



## Home Health Weekly: Recap of LeadingAge Updates

January 20, 2022

**Upcoming LeadingAge Coronavirus Calls.** Interested in hiring refugees? What about the impact of the pandemic on society and on individuals as we get to the next normal? All calls are 3:30 PM ET. Join us on **Monday, January 23**, as we speak with Mary Klein from Westminster Communities of Florida about her organization's Afghan Refugee resettlement project. **On Wednesday, January 25**, Karen Kaplan, Science and Medicine Editor at the Los Angeles Times will join us to share her observations of changes in health care, society, and individuals' behaviors as a result of the pandemic. She has consistently provided timely, unique, and hard-hitting coverage over the course of the past three years. She has always paid attention to older people and been supportive of aging services. 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.

**Reminder for Home Health Rural Add-On Policy.** The [Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023](#) extended the rural add-on policy by providing a 1% payment increase for home health services provided in the "low population density" category for CY 2023. CMS is reminding Home Health Agencies that they must submit county codes on all home health prospective payment system claims. Home health agencies should continue to report value code 85 and an associated Federal Information Processing System (FIPS) state and county code on all claims. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) released a [report](#) in December 2022 noting the lack of FIPS codes on claims made it difficult to analyze utilization of the rural add-on which is critical to ongoing advocacy for the yearly payment. Providers using the Home Health Rural Add-On should review the [Home Health Claims Processing Manual](#) for more information on how to properly report FIPS codes.

**MACs Send Notice of Home Health Claims Being Rejected.** All three Medicare Administrative Contractors, [NGS](#), [CGS](#), and [Palmetto](#), notified providers that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) reactivated Reason Code (RC) 31755 effective 1/3/2023 and some Home Health (HH) claims from January 2022 are being returned to providers due to billing errors associated with an artificial admission date not matching the 0023 revenue code line. Providers are advised to enter the date of the first covered visit during the period with Revenue Code 0023. For subsequent periods, providers are advised to report the date of the first visit during the period, regardless of whether the visit was covered or noncovered.

**CDC Releases New Dashboards for Tracking Respiratory Disease.** CDC has released two new dashboards for tracking respiratory disease including COVID-19, flu, and RSV. [Respiratory Virus Hospitalization Surveillance Network \(RESP-NET\)](#), interactive dashboard updated weekly, can be used to follow trends and see comparisons of COVID-19, influenza, and RSV -associated hospitalization rates in different demographic groups including by age, sex, and race and ethnicity, and across seasons. A

[second dashboard](#) provides a view of emergency department visit data for multiple respiratory diseases tracked by the National Syndromic Surveillance Program (NSSP). These dashboards will prove useful to providers implementing infection control surveillance systems and in determining appropriate infection prevention and control strategies based on the prevalence of these respiratory infections in the surrounding community.

**FAQs on LeadingAge test ordering website available now.** To help aging services providers navigate utilization of the LeadingAge test ordering website, we asked a number of FAQs of HHS and wrote them up for those ordering tests. The FAQs can be found at [this link](#).

**Joint replacements performed by high-volume surgeons result in significantly better outcomes.** Recent [research](#) by [Clarify Health Institute](#) analyzed approximately 14% (over 178,000 combined) of full hip and knee replacements performed across the United States in 2021. The findings indicate reductions in post-acute readmissions, revision surgeries, and ED visits. These findings could be important financial considerations in making provider specialist contracting decisions or when assisting residents or participants with decisions related to selecting surgeons for hip or knee replacements.

**Anticipated Delay of Fiscal Year 2024 White House Budget Request.** Observers expect the President's FY24 budget request to Congress to be delayed until March, potentially pushing back Congress's appropriations timeline. The President's budget request is considered the first step in the federal budget process that includes passing annual appropriations bills that fund the government. Although federal law sets the target date of the President's budget request as the First Monday in February, this timeline often shifts depending on the circumstances. We will provide additional updates on the federal budget process as it evolves.

**Reminder: Provider Relief Fund Reporting Period 4 is Open.** Reporting Period 4 (RP4) opened January 1 and continues through March 31, 2023. It covers PRF received between July 1 and December 31, 2021. Members should know that this reporting period is guided by the updated reporting guidance issued in October 2021, which outlines how ARP Rural funds should be reported upon but also contains changes to how lost revenues will be treated going forward. Members should familiarize themselves with the new guidance prior to reporting. These new requirements apply to RP4 and all future reporting periods. **LeadingAge is hosting a webinar with experts from CLA on the new PRF reporting requirements on February 2 at 2 PM ET. Providers can register [here](#).**