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HHS Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs News Bulletin: Friday, July 11, 2014

Visit HHS.gov/Healthcare and CuidadodeSalud.Gov, two consumer-focused health care websites to: [find insurance options](#), [compare care quality](#), [and learn about the law](#). How is the Affordable Care Act helping you? Share your story [here](#).

ACA News

✱ July 9, 2014

Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell announced new prospective awardees to test innovative care models, bringing the total amount of funding to as much as \$360 million for 39 recipients spanning 27 states and the District of Columbia. These models are designed to deliver better health care and lower costs under the Health Care Innovation Awards program.

The prospective (not yet final) awards range from an expected \$2 million to \$23.8 million over a three year period. These awards are made possible by the Affordable Care Act and round out the anticipated recipients for round two of the Health Care Innovation Awards program. Examples include projects to promote better care for persons living with HIV/AIDS, reduce unnecessary use of emergency departments, improve pediatric dental care, promote prevention and management of cardiovascular disorders, and to improve care coordination in rural areas of the country. Earlier this year, HHS announced 12 prospective round two recipients receiving as much as \$110 million in combined funding and testing models in 13 states. Prospective recipients will receive their final Notice of Award later this summer.

The press release is available [here](#).

Additional information about the Health Care Innovation Awards program prospective recipients announced today is available [here](#).

Information on other innovative models being tested by the CMS Innovation Center is available at: innovation.cms.gov.

✱ July 8, 2014

HHS Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell announced the availability of \$100 million from the Affordable Care Act to support an estimated 150 new health center sites across the country in 2015. New health center sites will increase access to comprehensive, affordable, high quality primary health care services in the communities that need it most.

This investment will add to the more than 550 new health center sites that have opened in the last three years as a result of the Affordable Care Act. Today, nearly 1,300 health centers operate more than 9,200 service delivery sites that provide care to more than 21 million patients in every State, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Pacific Basin. Health centers are also playing a critical role in helping the public learn about new coverage opportunities under the Affordable Care Act, by conducting outreach and enrollment activities that link individuals to affordable coverage options available through the [Health Insurance Marketplace](#).

The press release is available [here](#)

More information on this funding opportunity is available [here](#)

You can learn more about the Affordable Care Act at www.HealthCare.gov

Additional information on HRSA's Health Center Program is available [here](#)

To find a health center in your area, visit <http://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov>

✱ July 7, 2014

Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell announced \$83.4 million in Affordable Care Act funding to support primary care residency programs in 60 Teaching Health Centers across the nation. The funding will help train more than 550 residents during the 2014-2015 academic year, increasing the number of residents trained in the previous academic year by more than 200 and helping to increase access to health care in communities across the country.

Created by the Affordable Care Act, the Teaching Health Center Program expands residency training in community-based settings. Residents will be trained in family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, psychiatry, geriatrics, and general dentistry.

Today's awards expand the number of states with Teaching Health Centers from 21 to 24. Teaching Health Centers are located in a variety of settings, including urban, rural, and Tribal communities, and serve diverse populations.

A list of awards (asterisk indicates new awardees) is available [here](#)

More information on the Teaching Health Centers program is available [here](#)

The Press Release can be found [here](#)

✱ July 3, 2014

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a proposed rule that would update payment policies and payment rates for services furnished under the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (PFS) on or after Jan. 1, 2015. Medicare primarily pays physicians and other practitioners for care management services as part of face-to-face visits. Last year, CMS finalized a separate payment, outside of a face-to-face visit, for managing the care of Medicare patients with two or more chronic conditions beginning in 2015. Through this year's rule, CMS is proposing details relating to the implementation of the new policy, including payment rates. In addition, CMS is proposing a new process for establishing PFS payment rates that will be more transparent and allow for greater public input prior to payment rates being set. Under the new process, payment changes will go through notice and comment rulemaking before being adopted beginning for 2016. We are also proposing to define screening colonoscopy to include anesthesia so that beneficiaries do not have to pay coinsurance on the anesthesia portion of a screening colonoscopy when furnished by an anesthesiologist.

Additional information on Open Payments is available [here](#).

The proposed rule will be published in the Federal Register on July 11, 2014. CMS will accept comments on the proposed rule until Sept. 2, 2014.

For more information, visit: <https://www.federalregister.gov/public-inspection>

The Payment Fact Sheet, Quality Fact Sheet and Value Modifier are all available [here](#)

✱ July 3, 2014

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued the Calendar Year (CY) 2015 Hospital Outpatient Prospective Payment System (OPPS) and Ambulatory Surgical Center (ASC) Payment System Policy Changes and Payment Rates proposed rule [CMS-1613-P] on July 3, 2014.

The proposed rule would update Medicare payment policies and rates for hospital outpatient department and ASC services, and update and streamline programs that encourage high-quality care in these outpatient settings. This proposal would continue the progress made so far in moving the OPPS from what currently resembles a hybrid of a prospective payment system and a fee schedule, to a more complete prospective payment system. CMS is proposing a policy finalized in the CY 2014 OPPS/ASC final rule with comment period regarding comprehensive APCs, for which implementation was delayed until CY 2015. CMS is proposing refinements and updates to this policy to make a single payment for all related or adjunctive hospital services provided to a patient in the furnishing of certain primary procedures, such as insertion of a pacemaker.

This Fact Sheet addresses the general payment provisions of the Hospital OPPS and ASC payment system for CY 2015. A separate fact sheet addressing the quality provisions of the proposed rule can be found here: <http://cms.gov/Newsroom/MediaReleaseDatabase/Fact-sheets/2014-Fact-sheets.html>.

CMS will accept comments on the proposed rule until September 2, 2014 and will respond to comments in a final rule to be issued on or around November 1, 2014. The proposed rule will appear in the July 14, 2014 Federal Register and can be downloaded from the Federal Register at: <http://www.ofr.gov/inspection.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>.

✱ July 2, 2014

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a proposed rule that would update payment policies and rates under the End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Prospective Payment System (PPS) for renal dialysis services furnished to beneficiaries on or after January 1, 2015. This proposal would introduce new quality and performance measures to improve the quality of care by outpatient dialysis facilities treating patients with end-stage renal disease and proposes to implement the Affordable Care Act mandate to bring more competitive bidding for durable medical equipment.

The rule also proposes changes to the ESRD Quality Incentive Program (QIP), including for payment year (PY) 2017 and PY 2018, under which payment incentives are applied to dialysis facilities to improve the quality of dialysis care. Under the ESRD QIP, facilities that do not achieve a minimum total performance score with respect to quality measures established in regulation receive a reduction in their payment rates under the ESRD PPS. This rule also addresses issues related to the coverage and payment of durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies (DMEPOS).

A fact sheet addressing the quality provisions of the ESRD PPS for CY 2015 can be found [here](#).

CMS will accept comments on the proposed rule until September 2, 2014. The proposed rule will appear in the July 11, 2014 Federal Register and can be downloaded from the [Federal Register](#).

Additional Information on the End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) can be found [here](#)

✳ July 2, 2014

The Council of Economic Advisers released a report, *Missed Opportunities: The Consequences of State Decisions Not to Expand Medicaid*, which details the effects of state decisions regarding Medicaid expansion on access to care, financial security, overall health and well-being of residents, and state economies.

The Affordable Care Act has expanded high-quality, affordable health insurance coverage to millions of Americans. One important way in which the Affordable Care Act is expanding coverage is by providing generous financial support to States that opt to expand Medicaid eligibility to all non-elderly individuals in families with incomes below 133 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

✳ July 1, 2014

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced proposed changes to the Medicare home health prospective payment system (HH PPS) for calendar year (CY) 2015 that would foster greater efficiency, flexibility, payment accuracy, and improved quality. Based on the most recent data available, CMS estimates that approximately 3.5 million beneficiaries received home health services from nearly 12,000 home health agencies, costing Medicare approximately \$18 billion in 2013.

In the rule, CMS projects that Medicare payments to home health agencies in CY 2015 will be reduced by 0.30 percent, or -\$58 million based on the proposed policies. The proposed decrease reflects the effects of the 2.2 percent home health payment update percentage (\$427 million increase) and the rebasing adjustments to the national, standardized 60-day episode payment rate, the national per-visit payment rates, and the non-routine medical supplies (NRS) conversion factor (\$485 million decrease).

Additional information about the Home Health Prospective Payment System is available [here](#).

The proposed rule can be viewed at the [federal register](#). Please be mindful this link will change once the proposed rule is published on July 7, 2014 in the Federal Register. CMS will accept comments on the proposed rule until Sept. 2, 2013.

✳ June 30, 2014

The Office of Minority Health released a new data brief examining the characteristics of uninsured adult males by race and ethnicity. The data brief highlights several factors that impact health and access to health care for minority men.

The brief can be found [here](#)

The blog can be found [here](#)

Special enrollment period:

SEP: Baby or Adoption

Suggested Content

- ☐ Growing family? You're due to [#GetCovered](#)! Explore your health care options here: <http://1.usa.gov/1umMaWN>
- ☐ Having a baby? Your growing family may have new options for coverage: <http://1.usa.gov/1qGzMCu> [#GetCovered](#)
- ☐ Having a baby or adopting a child qualifies you for a Special Enrollment Period: <http://go.usa.gov/9cSY>
- ☐ Baby on the way? You're [#DueToGetCovered](#)! Learn more about your health care options: <http://1.usa.gov/1umMaWN>.
- ☐ Make sure every toe is covered - [#BabyOnTheWay](#) means you have new health care options available to you!
- ☐ Your growing family may have new options for coverage: <http://1.usa.gov/1qGzMCu> [#GetCovered](#)
- ☐ Your new family may have new options for coverage. <http://1.usa.gov/1qGzMCu> [#GetCovered](#)
- ☐ Have a new addition to the family? Learn more about getting coverage outside of open enrollment: <http://go.usa.gov/9cSY> [#GetCovered](#)

Images

- ☐ [new-family-new-coverage-1.jpg](#)
- ☐ [new-family-new-coverage.jpg](#)
- ☐ [Baby1.jpg](#)
- ☐ [Baby2.jpg](#)

SEP: 26th Birthday

Suggested Content

- ☐ Turning 26 and looking for health coverage? [#GetCovered](#) at [@HealthCareGov](#). [#BornIn88](http://1.usa.gov/1umMaWN)
- ☐ No longer covered by your parents' plan? [#GetCovered](#) at [@HealthCareGov](#) when you turn 26. [#BornIn88](http://1.usa.gov/1umMaWN)
- ☐ Turning 26 means you have new options for health coverage: [#GetCovered](http://1.usa.gov/1umMaWN) [#BornIn88](#)

Images

- ☐ [26th-birthday-get-covered.jpg](#)
- ☐ [26th-birthday-get-covered-1.jpg](#)
- ☐ [26th-birthday-get-covered-2.jpg](#)

SEP: New Address

Suggested Content

- ☐ Unpack, then [#GetCovered](#). A new address means new coverage options: <http://1.usa.gov/1umMaWN>
- ☐ Open the door to your new home, and new health care options: [#GetCovered](http://1.usa.gov/1umMaWN)
- ☐ New home = new coverage. [#GetCovered](http://1.usa.gov/1umMaWN)

Images

- ☐ [new-address-new-coverage.jpg](#)
- ☐ [new-address-new-coverage-1.jpg](#)

SEP: Marriage

Suggested Content

- ☐ Got married? Congratulations! You're in the driver's seat to [#GetCovered](#): <http://1.usa.gov/1umMaWN>
- ☐ Tying the knot? It's time to [#GetCovered](#)! [#GetCovered](http://1.usa.gov/1umMaWN)
- ☐ Getting married means you have new options for health care: [#GetCovered](http://1.usa.gov/1umMaWN)
- ☐ It's time to say "I Do" to health insurance. Take the next big step and [#GetCovered](#): <http://1.usa.gov/1umMaWN>
- ☐ If you're saying "I do" you have new options for health care: [#LoveIsLove](http://1.usa.gov/1umMaWN)

Images

- ☐ [got-married-get-covered.jpg](#)
- ☐ [Marriage1.jpg](#)
- ☐ [Marriage2.jpg](#)

SEP: Medicaid & CHIP

Suggested Content

- ☐ Kids can [#Enroll365](#) in [#Medicaid](#) and [#CHIP](#)! Explore your options and [#GetCovered](#): <http://1.usa.gov/1umMaWN>
- ☐ Kids can be enrolled in [#Medicaid](#) and [#CHIP](#) all year long! [#Enroll365](http://1.usa.gov/1umMaWN)

Images

- ☐ [enroll-365.jpg](#)
- ☐ [enroll-365-1.jpg](#)

Health Care Blog Posts

✱ July 11, 2014

Medicaid enrollment continues to increase all across the country, especially in those states that have expanded their Medicaid programs under the Affordable Care Act.

As of the end of May, 6.7 million more individuals were enrolled in Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) as compared to the baseline period from July through September 2013, an increase of 11.4 percent. That includes more than 920,000 additional people enrolled in May as compared to April in the 48 states and the District of Columbia that reported data.

[Read the full blog post here.](#)
[Read the July 11th report.](#)

✱ July 10th, 2014

In [*I'm Covered Stories: Getting the Facts Herself*](#), we meet Ruth – a former skeptic of the Affordable Care Act. When she finally did the research herself, she got covered. It ultimately saved her life. It's a story worth sharing. Check out Ruth's blog to learn how the ACA has helped her take control of her health and put her life back in focus, through preventative services and vital screenings with a plan she can afford.

✱ July 7, 2014

If you are a small business owner, learn the basics of the Affordable Care Act and how you can enroll into the SHOP Marketplace. This blog, [Health care basics for small businesses](#), provide information for small business owners that have questions about the ACA and information about upcoming webinars is also posted here.

✱ July 1, 2014

In the blog post, [*I'm Covered Stories: And Baby Makes Three with a Special Enrollment*](#), we meet Stephanie and Justine Parker – with a soon to be +1! As a growing family, the Parkers made the decision to finally get covered under the ACA, after years of being unable to afford health insurance. Stephanie said that without the law, she probably would have been turned down for insurance because of her pregnancy, a pre-existing condition that now can't be held against her.

Read Stephanie and Justin's story to get a sense of how the ACA has helped support growing families both during and after pregnancy, including preventive services like a well-baby visit that the Affordable Care Act requires insurers to cover at no out-of-pocket charge.

✱ July 3, 2014

In this blog, [We're making it easy for you to keep your Marketplace coverage next year](#), the public will be able to learn about the 7 things to know about renewing your health coverage and auto-enrollment during the 2014-2015 Open Enrollment Period.

White House Health Care Blog Posts

✱ July 3, 2014

[A few miles can make the difference between getting healthcare or being uninsured](#). For Adelina of Sunland Park, New Mexico, living in one state over another made all the difference in getting health care. Because she lives in New Mexico, rather than nearby Texas, she was able to access health care. The real difference of a state's decision making is demonstrated in [both Adelina's story](#) and a new report released yesterday by the Council of Economic Advisers entitled *Missed Opportunities: The Consequences of State Decisions Not to Expand Medicaid*.

✱ July 2, 2014

Twenty-four states still haven't acted to make more struggling families eligible for Medicaid — including many of the states that would benefit most. If these states don't opt to expand Medicaid, 5.7 million people won't have access to health insurance coverage in 2016. [Want to know exactly how Medicaid expansion will help millions of Americans? Check out our new resource center](#), featuring an interactive map that shows what expanding Medicaid would mean for people in each state — from access to affordable health insurance and preventive care, to new jobs created.

✱ July 1, 2014

For the sixth time since taking office, President Obama joined national, state, and local community leaders, business leaders, grassroots activists, elected officials, and others for an event celebrating [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender \(LGBT\) Pride Month](#) at the White House.

Read more and watch a video of the event [here](#).

✱ **June 30, 2014**

On June 30th, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Hobby Lobby in the much-publicized *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc.* case. Read Press Secretary Josh Earnest's statement about where the President stands on this ruling [here](#).

Educational Materials

Below you'll find materials related to the implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

Info-Grpahics

View our entire **Flickr Info-Graphs** page [here](#).

Public Service Announcement/Address

Twitter/Facebook

Marketplace Updates

For information on how to sign up for coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace, including text message and email updates visit <http://www.healthcare.gov/marketplace/index.html>

State by State Fact Sheets

Choose your state to learn more about the immediate benefits of the Affordable Care Act. The ACA state by state fact sheets have been updated with the most current stats available.

They can be found here: <http://www.hhs.gov/healthcare/facts/bystate/statebystate.html>