



## CMS Snapshot

### October 8-15, 2020

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

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, October 8 through 2pm Thursday, October 15, 2020.

#### News Releases

\*October 8- [CMS Announces New Repayment Terms for Medicare Loans made to Providers during COVID-19](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced amended terms for payments issued under the Accelerated and Advance Payment (AAP) Program as required by recent action by President Trump and Congress. This Medicare loan program allows CMS to make advance payments to providers and are typically used in emergency situations.

\*October 8- [High-Quality Care for Medicare Beneficiaries Continues as Medicare Health and Drug Plans Receive Star Ratings](#). Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that Medicare beneficiaries will continue to have access to high-quality Medicare Advantage and Part D prescription drug plans in 2021. According to the latest data, quality ratings of Medicare Advantage and Medicare Part D drug plans remain strong. Most Medicare beneficiaries – about 77 percent – who enroll in Medicare Advantage plans with drug coverage will be in plans with four or more stars in 2021.

\*October 9- [CMS Takes Action to Protect Integrity of COVID-19 Testing](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is taking every action to ensure U.S. laboratories are fit to deliver reliable, accurate and timely patient test results for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) by confirming Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 (CLIA) certifications are up-to-date. A recent record check by CMS resulted in the issuance of 171 cease and desist letters to facilities that did not have proper CLIA certifications in place.

\*October 9- [OCR Settles Ninth Investigation in HIPAA Right of Access Initiative](#). The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announces that it has settled its ninth enforcement action in its HIPAA Right of Access Initiative. OCR announced this initiative as an enforcement priority in 2019 to support individuals' right to timely access to their health records at a reasonable cost under the HIPAA Privacy Rule.

\*October 9- [Trump Administration Expands Collaboration with AstraZeneca to Develop and Manufacture an Investigational Monoclonal Antibody to Prevent COVID-19](#). To meet the Trump Administration's [Operation Warp Speed](#) goals, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ([HHS](#)) and Department of Defense ([DoD](#)) today announced an agreement with AstraZeneca for late-stage development and large-scale manufacturing of the company's COVID-19 investigational product AZD7442, a cocktail of two monoclonal antibodies, that may help treat or prevent infection with SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

\*October 9- [Unsubsidized Enrollment on the Individual Market Dropped 45 Percent from 2016 to 2019](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the Trends in Subsidized and Unsubsidized Enrollment Report today, providing key information on the stability of the individual health insurance market.

\*October 10- [HHS and the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation Announce \\$25 Million "LymeX" Innovation Accelerator – Largest Lyme Public-Private Partnership in History](#). Today, at the virtual [LymeMIND](#) conference, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation announced a new \$25 million-dollar, public-private partnership — the LymeX Innovation Accelerator (LymeX). This is the largest Lyme disease public-private partnership in history. This partnership will be a force multiplier to expedite progress and catalyze change faster than government or other sectors can do on their own.

\*October 13- [HHS Secretary Azar Statement on First FDA Approval of Ebola Therapeutic](#). On Wednesday, the Food and Drug Administration approved Inmazeb, a mixture of three monoclonal antibodies made by Regeneron. This is the first FDA-approved treatment for *Ebola virus* infection in adult and pediatric patients, following a U.S. government-supported trial and expanded access protocol in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). HHS Secretary Alex Azar issued the following statement.

\*October 13- [Trump Administration Makes Major Investment to Increase Availability of Fast Molecular POC Test](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in collaboration with the Department of Defense (DOD) awarded a \$481 million Other Transaction Agreement to Cue Health, Inc. to expand U.S. production capacity for a cartridge-based point-of-care COVID-19 molecular test that produces results in about 20 minutes.

\*October 13- [Trump Administration Expands Manufacturing Capacity with Cytiva for Components of COVID-19 Vaccines](#). To meet the Trump Administration's [Operation Warp Speed](#) goals, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ([HHS](#)) and Department of Defense ([DoD](#)) today announced an agreement with Cytiva, headquartered in Massachusetts, to expand the company's manufacturing capacity for products that are essential in producing COVID-19 vaccines.

\*October 14- [Trump Administration Drives Telehealth Services in Medicaid and Medicare](#). Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) expanded the list of telehealth

services that Medicare Fee-For-Service will pay for during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) Public Health Emergency (PHE). CMS is also providing additional support to state Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) agencies in their efforts to expand access to telehealth. The actions reinforce President Trump's Executive Order on Improving Rural Health and Telehealth Access to improve the health of all Americans by increasing access to better care.

\*October 15- [HHS Awards Nearly \\$500 million to Support Primary Health Care Workforce Nationwide](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) announced nearly \$500 million in awards to support, recruit and retain qualified health professionals and students through its [National Health Service Corps \(NHSC\)](#), [Nurse Corps](#) and other workforce development loan repayment and scholarship programs.

\*October 15- [HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health Presents Award to Dr. Kwaku Ohene-Frempong](#). Washington, D.C. –Yesterday, the Assistant Secretary for Health, ADM Brett P. Giroir, M.D., presented the Assistant Secretary of Health (ASH) Exceptional Service Medal to Dr. Kwaku Ohene-Frempong recognizing him for his outstanding contributions on behalf of the millions of people worldwide suffering from sickle cell disease (SCD). The civilian medal is awarded for exceptional achievement to the cause of public health and medicine, and is the highest civilian award from the Public Health Service, which includes all health divisions of the Department of Health and Human Services. Dr. Ohene-Frempong is the first civilian recipient of the ASH Exceptional Service Medal.

## Blogs

\*October 9- [Don't forget your mental health care](#). Depression is the leading cause of disability in the world, affecting 1 out of 6 adults. Now more than ever, it's important to know the signs of depression and when to get help.

\*October 15- [Shop & compare 2021 plans with the Medicare Plan Finder](#). Medicare's Open Enrollment starts today! Now's the time to review your Medicare health and drug coverage and look for other plans that may better meet your needs. The [Medicare Plan Finder](#) helps you compare 2021 coverage options and shop for plans.

\*October 15- [Choosing a Marketplace plan that meets your household's needs](#). Open Enrollment for 2021 coverage starts November 1. Plans have different premiums and out-of-pocket costs and may differ in the quality of service and benefits they provide. Knowing a few things before you apply can make the process for choosing a plan simpler.

*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](mailto:partnership@cms.hhs.gov)*