systems and service providers and to support the development and coordination of policies and programs that contribute to a stable, robust direct care workforce. The center’s website will share resources from the federal government, highlight state and local model policies and best practices that can be replicated or adapted, and share training and technical assistance materials. In addition, the center will facilitate peer-to-peer sharing of lessons learned and promising practices through learning collaboratives and support collaboration between state systems, including Medicaid, aging, disability, and workforce agencies; service providers; and aging, disability and labor stakeholders. This initiative builds upon the ongoing collaboration to strengthen the direct care workforce between ACL, the Department of Labor, and other HHS agencies, including the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. More information can be found [here](#) on ACL’s website.

ONC Webinar on Information Sharing on October 27. The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) offered an “Ask Us About Information Sharing” webinar on Thursday, Oct. 27. Housed within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the ONC is the organization that issued and oversees implementation of the federal “Information Blocking” rule, which sets standards for how health care providers and others respond to requests for electronic health information (EHI). The rule requirements have been effective since April 2021; however, ONC has not yet defined an enforcement mechanism for providers. Among other issues, the webinar will address an aspect of the rule that changed on Oct. 6 – namely, that it now applies to a broader set of information, expanding to include all electronic PHI to the extent it is included in a “designated record set,” as defined by HIPAA. This [ONC posting provides information](#) about the change, and [this webpage](#) provides further background about the rule.

NLRB and DOL Extend Deadline for Comments on Proposed Rules. As we have shared earlier, both the National Labor Relations Board and the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, have issued proposed rules relating to standards defining when individuals are considered employees of a given organization. The NLRB rule would revise the so-called “joint employer” standard, and the DOL rule would establish a framework for classifying individuals as employees versus independent contractors. An article summarizing the two rules is [available here](#). Recently both agencies have extended the deadline for comments on their respective proposals: comments to NLRB are due Dec. 7, and comments to DOL are due Dec. 13. LeadingAge is developing comments on both proposals, and we will work with members and state partners to inform our submissions and ensure they are comprehensive of the issues involved.

CMS All Stakeholder Call on Strategic Plan, Other Initiatives on November 1. CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure, Deputy Administrator Jon Blum, and other senior leaders invite all interested individuals to a National Stakeholder Call on November 1 from 3:00 - 4:00 PM ET. The call will focus on the CMS Strategic Plan and other initiatives. This is not a long-term care or post acute care specific call, but it is possible some related initiatives will be discussed. To RSVP and register for the call, click [here](#).

News from LeadingAge:

Share Your Workforce Innovations With the Story Collector. Do you have a story of innovation in staff recruitment, training, or retention? Tell your colleagues about innovations that help you fill positions, build a strong workplace culture, and promote the honorable and varied careers available in aging services. [Visit the LeadingAge Story Collector](#), powered by LeadingAge Gold Partner Greystone, to tell us more!

Have You Seen the New Workforce Recruitment Tools? Backed by recent national research among potential employees, LeadingAge prepared new workforce recruitment tools. LeadingAge members can access communications strategies, message frames, messenger guidance, and tips for crafting recruitment communications. These tools are part of the expanded [Opening Doors to Aging Services](#) initiative to increase awareness of the sector and move perceptions positively. Now specific insights about connecting with potential employees are available through [Opening Doors to the Aging Services Workforce](#). These new resources are free to members. Access them now on the *new* [LeadingAge website](#)!

Start Planning Your 2023 Annual Meeting Sessions. Save the date! Proposals for the [2023 LeadingAge Call for Sessions](#) must be submitted by December 5, 2022. Submit your original session idea for the opportunity to speak at the 2023 LeadingAge Annual Meeting + EXPO in Chicago, IL from November 5-8, 2023. [Learn more and submit your proposal here.](#)

Interns Explore Aging Services in Summer Program. The [Summer Enrichment Program](#) promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion in a 10-week immersive internship. Undergraduate and graduate students across the country have the opportunity to gain real-world experience in aging services. [Interested in hosting an intern?](#)

Career Ladders and Lattices: Grow the Aging Services Workforce. Last week, aging services thought leaders from LeadingAge and partners discussed the importance of aging services providers to develop career ladders and lattices for their workforce. [Watch the event recording](#) as the panel discusses practical ways to build formal advancement opportunities and support the personal and professional goals of your individual staff members.

