



CMS Snapshot

December 16-23, 2021

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

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

News Releases

*December 16- [HHS Announces Additional Navigator Resources to Support the Extended HealthCare.gov Open Enrollment Period](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced today that it is adding more consumer resources to support consumers' access to coverage during the extended Marketplace Open Enrollment Period for HealthCare.gov – with approximately \$10.2 million in additional funding awarded to current Navigator grantees in Federally-facilitated Marketplace (FFM) states. This funding will help support Navigator grantees' outreach, education, and enrollment efforts around the extended Marketplace Open Enrollment Period.

*December 17- [Consumers Received \\$2 Billion in Premium Rebates for 2020](#). Health insurers have provided approximately \$2 billion in rebates for the 2020 reporting year to an estimated 9.8 million consumers, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is announcing today. Insurers were generally required to provide such rebates and notice of any rebates owed to consumers no later than September 30, 2021. Rebate payments can be provided in the form of a premium credit, lump-sum check, or, if a consumer paid the premium using a credit card or direct debit, by lump-sum reimbursement to the account used to pay the premium.

*December 17- [CMS Funding 1,000 New Residency Slots for Hospitals Serving Rural & Underserved Communities](#). Today the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) took a critical step to advance health equity and access, issuing a final rule that will enhance the health care workforce and fund additional medical residency positions in hospitals serving rural and underserved communities.

*December 17- [HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra Welcomes Carole Johnson Back to HHS as New HRSA Administrator](#). Today, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra released a statement welcoming Carole Johnson back to HHS as the new administrator of the Health Resources Services Administration. Johnson was previously the testing

coordinator for the White House COVID-19 response team and will be replaced in that role by senior HHS official Tom Inglesby.

*December 20- [HHS Announces Critical Investments to Implement Upcoming 988 Dialing Code for National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#). Today the Department of Health and Human Services, through its Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), will make critical investments in suicide prevention and crisis care services, announcing \$282 million to help transition the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) from its current 10-digit number to a three-digit dialing code – 988.

*December 20- [HHS Issues Guidance on HIPAA and Disclosures of Protected Health Information for Extreme Risk Protection Orders](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) through its Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is issuing guidance to help clarify how the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) Privacy Rule permits covered health care providers to disclose protected health information to support applications for extreme risk protection orders that temporarily prevent a person in crisis, who poses a danger to themselves or others, from accessing firearms. This guidance helps implement the U.S. Department of Justice's [model extreme risk protection order legislation](#) that provides a framework for states to consider in creating laws allowing law enforcement, concerned family members, or others to seek these orders and to intervene in an effort to save lives. These orders can be an important step toward improving the public's safety by helping to prevent firearm injuries and deaths.

*December 20- [HHS Announces PandemicX Accelerator with Health IT Cohort to Address COVID-19 Health Disparities](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced that 15 digital health startups are joining the 2022 PandemicX Accelerator cohort, specifically to address health inequities, create a culture for success, and deploy resources to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. PandemicX, co-led by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT, involves using digital tools and publicly accessible data to eliminate disparities and tackle drivers of inequity exacerbated by COVID-19.

*December 20- [Joint Statement from Secretary Xavier Becerra and Ambassador Katherine Tai on President Biden's Announcement of Intent to Appoint Commissioners to the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders](#). Today, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra and US Trade Representative Ambassador Katherine Tai, co-chairs of the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders and President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, issued a joint statement following President Joe Biden's announcement of his intent today to appoint 23 leaders to the Commission.

*December 21- [CMS Releases Latest Enrollment Figures for Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program \(CHIP\)](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has released the latest enrollment figures for Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)—all key connectors to care for more than 135 million Americans.^[1]

*December 22- [All-Time High: 13.6 Million People Signed Up for Health Coverage on the ACA Insurance Marketplaces With a Month of Open Enrollment Left to Go](#). This year's Open Enrollment Period is outpacing all previous years, a historic high of more than 13.6 million people already enrolled in health insurance coverage for 2022 through [HealthCare.gov](#) and State-based Marketplaces (SBMs). The American Rescue Plan (ARP) has made coverage more affordable and accessible for people across the country: 92% of people in [HealthCare.gov](#) states who signed up for plans through December 15, 2021, will receive premium tax credits for 2022 coverage. Moreover, more than 400,000 people will receive tax credits for 2022 coverage, to date, that would have been inaccessible to them prior to the ARP.

*December 22- [New Guidance to Boost Accessibility and Equity in COVID-19 Vaccine Programs](#). The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is issuing guidance today tied to legal standards and best practices for improving access to COVID-19 vaccine programs and ensuring nondiscrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin.

*December 22- [Massachusetts Healthcare Provider Resolves Allegations of Discriminatory Practices Regarding Patients Needing Opioid Use Disorder Treatment](#). The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and United States Attorney's Office in the District of Massachusetts announced today that they have reached agreement with The Oaks, a skilled nursing facility in Massachusetts operated by Life Care Centers of America, Inc., to resolve allegations that the facility denied admission to a prospective resident because he was taking an FDA-approved medication to treat Opioid Use Disorder (OUD), in violation of Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

*December 23- [CMS Takes Steps to Protect Georgians from Harmful Effects of Work Requirements and Premiums in the Medicaid Program](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that Georgia will no longer have authority to require work activities as a condition of Medicaid eligibility, or charge premiums beyond those allowed under the Medicaid statute, in its Georgia Pathways to Coverage demonstration. The decision, conveyed in a letter sent to the state today, supports the Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to reduce health disparities while ensuring access to comprehensive, affordable, person-centered care.

*December 23- [HHS Announces Availability of Nearly \\$48 Million to Increase the Public Health Workforce in Rural and Tribal Communities](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, is announcing the availability of nearly \$48 million in American Rescue Plan

funding for community-based organizations to expand public health capacity in rural and tribal communities through health care job development, training, and placement. Awardees will be able to use this funding to address workforce needs related to the long-term effects of COVID-19 as well as health information technology (IT) needs and other key workforce issues.

Fact Sheets

*December 17- [Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2022 Medicare Hospital Inpatient Prospective Payment System \(IPPS\) Final Rule with Comment Period \(CMS 1752-FC3\)](#). On December 17, 2021, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a final rule with comment period to implement the legislative changes to Medicare direct graduate medical education (DGME) and indirect medical education (IME) payments to teaching hospitals that were contained in sections 126, 127, and 131 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Pub. L. 116-260, December 27, 2020).

*December 21- [Medicare Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics and Supplies \(DMEPOS\) Final Rule \(CMS-1738-F, CMS-1687-F and CMS-5531-F\)](#). On December 21, 2021, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a final rule that furthers the agency's commitment to strengthen Medicare by expanding access to certain durable medical equipment, such as continuous glucose monitors that increase diabetes treatment choices for people with Medicare. The Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics and Supplies (DMEPOS) final rule aligns with the key goals of the Administration to create a health care system that results in better accessibility, quality, affordability, empowerment and innovation.

*December 22- [Marketplace Weekly Enrollment Snapshot: Week 6, December 5 - December 15, 2021](#). In week 6 of the 2022 Open Enrollment Period, approximately 5.8 million people selected individual market plans or were automatically re-enrolled in a plan through the 33 states that use the HealthCare.gov platform. During the Open Enrollment Period, to date, approximately 9.7 million people have selected individual market plans or were automatically re-enrolled in a plan through [HealthCare.gov](#). While past snapshots this year have measured enrollment weeks Sunday through Saturday, this week's snapshot for week six also includes the final few days prior to the deadline for January 1 coverage.

Blogs

*December 23- [Pay your premium to activate your coverage](#). Before you can start using your new 2022 Marketplace coverage, you must pay your first premium — the amount you pay for your health insurance every month — directly to the insurance company (not the Marketplace).

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