

Medicaid HCBS and PACE Weekly: Recap of LeadingAge Updates

February 3, 2023

Upcoming LeadingAge Coronavirus Calls. All calls are at 3:30 PM ET. **How about a partnership with an Ombudsman program that finds a way to bring frontline workforce issues to the fore, that seeks to elevate the role and increase recruitment and retention?** Join us on **Monday, February 6** to hear how Brenda Gallant, Executive Director of the Maine Long Term Care Ombudsman Program created and operationalized the "Power of Care" campaign. The objective of the campaign is to engage and empower direct support professionals. Brenda will talk about [results](#) of a series of direct support professional focus groups conducted as part of the work and how the report led to the creation of the Advisory Council. **Everyone needs help coming back from the isolation of the pandemic, finding their next normal. Aging services providers face additional layers of challenges supporting the older individuals they serve in reestablishing social connection and community.** On **Wednesday, February 8**, we look forward to talking with Evan Cudworth, a "Party Coach" who teaches people how to address social anxiety and optimize work and life integration. 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.

CMS issues guidance to states on Medicaid unwinding and collection of enhanced FFP. Late Friday, January 27, CMS sent a letter to State Health Officials (SHO) reiterating timelines, requirements, and details about the decoupling of Medicaid's continuous enrollment and enhanced FMAP from the COVID-19 public health emergency. States can initiate Medicaid eligibility redeterminations beginning in February for individuals; no terminations of coverage can be effective prior to April 1, 2023. For states that wish to continue collecting enhanced FMAP, CMS has imposed reporting requirements to assist CMS in reviewing states' progress through the unwinding timeframe. States have 12 months to initiate and 14 months to completed Medicaid redeterminations on all currently enrolled Medicaid recipients. Review the SHO letter [here](#). The CMS homepage on unwinding is [here](#). If you have questions, contact Georgia (ggoodman@leadingage.org).

Launching Medicaid Telehealth Resource Page CMS released a redesigned [resource](#) for states with a reorganization of Medicaid telehealth resources. The page includes many links and guidance to states. State partners and providers should be mindful of their state's agreements or limitations on telehealth in Medicaid.

The End of the PHE: Mixed Impact on Older Adults. When the Public Health Emergency (PHE) ends on May 11, there will be a significant impact on older adults, according to [preliminary analysis](#) from Howard Gleckman, writing in Forbes. The loss of the three day stay waiver is front of mind for nursing home providers. In addition, it is not completely clear what will happen with treatments, tests, and vaccines currently approved under Emergency Use Authorizations and some other authorities are in question. At the same time, though decoupled from the end date of the PHE, many older adults will lose Medicaid coverage, affecting those throughout the continuum of services and care. LeadingAge staff are actively

identifying top concerns for provider members and developing strategies to advocate with policymakers to ensure that the end of the PHE does not harm providers and the individuals they serve and care for.

CMS Resources on Strengthening the Direct Care Workforce. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has released an online training course and a series of resources that offer strategies and information on [self-direction](#) of home and community-based services, strengthening the direct service workforce (DSW) in rural areas, and emerging strategies for states. Direct care workers, also referred to as direct service workers, provide essential supports to older adults and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, physical disabilities, and behavioral health needs.

- [Recruiting, Selecting, and Retaining Direct Service Workers to Provide Self-directed Home and Community-Based Services \(HCBS\)](#): Online training that provides information to people who self-direct or wish to self-direct their HCBS and others interested in finding, hiring, and retaining workers.
- [Strengthening the Direct Service Workforce in Rural Areas](#): Report that summarizes the challenges of ensuring an adequate workforce in rural areas and strategies that state Medicaid and partner agencies and rural stakeholders can use to deliver high-quality HCBS.
- [The Self-direction Briefing Paper Series](#): Resources designed for policymakers and stakeholders to inform conversation and policy on HCBS self-direction.
- [Emerging Strategies for States](#): DSW Learning Collaborative summary of themes, challenges, and strategies from state Medicaid and partner agencies participating in CMS' 2021 DSW State Medicaid Learning Collaborative.

Grant Opportunity to Address Trauma Informed Services. The Jewish Federations of North America's Center on Holocaust Survivor Care and Institute on Aging and Trauma will be funding selected aging services organizations as subgrantees under its Person-Centered, Trauma-Informed Care: Services for Holocaust Survivors and Other Older Adults with History of Trauma, and Their Family Caregivers grant from the HHS Administration on Community Living. Applicants for subgrants may propose projects that offer a diverse array of services, including physical health, mental health, social health, cognitive health, access to community resources, financial health, and family caregiving. Aging services providers interested in applying for this opportunity must submit a letter of intent to apply by February 16. The Jewish Federations will host an informational call for applicants on Thursday, February 9; applications are due on April 17. Details are spelled out in this [Call For Applications](#) issued on February 2.