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October 24, 2014

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From NASUAD

2014 HCBS Conference Materials are Now Available

Conference presentations are now online at www.nasuad.org.

They are also available in the HCBS conference app. In the app, simply select the session you are interested in (from the agenda button) and you will find the PDF file loaded after the session description.

If you do not see a PowerPoint presentation listed, it is because a copy of that presentation was not shared with NASUAD. Staff will be working on collecting the missing presentations.

Make sure to save the date for the 2015 HCBS Conference from **August 31 - September 3, 2015** in Washington DC.

[Click here](#) to view the conference materials.

[Click here](#) to contact Byron Phillips if you see that your own presentation is missing.

Long-Term Services and Supports Hill Briefings

On Monday, October 20th, NASUAD moderated a panel on rebalancing issues for Congressional staff. This briefing was one in a series of four sponsored by Senators Blumenthal and Rockefeller and facilitated by the National Council on Aging (NCOA); the briefings are intended to educate staff on current LTSS issues and challenges. Representatives from NCOA, the National Senior Citizens Law Center, The National Resource Center for Participant-Directed Services and the West Virginia Developmental Disabilities Council shared perspectives on both the progress made to date in rebalancing the long term care system as well as remaining challenges. Key among those are the institutional 'bias' in Medicaid coverage and the cessation of funding for ADRCs, the Balancing Incentive Program and the Money Follows the Person program in the next couple of years.

[Click here](#) to access handouts and background papers from the four session.

***SAGE: New Report, Out and Visible**

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Now Available: MIPPA Outreach Materials for Low-Income Medicare Beneficiaries with Disabilities

In collaboration with consumers and professionals in the aging and disabilities network, NASUAD has developed outreach materials to promote Medicare low-income subsidies to beneficiaries with disabilities. NASUAD created 3 posters to educate Medicare beneficiaries with disabilities about subsidies that may help them save on Medicare costs. NASUAD also developed a Tip Sheet for MIPPA outreach professionals to use as a quick reference tool about Medicare low-income subsidies and referral resources. The posters include an editable space wherein outreach professionals may add contact information for their preferred referral source.

[Click here](#) to view or download the Posters and Tip Sheet.

From the Administration

White House Conference on Aging Website Goes Live

Nora Super, the Executive Director of the White House Conference on Aging, announced the launch of the [Conference Website](#) this week. Super stated:

"Preparations for the 2015 White House Conference on Aging are in full gear. Older adults are an essential part of the fabric of American life, and the Conference offers an opportunity to celebrate the contributions of older Americans to our economy, families, and community. Throughout the next year, we will engage in a national dialogue with Americans of all ages to celebrate and support the health and well-being of older Americans. This will culminate in a memorable Conference in the year that we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Medicare, Medicaid, and the Older Americans Act, and the 80th anniversary of Social Security."

The website provides an opportunity to get involved in planning for the 2015 White House Conference on Aging.

[Click here](#) to receive weekly updates on Conference activities and to share your thoughts and stories about the issues and programs most important to you.

[The Conference website](#) will continue to share new opportunities to engage directly with the 2015 White House Conference on Aging through social media, regional forums, and webinars.

To read Nora Super's full announcement, [click here](#).

Administration for Community Living

ACL Announces Changes to Organizational Structure

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) has announced changes to its organizational structure. As described in a notice published in the Federal Register (Vol. 79, October 16, 2014), the reorganization intends to advance the objectives of ACL by establishing a Center for Consumer Access and Self-Determination to serve as the locus for programs that assist older Americans and people with disabilities to access both health care services and long-term services and supports, as well as initiatives to expand the use of self-directed and person-center service models; and by establishing a Center for Policy and Evaluation to provide a strategic focal point for the development and implementation of policies to improve access to long-term services and supports and enhance opportunities for both populations to live in their communities.

The Center for Consumer Access and Self-Determination replaces the Center for Disability and Aging Policy (CDAP). The State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIP) will be housed there, as will the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) and Medicare Improvements for Patients and Provider Act (MIPPA) programs, bringing together three programs with a common focus on Medicare beneficiary education and outreach. This Center is also where the Lifespan Respite program and some smaller integrated activities, such as the coordinated transportation and supported decision-making grants, will reside. The changes also realign ACL's existing policy development and program evaluation activities from CDAP to the new Center for Policy and Evaluation. This center will assume responsibility for evaluating ACL programs and reviewing departmental policies for their impact on older adults and people with disabilities.

These changes also incorporate the Paralysis Resource Center and SHIP, which respectively moved from the CDC and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to ACL earlier this year. Additionally, the reorganization expands the Office of Elder Rights to become the Office of Elder Justice and Adult Protective Services (APS) in recognition that APS spans both the aging and disability communities. Finally, the reorganization sets the stage for transitioning programs from the Department of Education to ACL as part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act over the next year.

[Click here](#) for more information.

[Click here](#) to view the notice in the *Federal Register*.

Integrating Plans for Long-Term Services and Supports and Health Care Delivery through Health Information Technology

On Thursday, October 16, 2014, the Administration for Community Living and the Office of the National Coordinator on Health Information Technology of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services held a town-hall style public workshop seeking input from stakeholders and experts on the use of health information technology (HIT) to enable a person-centered approach for planning and delivering long-term services and supports and health care, including how to improve collaboration among community-based organizations and the health care sector.

The session touched on several themes, including the importance of interoperability between social and medical IT systems; the need to develop metrics around long-term services and supports; the role of sequencing and language in presenting information about a patient; and shaping policy to promote person-centeredness. You can access the workshop agenda and presentations [here](#).

The Administration for Community Living and the Office of the National Coordinator on Health Information Technology are soliciting public comments on all aspects of the workshop topics.

The deadline for submitting comments is October 31, 2014. You can submit comments [here](#).

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

August Medicaid Enrollment Report Available

On Friday, October 17th, CMS released the latest in their series of monthly Medicaid enrollment reports. According to the CMS report, the number of individuals on Medicaid grew by approximately 8.7 million individuals since the beginning of the open enrollment period in October 2013. According to the report, states that adopted the ACA expansion saw enrollment growth of over 20%, while enrollment grew by approximately 5% in states that did not adopt the expansion.

[Click here](#) to review the full report.

Medicare Open Enrollment Begins

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced the start of the Medicare Open Enrollment, which began this week on October 15th and ends December 7th. CMS encourages people with Medicare to review their current health and prescription drug coverage options for 2015.

"It's important that seniors should take this time to review their plans to make sure they are the best choice for their situation. Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, seniors and people with disabilities are benefiting from improved quality in Medicare health and drug plans at competitive prices," said CMS Administrator Marilyn Tavenner. "With this improved quality, Medicare health and drug plan enrollees will receive improved care and coverage in a timely manner."

[Click here](#) for more information.

Innovation Accelerator Program to Focus on Substance Abuse Disorder Treatment Systems

In July 2014, CMS launched the Medicaid Innovation Accelerator Program (IAP) with the goal of improving health and health care for Medicaid beneficiaries by supporting states' efforts to accelerate new payment and service delivery reforms. They

recently announced that the first IAP focus area will address strategies to improve states substance use disorder (SUD) treatment systems. SUD is a serious and growing problem in the US, but evidence is also strong for the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of treatment.

Based on conversations CMS has been having for the past couple of years about the importance of expanding and improving services for SUD, they think the timing is right to collaborate on the introduction of some significant system reforms. In the weeks to come, CMS will release guidance and hold a webinar for states interested in learning about additional SUD-related technical assistance opportunities.

They are looking for states that are interested in investing in transformative changes in their SUD treatment systems in raising the bar for SUD service design and delivery.

If your state is interested in joining this SUD Learning Collaborative, or if you have ideas about SUD-related challenges, strategies, data needs, or other considerations, email MedicaidIAP@cms.hhs.gov.

Department of Labor

Partnership on Employment and Accessible Technology Launches Web Portal

The Office of Disability Employment Policy at the U.S. Department of Labor announced the launch of PEATworks.org, a comprehensive web portal led by the agency's Partnership on Employment & Accessible Technology (PEAT). The website's content aims to help employers and the technology industry adopt accessible technology as part of everyday business practice, for the benefit of all workers. PEATworks.org will be the central hub of PEAT, a multifaceted initiative to improve the employment, retention and career advancement of people with disabilities through the promotion of accessible technology. PEAT conducts outreach, facilitates collaboration and provides a mix of resources to serve as a catalyst for policy development and innovation related to accessible technology in the workplace. Features of PEATworks.org include an action guide for employers and informational articles, and it will serve as a platform for collaboration and dialogue around accessible technology in the workplace. Also featured is "TechCheck," an interactive tool to help employers assess their technology accessibility practices and find resources to help develop them further.

[Click here](#) for more information.

Social Security Administration

Social Security Benefits to Increase by 1.7 Percent in 2015

On October 22nd, the Social Security Administration announced the annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for benefits. Based upon the inflationary formula, benefits will increase by 1.7%,

beginning in January 2015. This will lead to an average monthly retiree benefit of \$1,328, an average payment to individuals with disabilities of \$1,165. The new monthly SSI standard will be \$733. The COLA will also affect eligibility thresholds for certain Medicaid programs, including many Medicaid waivers which set eligibility at 300% of the SSI standard.

[Click here](#) for more information.

From Congress

Congress on Recess until November 12, 2014

From Other Organizations

Alliance for Aging Research

Webcast: Promoting Safe Medication Use and Storage with the Alliance for Aging Research and UpAndAway

On Tuesday, November 4th, 12:30 - 1:30 PM EST, the Alliance for Aging Research and the UpAndAway Campaign will present a webcast on medicine storage education specifically for seniors and the communities who serve them. The webcast aims to inform and engage collaborators and stakeholders in the senior health/aging space around the issue of safe medicine storage and disposal, both to keep young grandchildren safe from accidental medicine poisoning and abuse, and to protect curious teens from accessible medicines that can be abused. Tips for medicine adherence will also be addressed.

[Click here](#) to register for the webcast.

Alzheimer's Foundation

Participate in National Memory Screening Day

On November 18, the Alzheimer's Foundation of America will hold National Memory Screening Day. Healthcare professionals provide free, confidential memory screenings at myriad sites nationwide. Screening sites include doctors' offices, hospitals, Alzheimer's agencies, assisted living facilities, libraries and pharmacies. The results are not a diagnosis, but can indicate whether participants should follow up for a full examination.

[Click here](#) to sign up as a memory screening site.

National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care

October is Residents' Rights Month

Residents' Rights Month is an annual event designated by the Consumer Voice and is celebrated in October to honor residents living in all long-term care facilities, including nursing homes, sub acute units, assisted living, board and care and retirement communities. This is a time for celebration and recognition offering an opportunity for every facility to focus on and celebrate awareness of dignity, respect and the value of each individual resident. The theme for Residents' Rights Month 2014 is, "Better Staffing: The Key to Better Care" with the goal of encouraging residents and others to be educated about staffing and long-term care.

The Consumer Voice offers Residents' Rights Month promotional products including a calendar, keychain and magnet, as well as promotional materials and other resources.

[Click here](#) to view promotional products.

[Click here](#) to view all Residents' Rights Month resources.

Kaiser Family Foundation

Brief Examines Health Coverage for Workers with Disabilities

A new issue brief from the Kaiser Family Foundation looks at benefits and cost-sharing for working people with disabilities in Medicaid and the Marketplace. The authors recognize that access to affordable health insurance with adequate coverage of key benefits is essential to the ability of many people with disabilities to seek and maintain employment. The issue brief uses hypothetical examples of working people with disabilities to illustrate the experiences they might have with Medicaid and Marketplace coverage in four states (California, Kentucky, New Jersey, and Ohio), with a focus on benefits that are typically important to people with disabilities. The case studies include a student with mild cerebral palsy who is working part-time, a 35-year old construction worker with depression, and a 40-year old fast food worker recently diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Key themes to emerge from this analysis include several highlighted below:

- Due to mental health parity requirements, Medicaid benefits for newly eligible adults may include more extensive mental health and substance use treatment services, unless states also modify their Medicaid state plan benefits to reflect the full extent of required coverage for new adults.
- Within a benefit category, Marketplace qualified health plan (QHP) coverage of specific services, such as rehabilitative and habilitative services, may differ from Medicaid coverage and may be subject to different utilization limits than apply in Medicaid in some states.
- Coverage of long-term services and supports may be more extensive in Medicaid than in Marketplace QHPs.

The authors find that, looking ahead, Medicaid is likely to remain an important source of coverage for working people with disabilities, and Medicaid expansion and Marketplace QHPs may provide greater access to affordable coverage for this population as their incomes increase.

[Click here](#) to access the issue brief.

RESNA Catalyst Project

Upcoming Webcast on Assistive Technology

A webcast scheduled for November 13, 2014, from 2:00-3:00p.m. Eastern time, will feature the RESNA Catalyst Project on providing assistive technology (AT) support and technical assistance. In this webcast, Dr. Joey Wallace, Director of the RESNA Catalyst Project, will give an overview of the services offered by the Project. He will define the services and devices of assistive technology and describe the benefits of assistive technology such as independence, community living, and employment. In addition, Paul Galonsky, MPA, and Jason Luciano, PhD, both with RESNA, will discuss the options to help individuals live independently through Statewide Assistive Technology Programs. Dr. Luciano will explain alternative financing programs designed to help make assistive devices affordable. The RESNA Catalyst Project provides technical assistance to the 56 State Assistive Technology Projects and 36 Alternative Financing Programs. This webcast is hosted by Virginia Commonwealth University Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Employment of People with Physical Disabilities.

[Click here](#) to register.

SAGE

New Report from SAGE

Out and Visible: The Experiences and Attitudes of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Older Adults, Ages 45-75 examines the values, needs, wants and lifestyle preferences of LGBT older people. This study explores the aging realities of LGBT people, as well as their fears, beliefs, behaviors and aspirations in areas such as healthcare, finance and retirement, support systems, housing and sources of information.

[Click here](#) to download the full report.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Job Postings

Communications and Outreach Coordinator at NASUAD

NASUAD, located in Washington, DC, is looking for a Communications and Outreach Coordinator to write and edit stories and messages for publications, social media, website and various communication areas. The Coordinator will maintain our website, online clearinghouse, and online learning center, as well as coordinate media contacts, writes press releases, assist with special events as needed.

Other responsibilities include:

- Develop and manage engagement with social media, namely Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn
- Write, edit and disseminate our weekly e-newsletters
- Update and manage information on our website, our e-clearinghouse, and online learning center
- Assist with production of documents, publications and other communication materials

To apply, please send a resume and cover letter to: eristeen@nasuad.org. NASUAD is committed to providing equal opportunities for all applicants for employment.

Public Policy Intern at NASUAD

The National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD), the membership organization of the agencies in state government that manage programs for older people and adults with physical disabilities, seeks a public policy intern.

Responsibilities include analyzing aging and disability data, developing and/or maintaining databases, assisting with project management, and conducting legislative and policy research.

Applicants must have strong data analytic, data management, research and written communication skills. Candidacy for a Master's Degree in Public Policy, Public Administration or Public Health is required. Hours are flexible to accommodate classes.

To apply, please send a resume and cover letter to: eristeen@nasuad.org. NASUAD is committed to providing equal opportunities for all applicants for employment.

Director of Communications, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

The Director of Communications develops and executes a multi-strategy communications plan to provide essential information and resources to targeted audiences; raise awareness of Council priorities and initiatives; and impact and influence issues of importance to the Council. The Director of Communications also manages and contributes to the Council's internal and external reports, and performs other duties that support and enhance the work of the Council. The Director of Communication works closely and collaboratively with a small staff.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

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