



## Senior Housing Weekly

February 10, 2023

**LeadingAge Affordable Housing Network Meeting on February 13.** Join the LeadingAge Affordable Housing Member Network on Monday, February 13, from 12:30 – 1:30 PM ET for our regular housing call. We'll review major recent updates from HUD, including the [agency's new LeadingAge-driven guidance on supportive services fees for Section 202 PRAC properties](#). We'll also discuss next steps for the implementation of HOTMA, the NSPIRE demonstration change, CSPs, and more. Participation in the Network is open to all members of LeadingAge; for details on joining the Network (and attending Monday's meeting) contact Juliana ([JBilowich@leadingage.org](mailto:JBilowich@leadingage.org)) or Linda ([LCouch@leadingage.org](mailto:LCouch@leadingage.org)).

**LeadingAge Policy Update Calls, covering all the updates aging services providers need on what goes on in Washington and what it means for you and the people you serve, care for, and house, including but not limited to Coronavirus. Long COVID patient – study thyself!** On **Monday, February 13**, Lisa McCorkell will join us to talk about the Patient-Led Research Collaborative, a group of Long COVID patients who are also researchers. Their mission is to facilitate patient-led and patient-involved research into Long Covid and associated conditions while following rigorous research methodology and to advocate for policies that enable patients, particularly the most marginalized, to access care and live with dignity. The pandemic has exhausted workers. Join us on **Wednesday, February 15** to hear from Michele Holleran, Founder and CEO of Holleran Consulting. Michele will talk about best practices to improve supervisor well-being. 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.

**HUD Publishes LeadingAge-Driven Guidance for Supportive Services Funding in Senior Housing.** On February 9, HUD will publish [LeadingAge-driven guidance on the supportive services fee](#) for Section 202 PRAC properties. The additional budget allotment helps HUD-assisted properties provide independent living services to older adults aging in community. The fee, which can total between \$15-\$27 per unit per month at Section 202 PRAC properties, funds services and activities outlined by a supportive services plan submitted to HUD by eligible properties. In 2021, LeadingAge alerted HUD to the need for guidance for the supportive services fee, which was authorized for HUD's Section 202 program but not officially implemented through agency guidance. Since then, [LeadingAge has worked with its Housing and Services workgroup to provide feedback to HUD](#) as the agency developed implementation guidance; LeadingAge has also worked with many housing provider members to add the fee to budgets in the meantime. LeadingAge is thrilled to see the guidance issued from HUD on this important funding source for services in senior housing, and we look forward to working with more members to add the fee to budgets. To join the Housing and Services workgroup, please contact Juliana ([jbilowich@leadingage.org](mailto:jbilowich@leadingage.org)). More resources about the supportive services fee, including sample supportive services plans and a policy brief on HUD's new guidance, are forthcoming from LeadingAge.

**Housing Rule: Equity Plans to Drive Resources.** On February 9, HUD will publish a proposed rule in the Federal Register to implement the 1968 Fair Housing Act's statutory mandate to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH). The proposed rule operationalizes the 1968 Fair Housing Act's statutory obligation to affirmatively further fair housing by creating a structure for *certain* HUD participants to create Equity Plans that include a Fair Housing Analysis, Fair Housing Goals, A Description of Community Engagement undertaken, and Fair Housing Strategies to affirmatively further fair housing. After HUD approval of their Equity Plans, the HUD recipient would incorporate their plan's strategies for meeting its equity goals into the key federal planning tools that are used by state and local government and PHAs to determine how to use and distribute the majority of HUD resources, including for public housing, the housing choice voucher program, the HOME and C.D.B.G. block grants, Emergency solutions grants, the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS program, and national Housing Trust Fund resources. The Consolidated Plan sets the framework for the use HOME, CDBG, HOPWA, ESG, and HTF funding, while PHA Plans set the framework for use of federal funds by PHAs who administer federal public housing and housing choice vouchers. HUD multifamily providers do not themselves have to develop or submit these Equity Plans. But multifamily providers could work with state and local governments and local housing authorities to understand how their housing fits into the overall goals of the Equity Plans and help set meaningful goals that effectuate positive fair housing outcomes. On their own, state and local governments and PHAs are to include in their analyses the presence of all "publicly supported housing," which includes HUD multifamily housing, low income housing tax credit, and Rural Housing Service, etc. LeadingAge looks forward to commenting on the proposed rule. Learn more about the affirmatively furthering fair housing proposed rule in this [article](#).

**HUD Posts CSP Request Form Ahead of February 21 Deadline; LeadingAge FAQs Available.** Reminder that HUD published the Round V request form for COVID-19 Supplemental Payments (CSPs) ahead of the February 21 request deadline. LeadingAge has updated our FAQs with the latest info from HUD on COVID-19 Supplemental Payments (CSPs), which reimburse housing providers for COVID-19 related expenses. More information is available [here](#). Reach out to Juliana ([jbilowich@leadingage.org](mailto:jbilowich@leadingage.org)) with questions.

**New HUD Page & Tips for Free COVID Tests for Section 202 Communities.** On February 9, HUD launched a [COVID-19 Test Kit ordering webpage](#) for Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly communities. The webpage includes instructions and tips on how to order the free test kits. LeadingAge worked with HUD to create a way for Section 202 communities to place weekly, no-cost bulk orders for COVID tests. HUD began accepting orders on December 22 and the February 9 announcement of a dedicated HUD webpage for information about the bulk ordering and to place orders is welcome news. Read more about the new page and its resources [here](#).

**HUD Posts Tools to Navigate Reasonable Accommodations for Assistance Animals.** On February 6, HUD announced new tools to help housing stakeholders navigate Fair Housing policies related to assistance animals, including an interactive tool, a webinar recording, and a fact sheet. HUD's new tools explain HUD guidance for complying with the Fair Housing Act when assessing requests for reasonable accommodations for assistance animals. More information is available [here](#).

**HUD Deadline Approaching to Opt-Out of NSPIRE Demonstration.** Beginning April 1st, HUD-assisted properties enrolled in HUD's NSPIRE Demonstration program will switch from receiving "advisory" housing safety inspections to receiving "[inspections of record](#)." Properties who want to opt out of the demonstration program because of the change to scored inspections must do so by submitting a request via email to [NSPIRE-Demo-Opt-Out@hud.gov](mailto:NSPIRE-Demo-Opt-Out@hud.gov) by March 1. HUD's announcement is available [here](#).

LeadingAge will host a discussion about HUD's announcement during our next monthly workgroup meeting on HUD Oversight and Compliance (February 23, 1-2pm ET). Please reach out to Juliana ([jbilowich@leadingage.org](mailto:jbilowich@leadingage.org)) for more info.

**Housing Providers Give Feedback on HUD Awards.** In a meeting coordinated by LeadingAge, a majority of [awardees](#) from the most recent round of funding for new Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly homes shared their experiences with HUD headquarters multifamily housing staff. The discussion ranged from positives to pain points, with undergirding themes of tremendous support for the Section 202 program and the strong partnership that exists between nonprofit Section 202 developers and HUD's team. LeadingAge has been convening these Section 202 awardees since early 2022 with the goal of creating a feedback loop to HUD to continually improve Section 202, HUD's flagship senior housing program.

**Housing Hearing Focuses on Need.** "In 2021, a record number of renters – 21.6 million households – paid more than 30% of their income for housing. That's about half of the nation's renters. Many of these renters are working full-time jobs, or more than one job, but it just isn't enough. 11 of the 25 most common occupations in the U.S. – workers we all depend on, like home health aides and office support staff – nearly half of the most common occupations don't pay enough to afford a one-bedroom apartment anywhere in the country," Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Chair Sherrod Brown (D-OH) said as he opened a February 9 hearing. "And the families who have already become homeowners are feeling squeezed, too. [Including] ... seniors who have to put off critical repairs to keep up with payments on a fixed income." Ranking Member Tim Scott (R-SC) emphasized a different point, saying, "We need to leverage the successes of American capitalism by encouraging private investment in the housing sector and eliminating needless barriers that artificially restrict supply. And most importantly, we should remember that effective housing policy is driven by communities—it is critically important the federal government encourages local solutions to uniquely local problems." An entire section of the Joint Center for Housing Studies' Chris Herbert's testimony focused on "meeting the housing needs of a rapidly aging population," where he delved into the current and growing significant challenges of affordability, in-home mobility and access to needed services and supports. Watch a webcast of the hearing and see written testimony [here](#).

**LeadingAge Hosts Prep Session for Active Shooters in Affordable Housing.** On February 6, LeadingAge hosted a call with affordable senior housing providers on the topic of on-site active shooter situations. The call featured guests Michelle Norris and Sonya Brown of National Church Residences, and Steve Wilder of Sorenson, Wilder and Associates, to discuss best strategies for preparing and responding to active shooter scenarios at affordable senior housing communities. LeadingAge housing provider members also shared recent experiences with efforts to de-escalate interpersonal conflicts at housing sites. The call was hosted by LeadingAge's Housing Network, which hosts calls on affordable senior housing on Mondays at 12:30pm ET. Participation in the Network is open to all members of LeadingAge; for details on joining the Network contact Juliana ([JBilowich@leadingage.org](mailto:JBilowich@leadingage.org)) or Linda ([LCouch@leadingage.org](mailto:LCouch@leadingage.org)). More information is available [here](#).

**Leaders of Color Advocacy Webinar Series - Session Two: Let's Talk About State Advocacy.** Effective advocacy at the state level is becoming more important with each passing year. This Tuesday, February 14 webinar, from 2 – 3:15 pm ET, will help you understand how state advocacy works, how it impacts providers of aging services, and how people at all levels of an aging services organization can become engaged in advocacy. Leaders of color will reflect on their advocacy journeys and will describe how they navigated the advocacy process; the types of advocacy work they pursued; and the practical benefits

they, their team members, and residents/clients experienced. LeadingAge state executives will share examples of their advocacy work, explore the importance of building relationships with state legislators and Governor's office staff, and discuss their engagement with U.S. state senators and congressmen about issues related to their communities. Register for the February 14 webinar [here](#).

**CDC adds Covid-19 vaccines to its official immunization schedule for children, adolescents, and adults.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention added Covid-19 vaccinations for children, adolescents, and adults to its immunization schedule. These updates reflect current agency recommendations. Adding them formalizes that guidance for health care providers and schools. The CDC's vaccination schedule, released February 9, does not mandate vaccines. The FDA's vaccine advisory committee recently voted unanimously to recommend that all primary vaccination series switch to the updated bivalent shot, but the agency has yet to adopt these recommendations. The committee also discussed a possible path forward to include yearly Covid-19 booster vaccinations, similar to the annual flu shot, but didn't formalize any action. [More information on adult immunization schedule by age here](#).

**CDC Releases Falls Intervention Compendium.** CDC has released the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of its Effective Fall Interventions Compendium. This resource is designed to assist senior service providers, clinicians, and others address older adult falls in community. Learn more and download the resource [here](#).

**SOTU Through an Aging Services Lens.** In the President's State of the Union speech on February 7, he made references to several issues and goals related to aging services. Some highlights include:

- "Covid no longer controls our lives." Six words everyone is ready to hear, especially those who provide or use aging services.
- "We're protecting seniors' lives and life savings by cracking down on nursing homes that commit fraud, endanger patient safety, or prescribe drugs they don't need." This was the only reference to nursing homes (much shorter than last year). It's critical to note that LeadingAge's message may have gotten through because this statement does not bucket all nursing homes together. He referred only to those providers who engage in these illegal or unethical behaviors. Still, LeadingAge will be meeting with the Nursing Home Quality Initiative team to continue driving home the point that most providers do not fit this description and deserve accolades for their mission focused work.
- Guaranteeing all workers a living wage. LeadingAge has long advocated this position, coupled with reimbursement rates to pay such wages.
- "Let's get all families access to affordable and quality housing." LeadingAge agrees wholeheartedly, especially housing for low-income seniors.
- Helping older individuals stay in their homes. This point followed the housing point, seemingly tying them together. Supporting enactment of expansions like those proposed in Better Care Better Jobs bills that have been introduced in both chambers will move us closer to this end. (See LeadingAge Action Alert, below.)
- Don't cut Social Security and Medicare, lifelines for millions of older people. The President said, "stand up for seniors!" Medicare, of course, is also a lifeline for many providers of post-acute care.

LeadingAge will continue to advocate for establishing an office on aging in the White House to keep the focus on these goals and action plans.

**Appropriations Chair: Work Cut Out for Us.** In its first meeting of the new session of Congress, the House Committee on Appropriations met on February 8 to review its rules, hear formal introductions of its new members, and listen to its new chair review the Committee’s goals. LeadingAge attends (usually virtually these days) such organizing meetings for clues as to what lies ahead on the Committee’s agenda, and where we might most effectively focus our work. “We have our work cut out for us this year,” Chairwoman Kay Granger (R-TX) said at the meeting. “In many ways, the odds are stacked against us. But as I look across the room, I am reminded that we – as Appropriators – always find a way to get the job done for the American people. I am hopeful that together we will continue that great tradition. As I lead this committee, I will focus our work on that which unites us. By conducting robust, bipartisan oversight of government agencies and programs through hearings, briefings, and in-person visits, we can learn more about where our tax dollars are going.” Committee hearings and briefings will start soon and come quickly after the President delivers his fiscal year 2024 budget request to the Hill. As for in-person visits, LeadingAge strongly encourages our members and other aging services stakeholders to invite your members of Congress to see first-hand the amazing work you do; see LeadingAge’s [“Coffee Chats with Congress Toolkit”](#) for site visits by members of Congress and their staff.

**Tell Congress to Expand Home and Community Based Services!** National Caregivers’ Day is February 17. Please take this opportunity to let your representatives on Capitol Hill know you want them to support expansion of eligibility for home and community based services (HCBS) and better jobs with higher pay for the frontline caregivers who deliver HCBS. Use LeadingAge’s [Action Alert](#) template to send messages to your members of Congress to support S. 100/H.R. 547.