



LPC Weekly Report
Friday, August 2, 2024

Highlights for LPCs and CCAHs:

Recording of LeadingAge Explainer on [MA Prior Authorization Data Collection Initiative](#) and Tool. As part of our advocacy efforts, we are asking our SNF and home health members to submit data for one month on the prior authorization and re-authorization requests they make on behalf of the individuals they serve. This data will provide critical evidence to support our advocacy efforts seeking MA reforms and further clarifications to prior authorizations practices. On July 30, LeadingAge hosted a call to walk members through the data collection tool and corresponding guide. The recording is available [here](#). Here are the data collection spreadsheets and guides: [SNF Data Tool Spreadsheet](#), [SNF Guide](#), [Home Health Data Tool Spreadsheet](#), [Home Health Guide](#).

Change Healthcare Submits Initial Placeholder Breach Report, Updates Expected: The U.S. Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights (OCR) has updated its "[Change Healthcare Cybersecurity Incident Frequently Asked Questions](#)" webpage (see Question #3) to reflect that, on July 19, Change Healthcare filed an initial breach notification report with OCR concerning the ransomware attack that occurred earlier this year. According to the OCR: "Change Healthcare's breach report to OCR identifies 500 individuals as the "approximate number of individuals affected". This is the minimum number of individuals affected that results in a posting of a breach on the [HHS Breach Portal](#). Change Healthcare is still determining the number of individuals affected. ... HIPAA breach reports filed on the HHS Breach Portal may be amended as the breach report form allows a filer to file an initial breach report or an addendum to a previous report." This initial report to OCR follows prior communications from the company. As we noted in our [Change Healthcare Serial Post](#), the company started [notifying](#) providers and insurers on June 20 whether their patients' or members' data was compromised in the cyberattack and provided [a link to a website](#) that its customers can link to from their own websites to share with their potentially impacted individuals. Change has also updated that website effective July 31. We will continue to monitor and report developments relating to this cyberattack.

LeadingAge Launches MA Prior Authorization Data Collection Initiative, Seeking Member Data. LeadingAge is asking its skilled nursing facility and home health agency members to submit one month of data related to their experience with Medicare Advantage (MA) prior authorization and re-authorization requests, and corresponding outcomes for beneficiaries. This LeadingAge [article](#) includes all the details about the initiative including the spreadsheets and guides for collecting and reporting the data. LeadingAge is also hosting a call to explain the tools and the initiative on July 30, 3 p.m. ET. To register for that event, click [here](#).

Workforce & Hill News:

Bureau of Labor Statistics Releases Employment Data. On July 31, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) released the [Employment Cost Index \(ECI\)](#) an economic indicator that provides data on changes in labor costs and overall economic performance. The ECI measures changes in the cost of

employees to employers over time and provides employers with critical information that allow them to maintain competitive compensation and benefit packages. The report indicated compensation costs for private industry workers increased 3.9 percent over the year. In June 2023, the increase was 4.5 percent. Wages and salaries increased 4.1 percent for the 12-month period ending in June 2024 and increased 4.6 percent in June 2023. The cost of benefits increased 3.5 percent for the 12-month period ending in June 2024 and increased 3.9 percent in June 2023.

Advocacy & Hill News:

Older Americans Act (OAA) Reauthorization Passes Out of Senate HELP Committee. On July 31, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee passed the OAA reauthorization out of committee by a vote of 20-1. The reauthorization would permit Congress to appropriate more than \$2.7 billion dollars in FY2025 and overall would increase funding for OAA programs by 44% over the 5 year reauthorization. These are authorizations – the amounts to be appropriated are still to be determined. The bill needs a vote on the Senate floor and then would go to the House. OAA funds a number of programs that LeadingAge members utilize, often through their area agency on aging partners, like respite care, community-based services like adult day, some home care, meals, transportation, and other important services.

Hospice Final Rule Released. Advocacy Win! On July 30, CMS [released](#) the FY2025 Hospice Wage Index final payment rule. CMS finalized proposed changes to the Hospice CAHPS, including removal of and changes to several survey items as well as changes to administration timelines and modes of survey delivery. CMS delayed the final Hospice CAHPS implementation date from January 1, 2025, to April 1, 2025, LeadingAge asked for a delay to allow hospices more time to implement these changes. LeadingAge will review the rule in more detail and report out additional items of interest to members next week Link to the final rule [here](#). Read [LeadingAge's comments on the proposed rule here](#).

Healthcare & LeadingAge News:

LeadingAge Shares Feedback with White House on Respiratory Virus Vaccine. In follow up to the Long-Term Care Leadership Summit 3.0, which LeadingAge attended at the White House on July 18, LeadingAge sent a letter to the White House Office of Pandemic Preparedness and Response Policy on July 25 outlining feedback from nursing home members regarding barriers to vaccination and strategies for increasing vaccine acceptance. Based on this feedback, LeadingAge shared three recommendations for increasing vaccine acceptance for the 2024/2025 respiratory virus season. Read more [here](#).

Online Interactive Data Platform Examining Americans Views on Healthcare and Aging Launches. On July 31, the [West Health-Gallup National Healthcare & Aging Data Dashboard](#) launched. The dashboard examines how Americans view healthcare and the role it plays in the aging experience and explores trends and issues across various demographics including aging, gender, race, and income, drawing information from more than 17,000 respondents from 2021-2024. Key focus areas of the dashboard include healthcare affordability and its consequences, the intersection of aging and the healthcare system, the future of Medicare and Social Security, and the state of the country's readiness for a fast-growing aging population. The dashboard includes two unique indices: the [Healthcare Affordability Index](#) that measures Americans' ability to access and afford healthcare and the [Healthcare Value Index](#)

that measures the quality people associate with the care they receive relative to how much they pay for it.

CMS Shares Video Tutorial on the Patient Mood Interview. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) [released](#) a video tutorial for completing D0150, Patient Mood Interview (PHQ-2 to 9) and D0160, Total Severity Score. This video depicts two scenarios that demonstrate the coding of the PHQ-2 to 9 for the purposes of completing D0150, Patient Mood Interview (PHQ-2 to 9) and D0160, Total Severity Score. Two patient vignettes are depicted, one in which the PHQ-2 is demonstrated and one in which the entire PHQ-2 to 9 is completed. These two items are required as part of the nursing home MDS and home health OASIS assessments.

Register Today: Webinar on “Serious Mental Illness” in Affordable Housing. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) center for homeless and housing resources is sponsoring a webinar on August 7, 2024, from 2:00 - 3:30 PM EDT. The 90-minute webinar will provide an overview of serious mental illness for housing providers, including an overview of symptoms and medications, a review of effective policies and programs, a discussion of applied scenarios and recommendations, and a Q&A with experts. Although titled “Public Housing and Serious Mental Illness, the description states that the webinar is intended for public housing authorities (PHAs) and HUD Multifamily Housing provider; all housing and service providers are welcome to join. Register [here](#).



LeadingAge Wants to hear from YOU ! As a membership organization, keeping a pulse on what matters most and how members are innovating is key to keeping our priorities reflective of yours. We invite you to complete this quick survey and tell us what matters most to you. Scan the QR code or use [this link](#) to answer a few brief questions.