



CMS Snapshot

August 29-September 5, 2019

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

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, August 29 through 2pm Thursday, September 5

News Releases

*August 30- [CMS offers broad support for Florida with Hurricane Dorian preparation](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced efforts underway to support Florida in response to Hurricane Dorian. Today, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency (PHE) in the state. CMS is working to ensure hospitals and other facilities can continue operations and provide access to care despite the effects of Hurricane Dorian. CMS will be waiving certain Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) requirements; creating special enrollment opportunities for individuals to access healthcare quickly; and taking steps to ensure dialysis patients obtain critical life-saving services.

*August 29- [Surgeon General Releases Advisory on Marijuana's Damaging Effects on the Developing Brain](#). Surgeon General Vice Adm. Jerome M. Adams, issued an advisory emphasizing the importance of protecting youth and pregnant women from the health risks of marijuana use.

*August 29- [Secretary Azar Statement on Ebola Outbreak Reaching 3,000 Cases and 2,000 Deaths](#). This week, the Ebola outbreak that began in August 2018 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) reached 3,000 cases and 2,000 deaths. HHS Secretary Alex Azar released the following statement.

*August 30- [HHS Secretary Azar Statement on Illnesses Associated with E-Cigarettes](#). As of August 27, 2019, health departments from 25 states have reported 215 possible cases of pulmonary illnesses from users of e-cigarette products, resulting in one death, and additional reports are under investigation. HHS Secretary Alex Azar issued the following statement.

*August 30- [HHS Secretary Azar Declares Public Health Emergency for State of Florida Due to Hurricane Dorian](#). Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar today declared a public health emergency for the state in preparation for Hurricane Dorian and following President Trump's emergency declaration for the state of Florida. The declaration gives the HHS Centers

for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) beneficiaries and their healthcare providers and suppliers greater flexibility in meeting emergency health needs in disasters.

*September 2- [HHS Secretary Azar Declares Public Health Emergencies for States of Georgia and South Carolina Due to Hurricane Dorian](#). Following President Trump's lead in declaring an emergency for the States of Georgia and South Carolina, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar today declared a public health emergency for both states in preparation for Hurricane Dorian. The declaration gives the HHS Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) beneficiaries and their healthcare providers and suppliers greater flexibility in meeting emergency health needs in disasters.

*September 3- [HHS Purchases Smallpox Vaccine to Enhance Biodefense Preparedness](#). As part of ongoing preparedness efforts against biodefense threats, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will purchase smallpox vaccine, called ACAM2000, to build and replenish vaccine stored in the [Strategic National Stockpile](#) (SNS) over the next decade.

*September 3- [ONC Awards The Sequoia Project a Cooperative Agreement for the Trusted Exchange Framework and Common Agreement to Support Advancing Nationwide Interoperability of Electronic Health Information](#). The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) today announced that The Sequoia Project has been awarded a cooperative agreement to serve as the Recognized Coordinating Entity (RCE). The RCE will be responsible for developing, updating, implementing, and maintaining the Common Agreement component of the Trusted Exchange Framework and Common Agreement (TEFCA). The Common Agreement will create the baseline technical and legal requirements for health information networks to share electronic health information and is part of ONC's implementation of the 21st Century Cures Act (Cures Act).

*September 3- [OCR Issues Guidance to Help Ensure Equal Access to Emergency Services and the Appropriate Sharing of Medical Information during Hurricane Dorian](#). As Hurricane Dorian makes landfall, the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services remains in close coordination with federal partners to help ensure that emergency officials effectively address the needs of at-risk populations as part of disaster response. To this end, emergency responders and officials should consider adopting, as circumstances and resources allow, the following practices to help make sure all segments of the community are served.

*September 3- [State Opioid Response Grants by State](#).

*September 4- [CDC Overdose Data to Action Funding](#).

*September 4- [Trump Administration Announces \\$1.8 Billion in Funding to States to Continue Combating Opioid Crisis](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced more than \$1.8 billion in funding to states to continue the Trump administration's efforts to

combat the opioid crisis by expanding access to treatment and supporting near real-time data on the drug overdose crisis.

*September 4- [HHS Secretary Azar Declares Public Health Emergency for North Carolina Due to Hurricane Dorian](#). Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar today declared a [public health emergency](#) (PHE) for North Carolina in preparation for Hurricane Dorian, following President Trump's declaration of an emergency for the state. The declaration gives the HHS Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) beneficiaries and their healthcare providers and suppliers greater flexibility in meeting emergency health needs in disasters.

*September 4- [CMS offers comprehensive support for North Carolina with Hurricane Dorian preparation](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) today announced efforts underway to support North Carolina in response to Hurricane Dorian. On September 4, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency (PHE) in North Carolina that is retroactive to September 1. CMS is working to ensure hospitals and other facilities can continue operations and provide access to care despite the effects of Hurricane Dorian. CMS will be waiving certain Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) requirements; creating special enrollment opportunities for individuals to access healthcare quickly; and taking steps to ensure dialysis patients obtain critical life-saving services.

*September 5- [CMS Announces New Enforcement Authorities to Reduce Criminal Behavior in Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a final rule that strengthens the agency's ability to stop fraud before it happens by keeping unscrupulous providers out of our federal health insurance programs. This first-of-its-kind action – stopping fraudsters before they get paid – marks a critical step forward in CMS' longstanding fight to end "pay and chase" in federal healthcare fraud efforts and replace it with smart, effective and proactive measures. Today's action is part of the Trump Administration's ongoing effort to safeguard taxpayer dollars and protect the core integrity of the critical Medicare and Medicaid programs that millions rely on.

Fact Sheets

*August 30- [Market Saturation and Utilization Data Tool](#). Market Saturation and Utilization Data Tool was developed to allow the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to monitor market saturation as a means to help prevent potential fraud, waste, and abuse (FWA). Market saturation, in the present context, refers to the density of providers of a particular service within a defined geographic area relative to the number of beneficiaries receiving that service in the area. The data can be used to reveal the degree to which use of a service is related to the number of providers servicing a geographic region. There are also a number of secondary research uses for these data, but one objective of making these data public is to assist health

care providers in making informed decisions about their service locations and the beneficiary population they serve.

*August 30- [2019 Federally-Facilitated Exchange Navigator Cooperative Agreement Awards](#). Each year, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) makes Navigator Cooperative Agreement Awards to organizations who serve as Navigators in Federally-facilitated Exchange states. In 2019, CMS awarded a total of \$10 million to 34 organizations, matching the annual level of funding awarded last year.

Podcasts

*August 29- [CMS: Beyond the Policy- Episode 6: “Dispatches from the Blue Button Developers Conference”](#). Today’s edition is titled “Dispatches from the Blue Button Developers Conference.” This annual event brings together some of the nation’s top private-sector developers who are helping CMS to better serve Medicare beneficiaries by leveraging Medicare claims data. This podcast features key remarks from CMS Administrator Seema Verma, the application developers and Medicare beneficiaries, regarding the launch of the pilot project, Data at the Point of Care, and the value of these applications.

Upcoming Events and Items of Interest:

*CMS Open Door Forums

[Open Door Forum: New Medicare Card](#): The proposed agenda for the next New Medicare Card Open Door Forum scheduled for Wednesday, September 11, 2019, from 2:00pm-3:00pm ET is as follows: New Medicare Card Project Update. If you wish to participate, dial 1-888-455-1397 Conference Passcode: 4676500

[Special Open Door Forum: Hospice Outcomes & Patient Evaluation \(HOPE\) Tool---Status Update](#). This Special Open Door Forum (ODF) is to allow hospices and other interested parties to ask questions on the development of a Hospice Outcomes & Patient Evaluation (HOPE) Tool on Thursday, September 12, 2019, 2:00pm-3:00pm ET. This SODF is part of a series of regular SODF’s CMS plans to host on this patient assessment tool and other key topics related to the Hospice Quality Reporting Program. The purpose of a HOPE Tool is to develop outcome and other quality measures that relate to the care needs of people through the dying process and to ensure the safety and comfort of individuals enrolled in hospice institutions nationwide. The SODF will provide a status update and welcomes your questions. Special Open Door Participation Instructions: Participant Dial-In Number: 1-888-455-1397, Conference Passcode: 4676500

[Open Door Forum: Long-Term Services and Support](#): The next Long-Term Services and Support Open Door Forum scheduled for Tuesday, September 17, 2019, from 2:00pm-3:00pm ET. If you wish to participate, dial 1-888-455-1397 Conference Passcode: 4676500

[Open Door Forum: Home Health, Hospice and DME:](#) The next Home Health, Hospice and DME Open Door Forum scheduled for Wednesday, September 18, 2019, from 2:00pm-3:00pm ET. If you wish to participate, dial 1-888-455-1397 Conference Passcode: 4676500

[Open Door Forum: Skilled Nursing Facilities/Long Term Care:](#) The next Skilled Nursing Facilities/Long Term Care Open Door Forum scheduled for Thursday, September 19, 2019, from 2:00pm-3:00pm ET. If you wish to participate, dial 1-888-455-1397 Conference Passcode: 4676500

[Open Door Forum: Employers:](#) The next Employers Open Door Forum scheduled for Tuesday, September 24, 2019, from 2:00pm-3:00pm ET. If you wish to participate, dial 1-888-455-1397 Conference Passcode: 4676500

***Back-to-School and School-Based Outreach on Medicaid and CHIP**

Before and during the school year, there are a variety of ways to let parents and caregivers know that their children and teens may be eligible for free or low-cost health insurance through Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). With health insurance, they can get the immunizations, check-ups, eye exams, dental visits and other care they may need to fully participate in classroom, after-school and summer activities. Schools are great partners to help reach and enroll families with children who are eligible for Medicaid and CHIP.

The Insure Kids Now Campaign has outreach tools and materials to support school-based outreach efforts. Below are outreach materials specifically tailored for Back-to-School and other school-based outreach. You can learn about how others have used these and other campaign materials in our eNewsletters, webinars and videos.

The School-Based Outreach and Enrollment Toolkit can be found [here](#). Tips and ideas, palmcards, posters, social media messages, sample newsletter articles and Public Service Announcements (PSAs) scripts can be found [here](#).

***2019 Medicare National Training Program Workshops**

[Registration](#) for the 2019 CMS National Training Program (NTP) workshops is open. The cities and dates for the workshops are listed below. You're invited to attend at the location and days of your choice to meet your schedule and learning needs.

- Providence, RI: September 10-12

The workshops in Providence will be 3 full days. Agendas will be available on the registration site.

Please note, the CMS Kansas City Regional Office will be hosting similar training locally (tentatively in Kansas, Missouri, and Iowa). Dates and locations will be announced shortly.

What we'll cover:

- High-level and specific information on key aspects of the Medicare Program
- Information on Opioids
- A "Current Topics" session to raise awareness of program changes and innovations
- An overview of the new Plan Finder on Medicare.gov
- Scenario-based learning
- Please note, these workshops don't include information on billing

NTP training workbooks will be provided onsite for Day 1 and Day 3. Additional meeting materials will be available for download on the registration website prior to the workshops. If you would like access, please download and/or print. Free Wi-Fi will be available in the meeting room.

[Register](#) for a 2019 National Training Program Workshop

NOTE: Registration requests will be considered on a first-come, first-serve basis until each meeting reaches capacity. The number of attendees from the same organization may be limited.

***Save the Date: National Medicare Education Program (NMEP) Meeting**

- *September 16, 2019, 10:30 – 12:30 pm EST*
- *In-Person Meeting in the CMS Washington, D.C. Office*
- *Registration and Agenda will be coming soon*

For more information please email partnership@cms.hhs.gov