



## CMS Snapshot

**March 11-18, 2021**

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

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, March 11 through 2pm Thursday, March 18, 2021.

### News Releases

\*March 11- [Biden Administration to Expand COVID-19 Vaccine Program to 950 Community Health Centers](#). As part of President Biden's commitment to ensure the nation's underserved communities and those disproportionately affected by COVID-19 are equitably vaccinated, this week the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is announcing that an additional 700 HRSA-supported health centers will be invited to join the Health Center COVID-19 Vaccine Program. These health centers will have the opportunity to join the program over the next six weeks, increasing the total number of invited health center participants to 950.

\*March 12- [HHS and DHS Joint Statement on Termination of 2018 Agreement \(Spanish version\)](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced the termination of a 2018 agreement that undermined the interests of children and had a chilling effect on potential sponsors (usually a parent or close relative) from stepping up to sponsor an unaccompanied child placed in the care of HHS. In its place, DHS and HHS signed a new Memorandum of Agreement that promotes the safe and timely transfer of children. The new agreement does not change safeguards designed to ensure unaccompanied children are unified with properly vetted sponsors who can safely care for them while they await immigration proceedings.

\*March 12- [Biden Administration Takes Action Through HHS to Increase Number of Vaccinators](#). As part of President Biden's national strategy to defeat the pandemic, and following his speech last night outlining the Administration's next steps in the war-time effort to speed COVID-19 vaccinations, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has taken action to expand the pool of qualified professionals able to serve as vaccinators.

\*March 12- [CMS Announces Final participants in Emergency Triage, Treat, and Transport \(ET3\) Model, Furthers Commitment to Ensure Beneficiaries Have Access to Quality Care and](#)

[Treatment](#). Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announced the final list of participants approved to take part in CMS' Emergency Triage, Treat, and Transport (ET3) Model, a payment model that aims to provide greater flexibility to ambulance care teams to address emergency health care needs of Medicare Fee-for-Service beneficiaries following a 911 call. The list of final participants include 184 public and private ambulance providers and suppliers representing 36 states. CMS is also issuing a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) of up to \$34 million over two years for local and state governments to expand emergency and non-emergency medical triage services in locations of model participants.

\*March 15- [Biden-Harris Administration Increases Medicare Payment for Life-Saving COVID-19 Vaccine](#). Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is increasing the Medicare payment amount for administering the COVID-19 vaccine. This new and higher payment rate will support important actions taken by providers that are designed to increase the number of vaccines they can furnish each day, including establishing new or growing existing vaccination sites, conducting patient outreach and education, and hiring additional staff.

\*March 17- [Biden Administration to Invest More Than \\$12 Billion to Expand COVID-19 Testing](#). As part of President Biden's [National Strategy for the COVID-19 Response and Pandemic Preparedness - PDF](#), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will invest \$10 billion from the American Rescue Plan to ramp up screening testing to help schools reopen, \$2.25 billion to scale up testing in underserved populations, and provide new guidance on asymptomatic screening testing in schools, workplaces, and congregate settings. These measures are part of President Biden's strategy to increase COVID-19 testing nationwide as vaccinations increase.

\*March 17- [Biden Administration to Invest \\$150 Million to Expand Access to COVID-19 Treatments in Underserved Communities](#). As part of the Biden Administration's ongoing efforts to promote health equity in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is investing \$150 million to increase access to COVID-19 monoclonal antibody therapeutic treatments for patients in vulnerable communities across the country.

## Fact Sheet

\*March 12- [Fact Sheet: The American Rescue Plan: Reduces Health Care Costs, Expands Access to Insurance Coverage and Addresses Health Care Disparities](#). The Biden-Harris Administration is reducing health care costs, expanding access to coverage, and ensuring nearly everyone who buys their own individual or family health insurance through a Marketplace can receive a tax credit to reduce their premiums. The American Rescue Plan (ARP) not only provides the resources for America to beat this pandemic, but it also expands access to health insurance coverage, lowers costs, and ensures that health care truly is a right for all Americans.

\*March 12- [American Rescue Plan and the Marketplace](#). The New Law: President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) into law on March 11, 2021. ARP makes major improvements in access to and affordability of health coverage through the Marketplace by increasing eligibility for financial assistance to help pay for Marketplace coverage.

\*March 16- [Primary Care First Model Cohort 2 CY 2021 Fact Sheet](#). In January 2021, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMS Innovation Center) launched the Primary Care First (PCF) Model to test whether financial risk and performance-based payments that reward primary care practitioners for easily understood, actionable outcomes will reduce total Medicare expenditures, preserve or enhance quality of care, and improve patient health outcomes. CMS is announcing that the [Primary Care First Model](#) Cohort 2 Request for Applications (RFA) and Practice Application are now available.

*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)*