



FAMILY VOICES[®]

Washington DC Update
November 13, 2019

Greetings from Washington!

Open enrollment in ACA Marketplaces and TRICARE has begun, and numerous resources to help consumers enroll are provided at the end of this Update. In Congress, work goes on behind the scenes to address prescription drug prices and surprise medical billing. The administration has released the 2019 Medicaid and CHIP Scorecard, which provides information about the programs' administration and outcomes. The Georgetown Center for Children and Families has released its annual report on children's health insurance coverage. Read about these issues and more in this week's Update.

Baby Powder Recall

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is alerting consumers about Johnson's Baby Powder Lot #22318RB. A sample from this lot was found to contain chrysotile fibers, a type of asbestos. On October 18, 2019, Johnson & Johnson voluntarily recalled this product, and consumers who have this lot of baby powder should stop using it.

NOTE:

- **The 2020 Open Enrollment Period is November 1, 2019 to December 15, 2019.** See resources at the end of this Update.
- Get Ready: **TRICARE Open Season**, Federal Benefits Open Season Begins **Nov. 11**
- **Medicare's Medical and Drug Open Enrollment Period is October 15 - December 7**
To find 2020 health and drug plans, compare coverage options, or estimate Medicare costs, go to www.Medicare.gov. Click [here](#) for Medicare Open Enrollment Period Outreach and Media Materials.

UPCOMING WEBINARS AND CALLS

TODAY [Health in Rural America: Innovative Solutions to Address Disparities](#)

Wednesday, November 13, 2:00-3:30 pm ET

The National Institute for Health Care Management (NIHCM) Foundation

TODAY [Foundations: How to Build & Sustain the Communication Pipeline with Young Adults](#)

Wednesday, November 13, 4:00-5:00 pm ET

The Dibble Institute

TODAY Understanding Patient Rights Regarding Discharge and Aftercare

Wednesday, November 13, 8:00-9:00 PM ET

Well Spouse Association

NEW SERIES on Palliative Care and Hospice:

Demystifying Services for the Seriously Ill: Palliative Care and Hospice 101

Thursday, November 14, 2019, 12:00-1:00 pm ET

HHS Partnership Center and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization

Community Partnerships to Improve Access to Palliative Care, Hospice, and Bereavement Services

Thursday, November 21, 2019, 12:00-1:00 pm ET

NEW Strategies to Improve Sickle Cell Disease Primary Care

Thursday, November 14, 1:00-2:00 pm ET

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Expanding Access to School Behavioral Services via Telehealth

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

Healthy Students, Promising Futures Learning Collaborative

NEW Trauma-Informed Person-Centered Thinking and Support

Monday, November 18, 2:30 pm ET

National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems (NCAPPS - a new initiative from the Administration for Community Living and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services that helps States, Tribes, and Territories implement person-centered thinking, planning, and practice (in line with U.S. Department of Health and Human Services policy.)

NEW Benefits Outreach: Promising Practices that Work

Tuesday, November 19, 3:00-4:00 pm ET

ADvancing States

Operationalizing Family Voice and Leadership in Systems of Care

Wednesday, November 20, 2:30-4:00 pm ET

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

SERIES Person-Centered Planning and Practice

National Quality Forum/Administration for Community Living; Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

- Friday, December 13, 2019, 1:00-3:30 pm ET
- Monday, January 6, 2020, 1:00-3:30 pm ET
- Monday, February 3, 2020, 12:30-3:00 pm ET
- Monday, June 1, 2020, 1:00-3:30 pm ET
- [past] Friday, September 6, 2019

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THE COURTS

[Second Federal Judge Strikes Down Trump 'Conscience Protection' Rule for Health Care Providers](#)

(The Hill, 11/07/19)

[U.S. Judge Blocks Trump's Health Insurance Rule for Immigrants](#) (Associated Press, 11/3/19)

[U.S. Must Provide Mental Health Services to Families Separated at Border](#) (New York Times, 11/6/19)

CONGRESS

Lifespan Respite Bill Approved by Senate Committee

On November 5, the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions (HELP) unanimously approved [an amended version of S. 995](#), the Lifespan Respite Care Program Reauthorization Act. The bill was originally introduced by Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) and Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI). The legislation would reauthorize the program for another five years for \$50 million (\$10 million annually through FY 2024). The next step is for the Senate to pass the bill. See a [Letter of Support from National Organizations](#).

Prescription Drug Prices

As reported in the [October 31 Update](#), the House Democrats, led by Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), have developed a bill to lower prescription drug prices ([H.R. 3](#)). That bill, among other things, would require the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to negotiate Medicare drug prices with manufacturers. The concept of price negotiations were originally supported by the White House, but the administration recently [announced](#) that it thinks the Pelosi bill would be “unworkable.” Instead, the White House will now support a bipartisan (but [still controversial](#)) bill that was reported out of the Senate Finance Committee ([S. 2543](#)). That bill would basically peg drug prices to the rate of inflation. Pharmaceutical companies opposed both bills, while House [progressives would like to broaden the House bill](#). Although the president, and both parties and houses of Congress would like to address this issue, it is not clear whether a comprehensive approach can be negotiated. See [Voters Say Congress Needs To Curb Drug Prices, But Are Lawmakers Listening?](#) (Kaiser Health News, 11/11/19). See the [October 24 Update](#) for background information.

Surprise Medical Bills

As with prescription drug prices, both parties of Congress are interested in addressing the issue of surprise medical bills. Recently, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the House Energy & Commerce Committee discussed the issue on a morning show. According to a press release - [Good Morning America: Walden and Pallone Discuss Protecting Americans from Surprise Medical Bills](#) (E&C Republicans press release, 11/7/19) – there is progress on legislation in the House and tentative administration support for its key tenets. There is also bipartisan work on this issue in the Senate. See [The 'Dynamic Bipartisan Duo' Pushing Legislation to Fight Surprise Billing](#) (Inside Sources, 11/7/19). Nevertheless, there is a major conflict between key stakeholders about how to solve the problem. (In simple terms, insurers favor one approach and providers another. (See the [October 24 Update](#) for background information.)

MEDICAID/CHIP NEWS, INFORMATION, AND RESOURCES

2019 Medicaid and CHIP Scorecard Released

On, November 7, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released the second annual Medicaid & CHIP Scorecard. (See [CMS press release](#) and [fact sheet \[PDF version\]](#).) The Scorecard was developed to increase public transparency about the programs' administration and outcomes, and includes both measures voluntarily reported by states and federally reported measures. The Scorecard also includes [National Context](#) data that explain how Medicaid and CHIP programs can vary across states.

ACA NEWS, INFORMATION, AND RESOURCES

NOTE: The 2020 Open Enrollment Period is November 1, 2019 to December 15, 2019.

{FOR ENROLLMENT RESOURCES, PLEASE SEE THE END OF THIS UPDATE.}

[Seeing Fraud and Misleading Marketing, States Warn Consumers about Alternative Health Insurance Products](#) (Georgetown Center on Health Insurance Reforms, 11/4/19)

[ObamaCare enrollment reaches 177,000 in first two days of enrollment period](#) (The Hill, 11/6/19)

TRICARE

Both the TRICARE and FEDVIP open seasons will run from Nov. 11 to Dec. 9. Enrollment choices made during this period will take effect on Jan. 1, 2020.

See:

- [Information about TRICARE'S OPEN SEASON](#) (10/2/19)
- [Compare 2020 FEDVIP Plans and Costs, Prepare for Open Season](#) (10/3/19)

From TRICARE Benefits Updates:

[Compare TRICARE Plan Costs to Prepare for TRICARE Open Season](#) (11/7/19)

[Almost Time to Act: TRICARE Open Season, Federal Benefits Open Season Begins Nov. 11](#) (11/5/19)

[TRICARE Open Season: Time to Pick a Plan](#) (10/31/19)

For more information, please visit www.tricare.mil/OpenSeason or follow TRICARE on social media for regular updates:

- www.facebook.com/TRICARE
- www.twitter.com/TRICARE
- [Sign up for TRICARE email updates.](#)

OTHER NEWS, INFORMATION, AND RESOURCES

Report on Children's Health Insurance Coverage

Last week, the Georgetown Center for Children and Families (Center) released its ninth annual report tracking children's health insurance coverage ([overview](#); [full report](#); [blog post](#)). The Center also launched a [new interactive state data hub](#) showing a variety of indicators of children's health status and quality of care. The report shows that, from 2016 to 2018, the number of uninsured children in the U.S. increased by more than 400,000. Some other key findings:

- The loss of children's coverage is widespread *with 15 states seeing an increase in the number and/or rate of uninsured children – in most cases both*. This level of backwards movement at the state level has never happened since they starting writing this report ten years ago.
- States where the uninsured rate for children has gone up most rapidly are (in order) Tennessee, Georgia, Texas, Utah, West Virginia, Florida, and Ohio.
- Texas continues to have the highest rate of uninsured children in the nation, by far, at 11.2 percent – no other state is even in the double digits.
- Only one state in the nation made progress, and that was North Dakota.
- Another important finding is that *states that have not expanded Medicaid to parents and other adults under the ACA saw an increase in their rate of uninsured kids three times as large as states that have*. Children in these states that haven't expanded are nearly twice as likely to be uninsured as those living in states that have expanded Medicaid. Research has consistently shown that offering coverage to the whole family will decrease kids uninsured rates which is why Medicaid expansion is a kids' issue – though it is rarely seen as such.
- The highest uninsured rates are not for the poorest kids, but rather for those living just above the poverty line — between 138-250% FPL.

NASHP Launches RAISE Act Family Caregiver Resource and Dissemination Center

With support from The John A. Hartford Foundation, the National Academy for State Health Policy has launched the [RAISE Act Family Caregiver Resource and Dissemination Center](#). The Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage (RAISE) Family Caregivers Act created the Family Caregiving Advisory Council, which is creating the country's first national family caregiver strategy. The dissemination center will provide resources, technical assistance, and policy analysis for states and stakeholders to address this important issue.

Inaugural RAISE Council Meeting

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) has released [recordings](#) of the RAISE Family Caregiving Advisory Council's inaugural meeting in August. A written meeting [summary](#) is also available on ACL's site.

WORTH REPEATING: [How States Use the National Standards for CYSHCN in their Health Care Systems](#)

(map and state-specific information; National Academy for State Health Policy, 10/29/19)

YOUR INPUT SOUGHT

NEW National Needs Assessment: Mental Health Services for People with Developmental Disabilities - Due Nov. 15

Note: The survey is **available in Spanish**. When you click on the link above, you will see a drop down for selecting the Spanish version. Survey conducted by [The Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities National Training Center](#), which is seeking responses from each state and territory of the U.S. If you have any questions about this survey, send an email to Karen Ward (karenw@alaskachd.org) or Roxy Lamar (roxy@alaskachd.org). Or call them toll-free at 1-800-243-2199. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this needs assessment, please contact the University of Alaska Anchorage Office of Research Integrity and Compliance (1-907-786-1099 or uaa_oric@alaska.edu).

Call for Nominations: 2020 CMS Health Equity Award – Due November 15, 2019

Health equity is defined by Healthy People 2020 as the attainment of the highest level of health for all people. A measure of health equity is the reduction or elimination of disparities in health that adversely affect vulnerable populations. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recognizes the importance of health equity and is working to ensure that disparities in health care quality and access are eliminated.

The 2020 CMS Health Equity Award will shine a light on an organization leading the way on the path to equity, showing others how to reduce disparities in quality, access, and outcomes. The award will go to an organization who can demonstrate they have reduced disparities in health care quality, access, or outcomes between two or more groups. Populations of focus include racial and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, sexual and gender minorities, and rural populations. All CMS partner/stakeholder organizations and networks, at the organizational level, are eligible for the award. *All nomination forms and questions about the award should be submitted to the CMS Office of Minority Health (ATTN: 2020 CMS Health Equity Award) at HealthEquityTA@cms.hhs.gov.*

FDA Patient Representatives

Are you a patient or caregiver who wants to get involved at FDA? Contact [the Patient Affairs Staff \(PAS\)](#) or follow them on Twitter [@FDAPatientInfo](#).

OF POSSIBLE INTEREST

[Guardianship: Clashing Views from Self-Advocates and Family Leaders](#)
(Blog of the Association of University Centers on Disability, 10/25/19)

[Some kids in pain need opioids. For doctors, that means walking a tightrope](#)
(STAT News, 11/4/19)

ACA OPEN SEASON RESOURCES

NEW:

- The audio and slides from the webinar -- "[Best Practices When Assisting People with Disabilities Enroll in Health Coverage](#)" – part of the "Beyond the Basics" webinar series from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), is now archived. The program's other resources can be found [here](#).
- [Community Outreach Collaboratives](#) (COCs) work to increase collaborations in the community, dissemination and outreach efforts and enrollment of people with disabilities in the ACA marketplace. [Look for a COC](#) in your area.
- Numerous enrollment resources are available on the website of the National Disability Navigator Resource Collaborative [here](#). at <https://nationaldisabilitynavigator.org/resources-links/#overview>.

OTHER RESOURCES:

- [What's New for 2020 Marketplace Enrollment?](#) (Georgetown University Center on Health Insurance Reforms , 10/17/19) – provides an overview of several developments that affect this coming open enrollment.
- [CMS FACT SHEET: FEDERAL HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE 2020 OPEN ENROLLMENT](#) (describes new features of website)
- [List of 2019 CMS Navigator grantees](#)
- **The Georgetown Center on Health Insurance Reforms [Navigator Guide for Plan Year 2020](#).** The Guide helps answer questions about eligibility for insurance coverage or subsidies, health plan choices on- and off-marketplace, issues for small employers, coverage post-enrollment, and more.

Enrollment Assistance Materials from the Kaiser Family Foundation:

FAQs. To help consumers, navigators, brokers and other assisters, the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) has updated and expanded its database of more than 300 [Frequently Asked Questions](#) about open enrollment, the health insurance marketplaces, and the ACA. More than 180 of the FAQs are [available in Spanish](#). This year, there are new sections about immigration status, enrollment options for those affected by Hurricane Dorian, and the [sale of Marketplace plans on private websites](#), also known as "direct enrollment" sites or "certified enrollment partner" sites.

Fact Sheets. KFF also offers short, printable fact sheets on four common scenarios:

- [If You Shop on Private Websites Instead of HealthCare.gov](#)
- [If You Buy Health Coverage in the Individual Market](#)
- [For Consumers Considering Short-Term Policies](#)
- [If You Are Low-Income](#)

Calculator. KFF's Health Insurance Marketplace Calculator will soon be updated with 2020 premium data. Check [here](#) for KFF's most current resource.

- **Young Invincibles:**
 - [OE7 Resources and Suggested Messaging](#) (Scroll down for customizable materials, email message, FB posts, and Tweets.)
 - [YI OE7 Materials Folder](#)
 - [Connector tool](#) - find local help

- **Community Catalyst:** [Outreach Hub](#) Google Drive

- **Center for Budget and Policy Priorities:**
 - [5 Good Reasons to Visit HealthCare.gov During Open Enrollment](#) (full article) In sum:
 1. Financial help is available to reduce the cost of coverage and care.
 2. Plans are more affordable than people think.
 3. Consumers can save money by comparison shopping on HealthCare.gov.
 4. Plans purchased on HealthCare.gov are comprehensive and guaranteed to cover the essentials.
 5. Beware of insurance plans sold outside of HealthCare.gov.

Assister Readiness Resources

Modules for the first week of the 2020 Assister Readiness Webinar Series are now posted and ready to view. These modules cover topics relating to Helping Consumers Apply for Marketplace coverage. Modules for the first week of the *Helping Consumers Apply* 2020 Assister Readiness Webinar Series are now posted and ready to view:

- **Preparing to Apply**
 - [Recording \(mp4\)](#) | [Transcript](#)
- **Creating and Submitting Applications**
 - [Recording \(mp4\)](#) | [Transcript](#)
- **Application Assistance Simulation**
 - [Recording \(mp4\)](#) | [Transcript](#)

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,
 Janis Guerney
 Director of Public Policy
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