

# Medicaid HCBS and PACE Weekly: Recap of Leading Age Updates

January 13, 2023

**Upcoming LeadingAge Coronavirus Calls. NO CALL ON MONDAY. LEADINGAGE IS CLOSED FOR MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY.** On Wednesday, January 18, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra will join the 3:30 PM ET call to address all LeadingAge members, focusing mainly on the topic of bivalent boosters and the All Hands on Deck partnership between LeadingAge and HHS. Please join us to hear the most up to date briefing from Secretary Becerra. 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.

**Welcome, Georgia!** The LeadingAge policy team is excited to welcome Georgia Goodman. Georgia is our new Director of Medicaid and will be working with our members across the continuum and states on Medicaid policy. She comes to us with deep experience with our state partner, LeadingAge Pennsylvania, and has also worked with the State of Pennsylvania. We are thrilled to welcome Georgia to the team. Georgia can be reached at [ggoodman@leadingage.org](mailto:ggoodman@leadingage.org)

**PACE Network Will Meet January 19<sup>th</sup> at 1pm:** Please register for the PACE network [here](#). On Jan 19, we will be discussing the PACE component of the Medicare Advantage proposed [rule](#).

**Article on Medicaid Unwinding:** LeadingAge has an article available on the end of the Medicaid Continuous Coverage Requirement and other associated changes authorized by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023. The article can be found [here](#).

**Testing Page Clarifications Forthcoming. NO RECURRING WEEKLY TEST ORDERS; YOU MUST REORDER TESTS AS NEEDED.** LeadingAge is really excited by the response we have gotten to our testing page in partnership with HHS. Members have asked a number of questions on the process. We are working quickly to add clarifications to the page on our website as well as to get some frequently asked questions answered by HHS and then posted to the site. We will share these updates as soon as we have them. But critically, if you order tests, you are not signing up for a recurring order. You have to come back and reorder when the supply you order runs out – the interval at which you order is up to you. We will provide, as part of the FAQs, an answer on how quickly tests will ship after order, but please keep in mind you are not signing up for a recurring order.

**Public Health Emergency Extended.** The Public Health Emergency (PHE), first declared in January 2020 and extended continually for 90 day periods since then, has been extended for another 90 days. It would have expired today, January 11, without the extension. The Administration has promised to give at least 60 days' notice if it is going to end the PHE; many observers believe this could be the final extension. The unwinding of the PHE has many implications for health care financing and delivery, including the ending of some waivers that have been in place since 2020, private insurance and government health plans taking on COVID costs for most Americans, and loss of Medicaid coverage for millions of Medicaid beneficiaries.

**CMS All Stakeholder Call on January 24.** CMS invites all interested stakeholders to a call on January 24 at 1:00 PM ET to hear Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure and her leadership team highlight key 2022 accomplishments and discuss 2023 priorities to advance the CMS Strategic Plan. This call covers all CMS programs for all beneficiaries – it is not specifically a long-term care or post-acute care call. To register, click [here](#).

**ACTION ALERT REMINDER: Tell CMS: No Staffing Mandates without Funding and a Dependable Pipeline of Applicants.** CMS is expected to issue a proposed rule to establish national minimum staffing levels for nursing homes. The long-term care sector is already facing dire workforce shortages that are limiting new admissions and forcing organizations to close. We need real solutions that build domestic and international pipelines for applicants and funding increases to recruit and retain additional staff. Please join LeadingAge in sending an email to CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure opposing the adoption of a minimum staffing ratios mandate without the necessary workforce investments and reimbursement levels to ensure that residents and patients receive the care they deserve. [Click here to take action now!](#)

**Emergency Preparedness Resources.** The Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) has shared new emergency preparedness resources. The [On-Campus Hospital Armed Assailant Planning Considerations](#) is written for hospitals but could be helpful for emergency planning in nursing homes, life plan communities, and assisted living. [Partnering with the Healthcare Supply Chain During Disasters](#) highlights challenges and vulnerabilities in the healthcare supply chain and offers strategies to plan for and mitigate supply chain issues during disaster. Finally, the December issue of The Exchange focuses on [Decedent Management During Disasters](#). Articles contain considerations for ensuring a respectful, dignified, and efficient processing in managing fatalities during disaster, including considerations for mass fatalities and fatalities occurring during surges, remains management during surges, family notifications during ongoing disasters, and more.

**CMS Releases Timeline for Implementing Medicare Drug Pricing Negotiation Provision of the Inflation Reduction Act.** CMS [released a memo](#) with more details on the implementation steps for the Medicare Drug Price Negotiation Program, laying out the opportunities for engagement and public feedback throughout the implementation process. The memo details multiple comment opportunities for members of the public, people with Medicare and consumer advocates, pharmaceutical manufacturers, Medicare Advantage and Part D plans, health care providers and pharmacies, and other interested parties. LeadingAge recently attended a meeting with Meena Seshamani, Director of the Center for Medicare and Jon Blum, Deputy Administrator at CMS regarding the implementation of the Part D provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act. LeadingAge noted the need for as much education as possible for aging services providers on the impacts of the law on them and the ability to continue to engage in dialogue as the implementation continues. LeadingAge will continue to monitor this issue.

**Supreme Court Declines Look at 2019 Public Charge Rule.** In what will likely be the final act of the Trump Administration's attempt to change the public charge rule, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to review whether states could reopen litigation challenges to the 2019 public charge rule on January 10. LeadingAge and other groups opposed the 2019 rule out of concern it would keep eligible households away from needed social services programs like affordable housing. Some states sought to resurrect the 2019 rule, which was invalidated by the Biden Administration. With the Supreme Court [declining](#) to review those states' requests on January 9, the 2019 rule has run its course.

**Staffing Models Survey.** In the heat of the workforce crisis, LeadingAge is [exploring new and non-traditional staffing models](#) that providers can implement to increase flexibility for staff and better attract new applicants. We are asking members to complete this [short 2-minute survey](#) to share how your organization is approaching staffing. We are interested in any staffing model that has been effective for your organization, effective in recruitment or retention efforts, or offers flexibility for your team members. Thank you so much for taking a moment to complete this survey! With additional questions, reach out to [Jenna Kellerman](#), Director of Workforce Strategy and Development, LeadingAge.

**NIH Launches Home Test to Treat Pilot.** The National Institutes of Health, in partnership with the HHS Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR), launched the “Home Test to Treat” program on January 5. This community health intervention will provide free COVID-19 testing, telehealth sessions, and at home treatment. The program will launch in Berks County, Pennsylvania, where up to 8,000 eligible residents are expected to participate in the program. Ultimately, the Home Test to Treat program will serve around 100,000 people through collaborations with local health departments over the next year. More information can be found [here](#).

**2023 LeadingAge Leadership Summit | April 16-19.** Make plans to join us in Washington, DC from April 16-19. The [LeadingAge Leadership Summit](#) is a must-attend gathering for a range of leaders in aging services. You’ll have access to robust opportunities to gain insight, explore ideas, collaborate with your peers, and influence the nation’s decision makers. Together, we’re defining the future of aging services.