



CMS Snapshot

September 16-23, 2021

Delivered to you by the Partner Relations Group in the Office of Communications

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, September 16 through 2pm Thursday, September 23, 2021.

News Releases


*September 17- [CMS Extends Open Enrollment Period and Launches Initiatives to Expand Health Coverage Access Nationwide](#). The Biden-Harris Administration, through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), is taking a number of steps that will make it easier for the American people to sign up for quality, affordable health coverage and reduce health disparities in communities across the country. Beginning this year, consumers will have an extra 30 days to review and choose health plans through Open Enrollment, which will run from November 1, 2021 through January 15, 2022, on HealthCare.gov.

*September 17- [Statement by HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra on National Hispanic Heritage Month \(Spanish version\)](#). "This month, especially, we celebrate and recognize the significant contributions of more than 62 million Latinos currently living in the United States. Like so many Latinos in this country, my parents immigrated to the United States believing in the promise of our nation—that everyone who works hard and play by the rules can earn the opportunity to get ahead. Throughout my career, I have fought to ensure that the American Dream is in reach for everyone, regardless of where they come from.

*September 17- [HHS Announces \\$350 Million to Strengthen Maternal and Child Health Across the Nation](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced nearly \$350 million in awards to every state across the nation to support safe pregnancies and healthy babies. Funding will expand home visiting services to families most in need, increase access to doulas, address health disparities in infant deaths, and improve data reporting on maternal mortality. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) awarded these funds.

*September 17- [HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra Announces Actions to Protect Patients and Providers in Response to Texas' SB 8](#). Today, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra announced new resources and actions to protect reproductive health care for Texans, in response to President Joe Biden's directive. Following the passage of SB 8, President Biden launched a whole-of-government response and directed HHS to explore options to bolster

access to safe and legal abortions in Texas. Secretary Becerra is announcing measures HHS will take, including grant support for clinics, and resources that outline protections for health care personnel, and reinforcement of legal protections for pregnant individuals or persons experiencing pregnancy loss in Texas.

*September 17- [Readout of the MassChallenge 2022 Verticals Application Launch Event](#). On Thursday, September 9, 2021 Assistant Secretary for Health Rachel L. Levine, M.D., and National Coordinator for Health Information Technology Micky Tripathi helped kick off the PandemicX Accelerator Program during the virtual [MassChallenge 2022 Verticals Application Launch](#)  event.

*September 20- [Biden-Harris Administration Awards \\$15 Million to 20 States for Mobile Crisis Intervention](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) awarded \$15 million in planning grants to 20 states to support expanding community-based mobile crisis intervention services for Medicaid beneficiaries. By connecting people who are experiencing a mental health or substance use disorder crisis to a behavioral health specialist or critical treatment, these services—which will be provided by funding from the American Rescue Plan (ARP)— and will be available 24 hours per day, every day of the year, can help save lives.

*September 21- [CMS Launches New Medicare.gov Tool to Compare Nursing Home Vaccination Rates](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is making it easier to check COVID-19 vaccination rates for nursing home staff and residents with a new feature on [Medicare.gov](#). Today's announcement makes vaccination data available in a user-friendly format to help people make informed decisions when choosing a nursing home for themselves or a loved one.

*September 21- [HHS Announces Synthetic Health Data Challenge Winners](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) today announced \$100,000 in total awards to six winners of the Synthetic Health Data Challenge (Challenge). Synthetic health data (i.e., data that is artificially created to mimic real-world data), is important to researchers, health IT developers, and informaticians, among others, who need data to test new ideas until access to secure and actual clinical data is available.

*September 22- [HHS Announces Funding for Public Health IT Workforce Development Program](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) today awarded \$73 million in cooperative agreements as part of its Public Health Informatics & Technology Workforce Development Program (PHIT Workforce Program). Announced earlier this year and funded through the American Rescue Plan, the program aims to strengthen U.S. public health information technology (IT) efforts, improve COVID-19 data collection, and increase representation of underrepresented communities within the public health IT workforce. ONC will support the overall administration of the program.

Fact Sheet

*September 17- [Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; Updating Payment Parameters, Section 1332 Waiver Implementing Regulations, and Improving Health Insurance Markets for 2022 and Beyond Final Rule](#). In the Updating Payment Parameters, Section 1332 Waiver Implementing Regulations, and Improving Health Insurance Markets for 2022 and Beyond final rule, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) finalizes standards for issuers, Marketplaces, and Navigators. This rule is a continuation of the recent rulemaking process, as seen in parts 1 and 2 of the Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameters for 2022 final rule, published on January 19 and May 5, 2021, respectively.

Blogs

*September 23- [Get your free flu shot this fall](#). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends everyone 6 months and older get a yearly flu shot by the end of October. Flu viruses change from year to year, so even if you got the shot before, you should get a vaccine each year to protect against the most common types of viruses.

CMS has developed a [Virtual Toolkit](#) to help you stay informed on CMS and HHS materials available on the COVID-19. Please share these materials, bookmark the page, and check back often for the most up-to-date information. For more information, please email partnership@cms.hhs.gov