



CMS Snapshot

October 29-November 5, 2020

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

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, October 29 through 2pm Thursday, November 5, 2020.

News Releases

*October 30- [CMS Provides Transparency on Cost and Quality in State Medicaid and CHIP Programs](#). Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the third annual update to its Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Scorecard. The Scorecard is the signature Medicaid accountability initiative that highlights state and federal performance on the administration and health outcomes of the Medicaid and CHIP programs that collectively account for approximately \$600 billion in annual spending and serve over 74 million Americans.

*October 30- [2021 Federal Health Insurance Exchange Open Enrollment Period Starts Sunday, November 1 on HealthCare.gov](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is announcing that the Open Enrollment Period for the Federal Health Insurance Exchange will officially begin at HealthCare.gov on Sunday, November 1 and will run through Tuesday, December 15. Consumers will be able to log in to HealthCare.gov and CuidadodeSalud.gov or call 1-800-318-2596 to fill out an application and enroll in a 2021 Exchange health plan for coverage starting as soon as January 1, 2021.

*October 30- [NEWS ALERT OCTOBER 30, 2020](#). Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) launched a new online platform - the Nursing Home Resource Center - to serve as a centralized hub bringing together the latest information, guidance and data on nursing homes that is important to facilities, frontline providers, residents and their families, especially as the fight against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) continues.

*October 30- [NEWS ALERT OCTOBER 30, 2020 \(CMS Releases Part II of the 2022 Medicare Advantage and Part D Advance Notice\)](#). Today, CMS is releasing Part II of the Calendar Year (CY) 2022 Medicare Advantage and Part D Advance Notice to provide Medicare health and prescription drug plans with earlier notification of proposed payment changes. This announcement is being made approximately three months earlier than usual to provide

Medicare Advantage organizations and Part D sponsors more time to take this information into consideration as they prepare their bids for 2022.

*October 30- [Federal Health IT Strategic Plan Supports Patient Access to Their Own Health Information](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) published the [final 2020-2025 Federal Health IT Strategic Plan \(the Plan\)](#). The Plan outlines federal health information technology (health IT) goals and objectives, with a focus on individuals' access to their electronic health information.

*October 30- [KidneyX Artificial Kidney Prize Offers \\$10 Million to Accelerate Artificial Kidney Development](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) launched the [KidneyX Artificial Kidney Prize](#) to accelerate the development of artificial kidneys toward human clinical trials. This multiphase competition is KidneyX's first fully dedicated effort toward artificial kidney advancement, with initial phases offering up to \$10 million in prizes. Phase 1 seeks solutions that enable and advance the functionality, effectiveness, and/or reliability of artificial kidneys.

*October 30- [Trump Administration Producing Supply Kits to Safely Administer COVID-19 Vaccines to Americans](#). In support of [Operation Warp Speed](#) (OWS), the Trump Administration is preparing to provide ancillary supply kits to help healthcare workers who will be administering COVID-19 vaccines. Several candidate vaccines are in clinical trials to test their safety and efficacy; the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) would need to approve or authorize any vaccine for use.

*October 30- [City Health Department failed to terminate former employee's access to protected health information](#). The City of New Haven, Connecticut (New Haven) has agreed to pay \$202,400 to the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and to implement a corrective action plan to settle potential violations of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy and Security Rules. The New Haven Health Department, among other things, operates a public health clinic that provides preventative medical services, including adult and pediatric immunizations.

*October 30- [Readout from the Trump Administration's 40th Governors Briefing on COVID-19 Response and Vaccine Distribution Best Practices](#). Today, U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Alex Azar led a discussion with the chief executives and senior leaders of approximately 50 states, territories, and the city of Washington, D.C., and the White House Coronavirus Task Force on local, state, and federal COVID-19 response and recovery efforts and continued collaboration on vaccine distribution and administration planning. Earlier today, HHS responded to our nation's governors thoughtful technical questions on vaccine planning and distribution effort, which can be found [here - PDF](#) *.

*October 30- [HHS and DOD Announce \\$119 Million Contract to Hologic to Better Meet the Demand of COVID-19 Testing](#). Today, as part of an ongoing collaboration between the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD),

the two departments awarded [Hologic, Inc.](#) a \$119 million contract to establish additional domestic production to increase diagnostic testing capacity for SARS-CoV-2. This investment will enable Hologic, Inc. to expand production capacity for COVID-19 tests in their supplier's facilities in Wisconsin (Baldwin, Hudson, Somerset, and Menomonie), Maine (Guilford) and California (Anaheim, San Diego), increasing their production capacity to 13 million COVID-19 tests per month by January 2022.

*October 31- [HHS and DOD announce \\$12.7 million contract with InBios International to boost U.S. production of rapid COVID-19 tests.](#) Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) jointly announced a \$12.7 million contract with InBios International Inc., of Seattle, to expand domestic production capacity for two rapid point-of-care tests for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

*October 31- [389,000 BinaxNOW COVID-19 Tests Distributed Thus Far to Historically Black Colleges and Universities \(HBCU's\).](#) As part of the Trump Administration's ongoing national effort to prevent COVID-19 outbreaks in high risk communities, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) today detailed that 389,040 state-of-the-art Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 rapid tests have been distributed at no cost to 83 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's) in 24 states.

*November 1- [Trump Administration Approves Georgia's State Relief and Empowerment Waiver.](#) Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Department of the Treasury announced the approval of Georgia's request to implement a section 1332 State Relief and Empowerment waiver (also referred to as a section 1332 waiver) that will address systemic issues with the individual market in Georgia and result in lower premiums, greater access, and greater consumer choice in a more competitive private insurance market.

*November 2- [CMS Releases Toolkit to Accelerate State Efforts to Rebalance Long-term Care Systems and Enhance Home and Community-Based Services for Eligible Medicaid Beneficiaries.](#) The Trump Administration and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) are delivering on their commitment to foster innovation in Medicaid by providing states with new tools to help beneficiaries return home from institutional settings without sacrificing safety or quality of care. Today, CMS launched a new toolkit designed for state Medicaid agencies to strengthen their infrastructure and develop robust home and community-based services (HCBS) for eligible beneficiaries.

*November 2- [Trump Administration Finalizes Transformative Medicare Payment Changes to Support Innovation in Kidney Care and Incentivize Dialysis in the Home.](#) Today, under President Trump's leadership, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) finalized policies that allow certain new and innovative equipment and supplies used for dialysis treatment of patients with End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) in the home to qualify for an additional Medicare payment.

*November 4- [HHS Proposes Unprecedented Regulatory Reform through Retrospective Review](#).

Today, the Department of Health and Human Services issued a notice of proposed rulemaking requiring the Department to assess its regulations every ten years to determine whether they are subject to review under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA), which requires regular review of certain significant regulations. If a given regulation is subject to the RFA, the Department must review the regulation every ten years to determine whether the regulation is still needed and whether it is having appropriate impacts. Regulations will expire if the Department does not assess and (if required) review them in a timely manner.

Fact Sheets

*October 29- [CMS Finalizes Calendar Year 2021 Payment and Policy Changes for Home Health Agencies and Calendar Year 2021 Home Infusion Therapy Benefit](#). Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a final rule [CMS-1730-F] that finalizes routine updates to the home health payment rates for calendar year (CY) 2021, in accordance with existing statutory and regulatory requirements. This rule also finalizes the regulatory changes related to the use of telecommunications technology in providing care under the Medicare home health benefit.

*October 30- [2022 Medicare Advantage and Part D Advance Notice Part II](#). Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released Part II of the Calendar Year (CY) 2022 Advance Notice of Methodological Changes for Medicare Advantage (MA) Capitation Rates and Part C and Part D Payment Policies (the Advance Notice). CMS released Part I of the CY 2022 Advance Notice on September 14, 2020. CMS will accept comments on both parts of the CY 2022 Advance Notice through Friday, November 30, 2020, before publishing the final Rate Announcement by April 5, 2021.

*November 2- [Medicare Program; End-Stage Renal Disease Prospective Payment System, Payment for Renal Dialysis Services Furnished to Individuals with Acute Kidney Injury, and End-Stage Renal Disease Quality Incentive Program \(CMS-1732-F\)](#). On November 02, 2020, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a final rule that updates payment policies and rates under the End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Prospective Payment System (PPS) for renal dialysis services furnished to beneficiaries enrolled in Original Medicare on or after January 1, 2021. This rule also updates the acute kidney injury (AKI) dialysis payment rate for renal dialysis services furnished by ESRD facilities to individuals with AKI and finalizes changes to the ESRD Quality Incentive Program (QIP).

*November 2- [Long-term Services and Supports \(LTSS\) Rebalancing Toolkit Fact Sheet](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is releasing the Long-term Services and Supports (LTSS) Rebalancing Toolkit to support states in their efforts to expand and enhance home and community-based services (HCBS) and to rebalance, or recalibrate, LTSS from institutional to community-based systems. CMS remains steadfast in its commitment to ensuring that states have the necessary tools to design, implement, and advance LTSS

“rebalancing” – achieving a more equitable balance between the share of spending and use of services and supports delivered in home and community-based settings relative to institutional care.

Blogs

*October 29- [Op-ed: President Trump looks to lower seniors’ insulin costs, and other drugs may be next](#). The unpredictable and sky-rocketing cost of insulin has driven far too many Medicare patients to ration their medicine or even go without. Heart attack, stroke, vision loss, kidney failure, and nerve damage are just a few of the devastating complications that can result. Especially at a time when diabetics are particularly vulnerable to the Coronavirus, this situation is deeply concerning.

*October 29- [Op-ed: Medicare Executive Order: A Year of Improvements to the Program](#). October 3rd marked the one-year anniversary of President Trump’s historic Executive Order on Protecting and Improving Medicare for Our Nation’s Seniors. With 10,000 people joining Medicare daily, President Trump made clear his commitment to protecting and strengthening the program by building a system that provides more choices with better care at lower costs.

*October 30- [Medicare covers your 2020 flu shot](#). Things may be different this flu season, but your flu shot coverage is the same. We know that cost might be a factor when deciding whether to get a flu shot, but here’s some good news: you’ll pay nothing when you get yours from a doctor or other qualified health care provider who accepts [assignment](#).

*October 30- [3 reasons to review & compare Medicare plans](#). Medicare’s Open Enrollment ends **December 7**. Even if you’re happy with your current Medicare coverage, it’s important to know your Medicare coverage options for 2021.

*November 1- [November is American Diabetes Month — know the risks](#). Diabetes affects millions of Americans and it’s a leading cause of disability and death in the United States. The disease increases the risk of serious health problems like nerve damage, kidney failure, and heart disease. November is [American Diabetes Month](#), the ideal time for you to find out if you’re at risk and learn about the services and diabetic supplies covered by Medicare.

*November 1- [Open Enrollment is here! Enroll in 2021 coverage today!](#) The 2021 Health Insurance Marketplace® is open for business! You have until December 15 to apply for new 2021 health insurance, or renew, change, or update your 2020 health plan for 2021. Coverage starts January 1, 2021.

*November 2- [November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month — lower your risk](#). Lung cancer is the number one cause of cancer death in the United States. Every year, nearly 218,000 people are diagnosed with lung cancer and more than 150,000 die from this disease. The best way to prevent lung cancer is to quit smoking and stop using tobacco products.

*November 2- [Hospice care at home: get the support you need](#). There are many difficult decisions that come with a terminal illness, like considering whether hospice care is right for you. The thought of hospice can be scary, but it's important to learn about end of life options.

*November 5- [3 reasons to enroll in 2021 health insurance today](#). You have until Tuesday, December 15, 2020 to enroll in or change 2021 Marketplace health coverage that starts January 1, 2021. Enrolling at HealthCare.gov may be easier than you think. Here are 3 reasons to enroll today.

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