



## Nursing Home Weekly: Recap of LeadingAge Updates

December 9, 2022

**Upcoming LeadingAge Coronavirus Calls. All calls are at 3:30 pm ET.** On **Monday, December 12**, Alex Goldstein will join us to talk about @FacesofCOVID, an online initiative that has been cataloging the faces and names of those who died from coronavirus. Goldstein started this forum "...as a way to affirm that these people were are more than a statistic and their lives mattered and they had dignity, and that it meant something." On **Wednesday, December 12**, Erin Vigne, Director, of Clinical Affairs at AMDA - The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine will join us to talk about their new "Tripledeemic Toolkit". 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.

**Walgreens, DoorDash, and Uber partner to provide free delivery of Paxlovid.** On December 8, Walgreens launched a new partnership with DoorDash and Uber to provide free delivery of the COVID-19 oral treatment Paxlovid. The announcement noted that free delivery will be available to anyone who lives within 15 miles of a participating location. Since more than 8,000 Walgreens locations offer same day delivery service, Walgreens estimates about 92% of the population would have access to the program. Eligible patients must have a Paxlovid prescription from a healthcare provider. After the pharmacy has filled the prescription and before it gets picked up, individuals can go online to select "Same Day Delivery" by visiting [Walgreens.com/PrescriptionDelivery](https://Walgreens.com/PrescriptionDelivery), the Walgreens app or by calling their store. [Click here for additional information on the announcement](#).

**MACPAC Discusses Nursing Home Medicaid Rate Adequacy.** MACPAC staff have been researching and working on developing a report on Nursing Home Medicaid Payment adequacy. They note that due to the state variability of how rates are calculated, it is challenging to obtain the needed information or compare the disparate data. At the December 8 meeting, the staff [presented](#) two recommendations to commissioners: 1) To improve transparency of Medicaid spending, the recommendation instructs HHS to collect and report facility-level data on all types of Medicaid payments received by nursing facilities including resident contributions; and collect and report data on the sources of non-federal share so they can determine net Medicaid payment at the facility level; and 2) Revise the requirements for states to conduct nursing home rate studies so these happen more regularly looking at both costs of care for the Medicaid nursing home population and quality outcomes; and HHS should support states in these analyses with analytic support and technical assistance; and all findings from the studies should be made public. Commissioners asked that the recommendations to be expanded to collect additional data to provide a full financial picture at the facility level and consider possibly standardizing the data collection. The MACPAC staff will update the recommendations and present the final recommendations at the January MACPAC Meeting for a vote.

**SNF Open Door Forum.** CMS hosted an Open Door Forum on December 8. Topics included timeliness of COVID vaccine and therapeutics, QIO support around vaccination, and MDS transition to iQIES. Missed

the call? Access Instant Replay. Instant Replay is an audio recording of this call that can be accessed by dialing 1-866-388-5331 Instant Replay begins 1 hour after the call has ended. The recording expires December 10, 2022, 11:59 PM ET.

**Timeline Updates for MDS/RAI Manual.** On the SNF Open Door Forum on December 8, CMS shared a tentative timeline related to the forthcoming updated Minimum Data Set (MDS). The new MDS is still on track for October 2023. CMS anticipates releasing a draft of the update Resident Assessment Instrument (RAI) manual in the second quarter of 2023. Online training and resources will be available in May 2023 and CMS will host live trainings beginning in June 2023.

**MDS Transition to iQIES.** CMS continues the transition for nursing homes to the iQIES system. Onboarding of nursing home-level Security Officials began in August and is ongoing with approximately 60% of nursing homes having designated a Security Official. Onboarding for general users began in mid-November. To be added as a general user, contact your Security Official who can add you to the system. If your nursing home has not yet selected a Security Official, refer to this [job aid](#) to get started. You can also reach out to the iQIES Service Center at 800-339-9313 or [iQIES@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:iQIES@cms.hhs.gov). Refer to this [training video](#) for creating a HARP account.

**QIO Assistance for Vaccination and Therapeutics.** At the end of November, the Biden Administration announced a six week campaign to get all Americans up to date with COVID-19 vaccination. Concurrently, HHS launched an initiative to increase uptake of vaccines and therapeutics. As part of this initiative, CMS has tapped the QIOs to provide technical assistance to nursing homes. This assistance is open to all nursing homes and can include assistance with mobile vaccination clinics, answering vaccine and therapeutics questions, assistance identifying vaccine supply and vaccination resources including healthcare providers to administer vaccines, assistance with reporting issues, and connecting with other nursing homes in the area to share insights into successful vaccine uptake. Reach out to your QIO directly to request assistance. Locate and contact your QIO [here](#) or email Colleen Frey [colleen.frey@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:colleen.frey@cms.hhs.gov).

**Care Compare.** Due to the winter holidays, there will be no monthly update for Care Compare in December. The next update will take place with the January refresh on Wednesday, January 25, which will also be a quarterly refresh.

**LeadingAge Clinical Advisors Discuss Treatments.** On December 6, LeadingAge Clinical Advisors met with Dr. Tom Tsai of the White House COVID team to talk about underuse of oral treatments for COVID. According to White House and CDC experts and other infectious diseases clinicians, 100% of people over 50 who test positive for COVID and have symptoms should take oral therapeutics. Tom talked about some of the barriers, which LeadingAge clinical advisors said they have seen as well – concerns about the risks especially contraindications with certain prescription medications; misinformation that supply is limited; and prescribers being unwilling to prescribe. One solution is using the [action plan](#) described in item #3 below.

**Develop your COVID personal action plan now.** With COVID cases on the rise again during the fall and winter months, it's more important than ever to have a personal action plan in place for you and your family. Don't wait until you get sick before deciding what to do. This template has been developed by

the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) so everyone has the tools and information necessary to put a plan together now. [Check out the COVID Personal Action Plan here](#). The template can be shared with residents, clients, patients, anyone served or cared for by LeadingAge members, too.

**LeadingAge Comments on CMS RFI on Establishing a National Provider Directory.** LeadingAge has been advocating for administrative simplification efforts related to provider and Medicare Advantage organization processes such as credentialing, prior authorizations, and claims processing for some time. CMS recently sought information on the idea of establishing a National Directory of Healthcare Providers & Services (NDH), which shows promise to achieve some of these goals. LeadingAge submitted comments Dec. 6 on this RFI regarding the importance of including post-acute providers in this directory versus limiting it only to physicians; how the NDH might reduce administrative burden in interactions with health plans but also with federal and state agencies through a single data entry process to enter and update core provider organization data; how this NDH data may be accessed by MA plans for credentialing purposes, other providers for care coordination purposes and the possibility to use this data to pre-populate other forms providers must complete for CMS and other payers. For our complete comments, click [here](#).

**LeadingAge Comments on 2022 SNF and HH Measures Under Consideration.** The National Quality Forum (NQF) annually publishes a list of quality Measures Under Consideration (MUC) for future rule making and seeks public feedback on these measures. This information is then shared with relevant work groups of stakeholders who evaluate, discuss and make recommendations on the MUC measures. LeadingAge participates in the Post-Acute Care and Long-Term Care Work Group of the Measures Application Partnership, which convenes Dec. 12 to discuss the two proposed SNF and Home Health Quality Reporting Program (QRP) measures and the 5 proposed SNF Value-Based Purchasing (VBP) program measures. The [2022 MUC list](#) was published on Dec. 1 and LeadingAge submitted its [written comments](#) to NQF electronically on Dec. 7. These comments were based upon direct feedback from members through our Quality & Risk Management and Home Health networks.

**CMS Proposes a Rule on Advancing Interoperability and Improving Prior Authorization Processes in managed care, and other programs.** CMS is scheduled to publish a [403-page proposed rule](#) looking at advancing interoperability and improving prior authorization processes for Medicare Advantage organizations, Medicaid managed care plans, state Medicaid agencies, federal exchange health plans and other federal programs. Congressional leaders have been awaiting this rule in the hopes that it will make significant progress on the issues that have been highlighted regarding MAO prior authorizations. The extent of this rule will influence whether Congress moves ahead with its Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care bill, which has been considered for year-end action but has been thwarted due to a \$16B implementation price tag. LeadingAge will be reviewing and commenting as appropriate on the proposed rule though initial indications are it focuses heavily on what the payers must do. Comments are due March 13, 2023.

**NHSN Webinar on Person-Level Event Reporting:** The CDC National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) Vaccination Unit is providing a webinar on **Tuesday, December 13, 2022, at 2:00 PM Eastern Time** to review requirements for reporting data using the NHSN Person-Level (Event-Level) COVID-19 Vaccination Forms. Register in advance for this webinar [here](#).

**Registration Open for February 2, 2023 Provider Relief Reporting Webinar.** LeadingAge will be hosting a webinar February 2, from 2-3:30 pm ET, on the new reporting requirements for the Provider Relief

Funds and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Rural payments. These reporting requirements take effect with the next reporting period which opens January 1, 2023. LeadingAge Bronze Partner CLA will help walk aging service providers through the changes to the reporting requirements, including the considerations when providers are reporting on both PRF and ARP Rural funds, and how to plan for the end of the ability to report on lost revenues. Registration is now open for the webinar by clicking: [Getting Ready for the New PRF and ARP Rural Reporting Requirements](#).