



CMS Snapshot

October 7-14, 2021

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

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, October 7 through 2pm Thursday, October 14, 2021.

News Releases

*October 7- [Statement by HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra on the Swearing-In of Melanie Anne Egorin as Assistant Secretary for Legislation](#). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra swore in Melanie Anne Egorin as Assistant Secretary for Legislation. Egorin most recently served as the Deputy Staff Director for the Health Subcommittee and professional tax staff for the Committee on Ways and Means in the U.S. House of Representatives.

*October 8- [HHS Launches Spanish Language App to Help Latinos Navigate Health Care Questions, Issues New Report Highlighting Latino Coverage Issues \(Spanish version\)](#). Today, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) launched a Spanish version of its QuestionBuilder app, which can help Latino patients prepare for their in-person or telehealth appointments. The HHS Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) built *QuestionBuilder* en Español, which is being released during Hispanic Heritage Month and Health Literacy Month, to improve health care access and equity for Latinos. Latinos have among the highest uninsured rate of any racial or ethnic group within the United States.

*October 8- [CMS Releases 2022 Medicare Advantage and Part D Star Ratings to Help Medicare Beneficiaries Compare Plans](#). Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the 2022 Star Ratings for Medicare Advantage (Medicare Part C) and Medicare Part D prescription drug plans to help people with Medicare compare plans ahead of Medicare Open Enrollment, which kicks off on October 15. Plans are rated on a one-to-five scale, with one star representing poor performance and five stars representing excellent performance.

*October 12- [Biden-Harris Administration Greenlights Coverage of LGBTQ+ Care as an Essential Health Benefit in Colorado](#). For the first time, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) approved a request to provide gender-affirming care in the individual and small group health insurance markets as part of Colorado's Essential Health Benefit (EHB) benchmark. Today's landmark step is aligned with the Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to address

health care disparities by removing longstanding barriers and expanding access to care for transgender persons.

*October 12- [Readout of the Seventh COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force Meeting](#). On Thursday, September 30, COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force Chair, Dr. Marcella Nunez-Smith, held the seventh public meeting to vote on a final slate of recommendations for mitigating health inequities caused or exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and for preventing such inequities in the future. Task Force members also discussed and voted favorably on suggested actions for the Biden-Harris Administration to prioritize and propose outcomes to set the vision for the country's goals.

*October 13- [Statement by HHS Xavier Becerra on FDA Sodium Reduction Guidance \(Spanish version\)](#). "We need to get to a place as a nation where we not only react to health scares but work hard to prevent them. That requires thinking about the food we eat – or, better put, the food we don't. With FDA's new recommendations, we get one step closer to improving health outcomes.

Fact Sheet

*October 8- [Fact Sheet: Efforts Across HHS to Promote Behavioral Health for Children and Youth](#). Behavioral health is fundamental to the well-being of our country's children and youth. That's why agencies and offices across the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) are working together to advance behavioral health for children, youth, and their families, with an emphasis on improving access, promoting equity, and fostering innovation.

Blogs

*October 7- [Working Day or Night, NDMS Teams Deploy to Support Healthcare Facilities and Save Lives in Communities Overwhelmed by COVID-19: "We are NDMS...That's What We do"](#). On September 24, 2021, at the request of the state of Tennessee, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services deployed a team of 15 healthcare professionals, including safety and administrative support officers, from the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) to Baptist Memorial Hospital-Memphis in Memphis, TN. The team's mission: to augment the hospital's emergency department and provide much needed support to local staff.

*October 14- [Prepare now: Open Enrollment starts soon](#). Open Enrollment for 2022 coverage begins in a little over 2 weeks! See what you can do today to make applying easier.

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