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October 31, 2014

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From NASUAD

National I&R Support Center Hosts Webinar on Medicaid HCBS Final Rule

The National I&R Support Center will host a webinar on the Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services Final Rule on **Wednesday, November 12, from 3:00-4:00 p.m. ET.**

Across the country, changes in policy, financing, and service delivery are transforming the provision of home and community-based services (HCBS) to persons with disabilities and older adults. In January, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released regulations that will lead to significant changes in Medicaid-funded HCBS. These regulations reflect changing expectations regarding person-centered planning, conflicts of interest, and community integration. The final rule will significantly impact the landscape of services and supports in states across the country, as well as the experiences of individuals who receive Medicaid-funded HCBS. Importantly, the rule applies to both residential and non-residential settings, such as day programs.

For I&R specialists and other staff in aging and disability agencies, implementation of the rule may impact service options available to individuals who are currently or may become Medicaid eligible. The webinar will feature NASUAD's Senior Director Damon Terzaghi, who will discuss the major provisions of the rule; current status of state activities to become compliant; and potential implications to individuals' services.

No pre-registration is required to participate in the webinar. Information to log into the audio and webinar portions is provided below.

To join the meeting, follow this link: <https://join.me/nasuad1201>

On a computer, use any browser with Flash. Nothing to download.

On a phone or tablet, launch the [join.me app](#) and enter meeting code: nasuad1201

To join the audio conference:
Dial 888-346-3659

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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

Administration for Community Living

ACL Blog: Medicaid Buy-In Opens Doors to Employment for People with Disabilities

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) Blog, in honor of Disability Awareness Month, reviewed the benefits of the Medicaid Buy-In Option.

The Blog states, "The Medicaid Buy-In program continues to provide workers with disabilities an opportunity to improve their economic well-being and achieve a better life. Inspired through the independent living movement, the Medicaid Buy-In program is an optional State Medicaid benefit group for workers with disabilities who have earnings in excess of traditional Medicaid rules. So people with disabilities who would be ineligible for

Medicaid because of earnings can work and access the services and supports they need. Ideally, it means workers with disabilities do not need to choose between healthcare and work.

For many people with disabilities, their health care needs involve access to home and community based services not available through Medicare or private insurance plans. Currently 46 States have a Buy-In program. States have flexibility in regards to the treatment of income and assets for their Medicaid Buy-In programs. Over the past decade more than 400,000 individuals with disabilities have taken part in the Medicaid Buy-In program. Total earnings among all Buy-In participants in 2011 were about \$1.15 billion."

To read the entire blog post, [click here](#).

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

CMS Releases Information on Services for Substance Use

On October 29th, CMS released an Informational Bulletin discussing strategies to improve care and outcomes for individuals with substance use disorders (SUD). According to CMS, nearly 12% of Adult Medicaid enrollees, and over 15% of the ACA expansion group has a SUD. As a result, CMS recognizes that SUD services are an area with ample opportunity for improvement in Medicaid. The bulletin includes several examples of success stories from states that implemented structural changes to address SUD services, with an emphasis on medication assisted treatment (MAT).

In the document, CMS also invites states to participate in an intense learning collaborative to assist with efforts to improve SUD services, data collection, and outcome measures. This collaborative will be the first activity of the Medicaid Innovation Accelerator Program (IAP), and will involve the provision of intense technical assistance to states. In order to participate, states must commit to providing the resources needed to effectuate meaningful change. Interested states must submit a statement of interest, included in the Informational Bulletin, by November 21st. Additional assistance will be available at a later date for states that are unable to commit the necessary resources for the intense collaborative.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

CMS Announces Intent to Extend Higher Match Rate for Eligibility Systems

On October 28th, CMS sent a letter to the National Association of Medicaid Directors and the American Public Human Services Association discussing the status of increased federal funding for Medicaid eligibility systems. Historically, these IT systems were funded with 50% federal and 50% state funding. However, in 2011, CMS released regulations implementing a time-limited increase to 90% federal funds for development and

implementation, and 75% federal funding for ongoing operations.

The regulation also provided an opportunity to waive "cost allocation" rules that create challenges when eligibility systems are integrated across multiple programs, such as SNAP, OAA, or TANF. In the letter, CMS announced intent to promulgate further regulations that would extend the increased funding permanently, and guidance that extends the cost allocation waivers until December 2018.

The letter is available [here](#).

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.

Department of Labor

Assistant Secretary Martinez Records Video on Employment of Older Persons Who Are Visually Impaired

In honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, Kathy Martinez, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Disability Employment Policy, was featured in a video for VisionAware. The video focused on employment of older workers who are visually impaired. VisionAware, a service of the American Foundation for the Blind, helps adults who are losing their sight continue to live full and independent lives by providing timely information, step-by-step daily living techniques, a directory of national and local services, and a supportive online community.

[Click here](#) to watch the VisionAware video.

National Institute on Aging

Alzheimer's Disease Research Summit 2015

The National Institute on Aging at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will be hosting the Alzheimer's Disease Research Summit 2015: Path to Treatment and Prevention on February 9th and 10th, 2015.

The central goal of the AD Research Summit is to continue the development of an integrated multidisciplinary research agenda necessary to address critical knowledge gaps and accelerate the discovery and delivery of effective treatments for Alzheimer's patients at all stages of disease. Key to achieving this goal is the identification of resources/infrastructure and multi-stakeholder partnerships necessary to successfully implement this research agenda and strategies to empower patients and engage citizens.

The program will build on the foundation laid by the 2012 NIH AD Research Summit, the US National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA)/National Plan to Address AD, and the 2013 G8 Global Dementia Summit. The agenda will be organized around 6 major themes presented in consecutive sessions which will evaluate issues of critical importance for identification and implementation of successful therapeutic interventions for Alzheimer's disease.

[Click here to learn more and to register.](#)

From Congress

Congress on Recess until November 12, 2014

From Other Organizations

Easter Seals Project ACTION

Webinar: Frequently Asked Questions on the ADA: Alternative Modes of Transportation

The Easter Seals Project ACTION is hosting a webinar on **November 19, from 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET**, on Frequently Asked Questions on the ADA: Alternative Modes of Transportation.

The webinar aims to address common questions, such as: Have you ever wondered what your rights are as a person with a disability using a ridesharing application? Or how much assistance a taxicab operator is required to provide to people with disabilities? Or the requirements under the ADA on level rail boarding?

[Click here](#) to register by November 17, 2014.

Generations United

Webinar: TANF for "Grandfamilies"

Generations United, with support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, will be hosting a webinar on November 12th, 1:00-2:15pm ET. The webinar will explore how states and counties can improve access to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) for "grandfamilies" or children and the grandparents, other extended family members and close family friends who raise them. During this webinar, we will discuss a "Kinship TANF Model" that outlines specific ways in which states and counties can help ensure that grandfamilies have access to TANF.

The webinar will explore specific state and county TANF programs, policies, and practices that may work in your area. The webinar hopes to provide ideas for how to implement the program with our ongoing free help and support.

[Click here](#) to register.

Independence in Aging, LLC

Two Day Seminar on AAA Planning and Positioning

The Independence in Aging LLC is hosting a two-day seminar titled, "Is your AAA Ready? Moving from Area Plans, Advocacy and Allocation to Strategic Planning, Positioning and Pricing" on **November 17th and 18th in Atlanta, GA**. This intensive and interactive seminar, participants will learn practical ways to begin shifting AAA culture, position your agency to compete, adapt to the new pay-for-performance marketplace and develop a business model. The two-day seminar will provide you with tools to create a strategic plan and develop pricing and performance management programs that work.

Each participant will leave with a toolkit containing adaptable strategic planning tools, pricing models and performance management tools. Participants will learn key strategies for changing how their organization thinks and operates, from top to bottom, including how to:

- Develop business strategies that empower your organization to be successful in the changing marketplace.
- Create an organizational structure that aligns with the organization's strategy.
- Educate board members and key stakeholders on what is needed to "survive and thrive" in the new environment.
- Transition staff from "advocacy" thinking to "business" thinking.
- Develop a performance management system.

The seminar is \$995 per person. [Click here](#) for more information.

National Association of Medicaid Directors

The National Association of Medicaid Directors (NAMD) Conference

The National Association of Medicaid Directors (NAMD) is holding its Fall 2014 conference from **November 3-5, 2014** at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, VA, just outside Washington, D.C. The NAMD Fall 2014 conference will include a wide variety of Medicaid workshops, keynote speeches, and addresses from leaders in the profession. Session topics will include Medicaid managed care, integration, innovation, and rebalancing. In addition to quality content, the conference will offer unique opportunities for networking, information sharing, and relationship building.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the conference. Onsite registration begins Monday, November 3rd.

National Council on Aging

NCOA Grants for New Benefits Enrollment Centers

NCOA's Center for Benefits Access is seeking nonprofit or public agencies to be part of our next cohort of Benefits Enrollment Centers (BEC). BECs use person-centered strategies in a coordinated, community-wide approach to find and enroll Medicare beneficiaries—both seniors aged 65+ years and adults living with disabilities, aged 21-64, who have limited income and resources—into available benefits. The primary focus is on Medicare Part D Extra Help (or Low-Income Subsidy, LIS), Medicare Savings Programs (MSP), Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly Food Stamps), and Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

Organizations eligible to apply for BEC grants include state or community-based nonprofit organizations, government agencies, faith-based organizations, and coalitions addressing the needs of older adults and younger adults with disabilities. Organizations that have been funded in the past as BECs are not eligible for this award. Successful applicants will receive up to \$100,000 over 15 months to enroll Medicare beneficiaries in core benefits. Letters of intent are encouraged and due Nov. 21st. The deadline for full proposals is Dec. 12th.

[Click here](#) to access the RFP.

Mathematica Policy Research

Issue Brief on Key Features of SSDI

Mathematica Policy Research has published an issue brief titled "Completing the Picture: Key Features of the Social Security Disability Insurance Program." This issue brief summarizes the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Program. Program eligibility, application process, benefit amounts, return-to-work incentives, and caseload growth are discussed. Key findings include: (1) About 8.8 million people receive SSDI benefits based on their own history; (2) The benefit application process can be lengthy for applicants who appeal initial denials; (3) SSDI improves the economic well-being of those who receive it, but many still live in poverty; (4) The rise in the number of beneficiaries is due in part to shifts in labor force demographics, among other factors.

[Click here for more information.](#)

PHI

PHI Awarded NY State Balancing Incentive Program Grant to Improve Care Transitions

The New York State Balancing Incentive Program Innovation Fund has awarded PHI \$1.9 million for its "Care Connection Project." The project will use specially trained advanced aides and telehealth technology interventions to improve care transitions in Medicaid-funded home and community-based services.

The project aims to foster stability within the home environment and reduce preventable emergency room visits and hospital readmissions for more than 1,100 Brooklyn-, Queens-, and Bronx-based members of Independence Care System (ICS), a nonprofit Medicaid managed long-term care organization that serves elders and people living with disabilities.

PHI is partnering with three home care agencies: Cooperative Home Care Associates (CHCA), Jewish Association Serving the Aging (JASA), and Sunnyside Community Services, to provide specialized training to create eight Care Connection Aides. These aides will support ICS members, their home care workers, and family caregivers.

[Click here to read more.](#)

Job Postings

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.

Friday Update Archive

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