



Washington DC Update
June 13, 2019

Greetings from Washington! Congress has been busy with hearings on a variety of health issues, including a June 4 hearing on the Family-to-Family Reauthorization Act and other health bills. South Carolina joins other states in proposing to modify its Medicaid program to establish “community engagement” requirements. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has issued a proposed rule to protect consumers from harassment by debt collectors. And it’s a busy month in other respects:



Men’s Health Month & Wear Blue Day: Friday, June 14 #ShowUsYourBlue



World Sickle Cell Day: Wednesday, June 19

(See also the CDC’s [SCD webpage](#), available in both English and Spanish.)

Pride month: Understanding Unequal Health Risks of LGBT Students

Starting June 12: APPLY TO BE AN ACA COUNSELOR or NAVIGATOR – See the Affordable Care Act section below for more information.

UPCOMING WEBINARS AND CALLS

CMS June Learning Series Webinar

Wednesday, June 13, 1:00-2:30 pm ET

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

This webinar will feature a guest speaker from the National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC). We will discuss **aspects of caregiving**, including:

- Advocacy efforts
- Research
- Innovations
- Medicare considerations
- Resources and support

To register for the webinar, click [here](#). (You’ll need to create an account). Upon registration, you’ll get a confirmation email with an appointment.)

Marketplace Webinar – intended for Assisters and Navigators

Thursday, June 14, 2:00-3:00 pm ET

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

Topics: Consumer Education and Outreach; specific requirements, guidelines, and best practices for Assisters in Federally-facilitated Marketplaces (FFMs) about referrals and partnerships.

Pre-registration is recommended but not required. The audio portion of the webinar will be delivered via your computer. Please check your computer settings in advance to ensure that your speaker volume is adjusted appropriately. Using Google Chrome as your internet browser seems to provide the best audio experience. Please be sure to push the blue “play” icon on the left side near the Alternate Audio tab. If you cannot hear audio through your computer speakers, please refer to the Alternate Audio tab on the left side of the webinar screen for more tips. Please try to log in 5 minutes in advance so that audio links can be made.

Who Counts? Racial Misclassification and American Indian and Alaska Native Populations

Friday, June 14, 2:00-3:00 pm ET

Urban Indian Health Institute

Strategies for Preventing Custody Relinquishment for Mental Health Services

Wednesday, June 19, 2:30-4:00 pm ET

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) TA Network

Youth & Families: Reaching Common Ground That Moves Us Forward

Thursday, June 20, 4:00-5:30 pm ET

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) TA Network

Using Social Media to Build Rapport with Peers [part of a [series](#)]

Tuesday, June 25, 2:00-3:00 pm ET

[*Doors to WellBeing*](#)

Intended for youth leaders and advocates doing peer mental health work.

Promoting Access to Transportation Options with the National Aging and Disability Transportation Center

Tuesday, June 25, 3:00-4:00 pm ET

National Information & Referral Support Center, National Aging and Disability Transportation Center

How Can Medicaid and CHIP Support Children’s Emotional Health?

Wednesday, June 26, 2:00-3:00 pm ET

Manatt Health, Center for the Study of Social Policy

Building Family Leadership and Voice

Friday, July 12, 2:00-3:30 pm ET

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) TA Network

THE ADMINISTRATION

Trump Administration Moves to Release Migrant Children Faster from U.S. Custody

(Reuters, 6/10/19)

Memorandum on Enforcing the Legal Responsibilities of Sponsors of Aliens

(The White House, 5/23/19)

THE COURTS

Advocates Sue Trump Administration over 'Conscience Protection' Rule

(The Hill, 6/11/19)

CONGRESS

House and Senate Bills to Extend F2F Funding - UPDATE

As reported in the [May 29 Update](#), Representatives [Mikie \(Michelle\) Sherrill](#) (D-NJ) and [Fred Upton](#) (R-MI) introduced the *Family-to-Family Reauthorization Act of 2019* ([H.R. 2822](#)) on May 17. Senators Chuck Grassley (R-IA) and Robert Menendez (D-NJ) introduced a companion [Senate bill](#). The bipartisan bills would extend funding for the grant program that funds Family-to-Family Health Information Centers (F2Fs) for an additional five years, through federal FY 2024, at the current level of \$6 million per year. On June 4, the Health Subcommittee of the House Energy & Commerce Committee held a [hearing](#) on H.R. 2822 and 11 other bills to extend existing health programs. Since then, another cosponsor has joined – Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-MI). More details on these House and Senate F2F extension bills can be found on the [Family Voices website](#).

Meanwhile, Rep. Michael Burgess (R-TX), the Ranking Republican Member of the Health Subcommittee, introduced legislation ([H.R. 2700](#)) to extend the Family-to-Family program, and the other programs that were subjects of the June 4 hearing, for *one* more year (through FY 2020). That bill is cosponsored by all of the Republican subcommittee members, even though some of them have also sponsored bills to extend some of the programs for longer than one year. Rep. Burgess favors extending these programs, but is concerned about doing so without an “offset” to cover the federal cost of the extensions. His bill would provide an offset by establishing measures to lower the cost of prescription drugs, thus reducing costs for federal healthcare programs. See Rep. Burgess’ [hearing statement](#).

Disaster Relief Bill Enacted – Includes Funds for Territories

As reported in the [May 29 Update](#), the Senate passed a broad, \$19 billion disaster relief package to provide assistance to the areas of the US affected by fires, floods, and other natural disasters, including Puerto Rico and other territories. The House later passed the bill and the president signed it on June 6 (Public Law No: 116-20). The bill would provide nutrition assistance funding for both Puerto Rico and American Samoa and other assistance for Puerto Rico (see a [press release](#) from the office of Senator Menendez). Read more about the bill on the [website of the Senate Appropriations Committee](#).

Credit for Caring Act Introduced

On May 14, the bipartisan *Credit for Caring Act* was introduced in both the Senate and House. The Senate bill ([S. 1443](#)) was introduced by Senators Joni Ernst (R-IA), Michael Bennet (D-CO), and others. The House bill ([H.R. 2730](#)) was introduced by Representatives Linda Sánchez (D-CA) and Tom Reed (R-NY). The bill would provide tax credits to eligible caregivers for some of the cost of in-home care, adult day care, respite care, and other services. An “eligible caregiver” is defined as an individual who has earned income for the taxable year in excess of \$7,500 and pays or incurs expenses for providing care to a spouse or other dependent relative with long-term care needs. The tax credit would be equal to 30 percent of qualified expenses above \$2,000, and would be a maximum of \$3,000 per year.

MEDICAID NEWS, INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

MEDICAID WAIVERS

From CMS: South Carolina submitted an application requesting a new five-year section 1115 demonstration to implement a community engagement requirement, expansion of benefits, and a targeted substance use disorder program. All non-disabled individuals under the age of 65 covered by Medicaid, including parents and caretakers, children, pregnant women, and those needing substance use disorder treatment would be impacted by this demonstration. The federal comment period will be open from June 10, 2019 through **July 10, 2019**.

- [Pending Application](#)
- [View/Submit Public Comments](#)

REMINDER:

- Approved and pending Medicaid waiver applications can be found on [Medicaid.gov](#).
- The Kaiser Family Foundation regularly updates its state-by-state §1115 [Medicaid Waiver Tracker](#), and also provides related waiver [resources](#) and [definitions](#).

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT – NEWS, INFORMATION, AND RESOURCES

Open Season Announcement for Certified Designated Organizations - Live Application Link will be available June 12.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is inviting organizations that would like to become Certified Application Counselor Designated Organizations (CDOs) to apply during CMS’s Open Season beginning **June 12, 2019, and ending September 16, 2019**. In the Federally-facilitated Marketplace, CDOs oversee certified application counselors (CACs) who are trained and able to help consumers seeking health coverage options through the Marketplace. ***Any organization seeking to provide CAC enrollment assistance to consumers for Plan Year 2020 must be a certified CDO.*** In order to be designated as a CDO, you must submit an online application and enter into an agreement with CMS. **If your organization completed the CDO refresh process last year and received a new CDO identification number and a welcome packet, then you do not need to reapply.** CDO Application technical assistance webinar recordings, user guides, and more can be found [here](#). For additional questions, contact CACQuestions@cms.hhs.gov.

TRICARE

From recent TRICARE Benefits Updates:

[Your Child Transitioning to Adulthood with TRICARE Young Adult](#) (5/29/19)

[Moving Away to College May Change Your Child's TRICARE Options](#) (6/11/19)

- Sign up for TRICARE email updates at www.tricare.mil/subscriptions.
- Connect with TRICARE on Facebook and Twitter at www.facebook.com/tricare and www.twitter.com/tricare.

OTHER NEWS, INFORMATION, AND RESOURCES

NEWS:

Proposed Protections from Debt Collectors

On May 7, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (Bureau) [issued](#) a [Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#) (NPRM) to implement the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (FDCPA). The proposal would provide consumers with clear protections against harassment by debt collectors and straightforward options to address or dispute debts, including medical debt. See [Mired In Medical Debt? Federal Plan Would Update Overdue-Bill Collection Methods](#) (Kaiser Health News, 5/31/19).

RESOURCES:

From the CDC:

- [Preparedness and Safety Messaging for Hurricanes, Flooding, and Similar Disasters](#)
- [After a Tornado](#)

WORTH REPEATING:

From Benefits.gov: **Check Your Eligibility** at <https://www.benefits.gov/categories>

Benefits.gov has launched a new feature to provide a quick and easy way to pre-screen eligibility for federal government benefits. [Check out one of the top viewed benefits, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#) to test the new feature.

From Our Partners:

[Preparing for the Transition from Pediatric to Adult Health Care: Parent Guide](#) (PDF) – from Got Transition

[A Final Comfort: 'Palliative Transport' Brings Dying Children Home](#)

Kaiser Health News, 5/28/19

Behavioral Health Webinar Series - recordings

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia PolicyLab

- What Parents Don't Know: Working Together to Address Youth Suicide
- Integrating Behavioral Health in Hospitals & Primary Care
- Striking a Delicate Balance: Rethinking How We Talk to Teens about Weight
- Behavioral Health Prevention & Intervention in Schools: Exploring the Possibilities

WORTH REPEATING:

State-Level KIDS COUNT Data Books in 2019

The Annie E. Casey Foundation's [KIDS COUNT Network](#) — which spans all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands — tracks the well-being of children and families in each state. As part of this work, many of the network's grantee organizations produce state-level publications. View the catalog of state-level data books and fact sheets released so far in 2019 to learn more about how children in your home state are faring.

Summary of State Law Requirements Addressing Language Needs in Health Care

National Health Law Program (4/29/19)

Addressing Trauma and Children's Mental Health through Child Psychiatry Access Programs: An Introductory Guide for State Health Advocates

Community Catalyst

Public Charge and Deportation FAQ

Protecting Immigrant Families

YOUR INPUT SOUGHT

NEW Due August 12. CMS Seeks Public Input on Patients over Paperwork Initiative to Further Reduce Administrative, Regulatory Burden to Lower Healthcare Costs

(CMS Press Release, 6/6/19) This Request for Information solicits public comment on ideas for regulatory, subregulatory, policy, practice, and procedural changes that reduce unnecessary administrative burdens for clinicians, providers, **patients and their families**.

Due June 21, 11:59 pm ET. Federal Inflation Measures for Poverty Thresholds

On May 7, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) – part of the White House – issued a “[Notice of Solicitation of Comments](#)” about what consumer price index should be used to establish the “Official Poverty Measure,” which serves as the basis for poverty guidelines used to determine income-based eligibility for programs such as Medicaid and CHIP. Should OMB ultimately adopt a different inflation index, it could reduce the number of people eligible for these programs, and these reductions would become greater over time. See [White House Wants to Update Poverty Thresholds. It Could Affect Food Stamps and Medicaid Benefits](#) (Roll Call, 5/13/19), and **NEW** [this blog post from the Georgetown University Center on Children and Families](#), which explains the issues involved. Comments are due on June 21 (11:59 pm ET), and can be submitted via [this form on Regulations.gov](#).

Due June 21. HHS/Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs: Call for nominations to serve on the [Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee \(STAC\)](#). The committee seeks primary delegates and alternates for Albuquerque, NM and Billings, MT, as well as three (3) National At-Large Primary Delegates and one (1) National At-Large Alternate Delegate. All nominees must either be elected or appointed Tribal officials acting in their official capacity as elected officials of their Tribes. For further information, please contact [Stacey Ecoffey](#).

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

StoryBooth: Opportunity to Share YOUR Health Care Story!

Do you have a story about your health care experiences you'd like to share? Family Voices is working with the University of Pittsburgh to help promote their StoryBooth project. This is a research project designed to collect stories from patients and families about their experiences with health care. The hope is that by listening to the stories of people they can improve health care for others. In addition to stories from adults (patients and caregivers), they would like to include some stories from youth directly (must be at least 18 years old to participate). Stories are collected through phone interviews and then will be added to their [website](#). You can listen to some of the stories they've collected there. People who share their stories will be asked where they heard about the project, and then ask for permission to share the story with the source. Family Voices would love to be able to share your stories as well. Click on the links for two posters for general information and contact information:

- [General audience](#)
- [Youth audience](#)

OF POSSIBLE INTEREST

[Majority of Avoidable Patient Deaths Occur in Hospitals with 'C' Grade or Below: Leapfrog](#) (Fierce Healthcare, 5/15/19)

[Major Doctors Group Votes to Oppose Single-Payer Health Care](#) (The Hill, 6/11/19)

[Community Care For High-Need Patients](#) The June 2019 issue of the journal Health Affairs is devoted to this topic. Among other articles is this one:

[Home Health Care for Children With Medical Complexity: Workforce Gaps, Policy, And Future Directions](#) (Health Affairs, June 2019)

- [Press Release](#), Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago

[Study: Life Satisfaction for Children with Chronic Illness](#) (Physician's Briefing, 5/6/19)

Results from a survey of parents/caretakers suggest that children with chronic illness may have lower general health but similar life satisfaction compared with those who don't have chronic illness. The findings, published in *Pediatrics*, offer an opportunity to broaden the perspective of health beyond the absence of disease to one that considers the quality of life of children.

[How Measles Detectives Work to Contain an Outbreak](#) (Kaiser Health News, 6/10/19)

We at Family Voices would love to hear any suggestions you might have about how to make the Update more useful to you. Does it provide the right amount of information? What parts are helpful and not so helpful? Please let us know! Comments and questions can be directed to jguerney@familyvoices.org.

Yours truly,
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Family Voices

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