



CMS Snapshot

September 20-28, 2023

Delivered to you by the Partner Relations Group in the Office of Communications

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, September 20 through 2pm Thursday, September 28, 2023

News Releases

*September 21- [Coverage for Half a Million Children and Families Will Be Reinstated Thanks to HHS' Swift Action](#). *CMS Requires States to Pause Disenrollments and Reinstates Coverage for Impacted Individuals.* Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is announcing that it has helped half a million children and families regain their Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance (CHIP) coverage. On August 30, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a [call to action](#) to states about a potential state systems issue where systems were inappropriately disenrolling children and other enrollees, even when the state had information indicating the person remained eligible.

*September 22- [CMS Roundup \(Sep. 22, 2023\)](#). Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) provides an at-a-glance summary of news from around the agency.

*September 22- [HHS Deploys Public Health Service Officers to Hawaii](#). *The Behavioral Health Team will Provide Support Services to Maui Residents.* This week, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR), deployed a Behavioral Health Team, consisting of 25 Public Health Service officers from the [U.S. Public Health Service \(USPHS\) Commissioned Corps](#), to Hawaii to provide behavioral health support services to individuals impacted by the recent wildfires.

*September 22- [Letter from HHS Secretary on COVID-19 Vaccine Coverage](#). To the health care payer community: We appreciate the strong partnership on transitioning COVID-19 vaccines from government distribution to traditional health care distribution channels. Unfortunately, some consumers are experiencing insurance coverage denials when seeking the updated COVID-19 vaccines, and I am writing to ask for continued partnership and also want to remind you of legal obligations for coverage of the vaccines.

*September 25- [CMS Statement on Current Status of Blood Tests for Organ Transplant Rejection](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) confirms that neither CMS nor the Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) have made changes that affect patients'

ability to have blood tests used to monitor for organ transplantation rejection covered when ordered by their physicians in medically appropriate circumstances. Patients with transplanted hearts, lungs, or kidneys who meet the coverage criteria for these tests, as laid out in the Local Coverage Determination (LCD), can continue to access these tests in place of a more invasive biopsy.

*September 25- [Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than \\$200 Million To Support Youth Mental Health](#). *Builds on unprecedented investment through President Biden's Unity Agenda to tackle the mental health crisis and support community-based behavioral health care and treatment.* The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), announced \$206 million in grant awards towards youth mental health. Also today, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) *will make more Medicaid funding available for school-based health services in Virginia, improving health care access, including mental health services.*

*September 25- [HHS Secretary Becerra and HHS Principals Statements on World Cancer Research Day](#). Cancer touches every American in some way, and is still the second leading cause of death in America. The President and First Lady reignited the Biden Cancer Moonshot to dramatically accelerate progress in the fight against cancer and mobilize a national effort to end cancer as we know it.

*September 26- [Medicare Advantage and Medicare Prescription Drug Programs to Remain Stable in 2024 \(Spanish version\)](#). Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that average premiums, benefits, and plan choices for Medicare Advantage and the Medicare Part D prescription drug program will remain stable in 2024. Improvements adopted in the [2024 Rate Announcement](#), as well as the [2024 Medicare Advantage and Part D Final Rule](#), such as increased beneficiary protections around marketing and prior authorization and increased access to behavioral health, support this stability.

*September 26- [HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra Statement on the 50th Anniversary of Signing of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#). "Fifty years ago, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehab Act) was signed into law, marking a turning point in our nation's civil rights history. The Rehab Act authorized services that support disabled people in living the lives they want to lead, fully included in their communities. The law established accessibility standards for information technology, which are crucial in today's high-tech world, and more.

*September 27- [Grant Announcement: HHS Awards \\$13 Million to Improve Access to Community-Based Maternal Support Services for Pregnant and Post-partum People](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Minority Health (OMH) announced that it has awarded more than \$13 million in grants to 11 organizations for its Healthy Families Community-Based Perinatal Health Initiative (COPHI) to develop innovative models for integrating community-based maternal support services into perinatal systems of care.

*September 27- [As Part of HHS' Maternal Health Day of Action, the Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than \\$103 Million and Launches New Initiatives to Address Maternal Health Crisis](#). *New funding, federal task force, and national public education campaign advance President Biden's Blueprint for Addressing the Maternal Health Crisis, and his Unity Agenda.* Today, as part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Maternal Health Day of Action, HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra announced several new actions to address the nation's longstanding maternal health crisis. Secretary Becerra hosted a roundtable with the Health Resources and Services Administrator Carole Johnson as well as providers, advocacy organizations, and state and local leaders in Baltimore, Maryland. Secretary Becerra announced that HHS is awarding more than \$103 million to support and expand access to maternal health, forming a new task force to address maternal mental health conditions and co-occurring substance use disorders, and launching a national public education campaign, *Talking Postpartum Depression*, to provide information about and combat stigmatization associated with this significant public health issue.

*September 27- [Biden-Harris Administration Awards More than \\$230 Million for Suicide Prevention, Behavioral Health Care Programs for At-Risk Communities](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), recently awarded \$232.2 million in grants for suicide prevention and behavioral health care for at-risk communities, including more than \$200 million in new funding for states, territories, and Tribal nations and organizations to build local capacity for the [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) and related crisis services. Addressing the nation's ongoing mental health crisis is a top priority of the Biden-Harris Administration and a key pillar in President Biden's Unity Agenda for the nation.

*September 27- [HHS Announces Historic Child Welfare Package to Expand Support and Equity in Child Welfare System](#). *Administration is bringing the child welfare system closer to the Administration's goal to better support children and families in the child welfare system with resources and services that meet their needs.* Today, the Biden-Harris administration, through the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), released three new rules that will have a profound impact on child welfare in America. The three rules will support kinship caregivers, protect LGBTQI+ children in foster care, and expand access to legal representation for children and families in the child welfare system. Together, they will help child welfare agencies fulfill their mission of putting children first. The rules fulfill executive orders by President Biden and align with the administration's priorities to keep families together and increase equity in the child welfare system. Together, the rules represent one of the most substantial advances in child welfare in a generation.

*September 28- [HHS Office for Civil Rights Issues Bulletin on Countering Antisemitism and on Protecting Patients and Recipients of Human Services from Discrimination Based on Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics](#). *As part of Biden-Harris Administration's National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism, HHS Joins Agencies from Across the Administration in Producing Fact Sheets on Title VI Enforcement.* Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) joined seven other agencies in clarifying, for the first time in writing, that Title VI of the

Civil Rights Act prohibits certain forms of antisemitic, Islamophobic, and related forms of discrimination in federally funded programs and activities.

*September 28- [Biden-Harris Administration Announces \\$24.5 Million in Awards in Major Expansion of the Tribal Home Visiting Program](#). Today, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced \$24,500,000 in new awards to 34 tribes and tribal organizations to implement culturally grounded, evidence-based home visiting programs throughout the nation. These grants are part of the Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program, which supports and promotes the health and well-being of American Indian and Alaska Native expectant families and families with young children.

*September 28- [HHS Launches Climate and Health Outlook Portal to Identify Counties at Risk of Climate-Related Hazards](#). *New tool provides interactive maps to protect public health by identifying U.S. counties forecast to experience climate-related health hazards each month.* Today, in coordination with the [White House Summit on Building Climate Resilient Communities](#), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of Climate Change and Health Equity (OCCHE) and Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response's (ASPR) Geospatial Team launched the [Climate and Health Outlook Portal](#), an interactive tool that provides actionable, county-level data that can be used to prepare for climate-related hazard events. Policymakers, health care providers, and the general public can use the tool to better understand the health impacts of climate-related hazard forecasts in their communities and plan accordingly.

*September 28- [In the Lead Up to Prevention Month, the Biden-Harris Administration Awards \\$42.6 Million to Expand and Strengthen the Capacity of States and Local Community Prevention Providers to Implement Evidence-based Prevention Strategies](#). On the eve of Youth Substance Use Prevention Month and Substance Misuse Prevention Month, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), has awarded \$42.6 million in Strategic Prevention Framework - Partnerships for Success (SPF-PFS) grants to 17 states and 60 communities (located across 33 states). These grants — a foundational investment for substance use prevention in the U.S. — focus on preventing substance use initiation and reducing the progression of substance use and related problems by supporting the development and delivery of state and community substance use prevention and mental health promotion strategies. Increasing youth substance use prevention is a key goal in the Biden-Harris Administration's National Drug Control Strategy, and an essential strategy to helping to beat the overdose epidemic — a core pillar of President Biden's Unity Agenda for the nation.

Fact Sheets

*September 26- [Calendar Year 2024 Participation in the Medicare Advantage Value-Based Insurance Design Model: Innovating to Meet Person-Centered Needs](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is announcing the Calendar Year (CY) 2024 participants in the

Medicare Advantage (MA) Value-Based Insurance Design (VBID) Model. The estimated number of MA enrollees covered by the 69 MA organizations (MAOs) participating in the VBID Model in 2024 will increase by 47% in 2024 compared to 2023. These enrollees will potentially benefit from the additional supplemental benefits, reduced cost sharing, or enhanced rewards and incentives offered through the Model.

Blogs

*September 28- [CMS Launches Action Plan for Sickle Cell Disease Month](#). By: CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure and Acting Director CMS Office of Minority Health, Dr. Aditi Mallick. Everyone deserves a fair and just opportunity to attain their optimal health and well-being. For far too long, this ideal has felt out of reach for many individuals living with Sickle Cell Disease (SCD). Sickle Cell Disease – an inherited blood disorder, affects approximately 100,000 individuals in the United States, the majority of whom are Black/African American, and/or Hispanic. Too often, individuals with SCD experience pain crises, need hospitalization, navigate complicated care transitions, and face stigma and discrimination in the healthcare system.

*September 28- [Open Enrollment for 2024 coverage starts soon! Get ready now](#). You can enroll in a Marketplace health plan for 2024 starting November 1, but don't wait to get ready. Start preparing now to make enrollment faster and easier.