



# Washington Weekly!

December 2, 2022

## Administration

### HHS Highlights Roadmap for Behavioral Health Integration

In keeping with the President's goal to prevent, treat, and provide long term recovery supports for mental illness and substance use disorders (M/SUD), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) today highlighted its leadership role to implement and advance the President's Strategy. On September 16, Secretary Becerra, Deputy Secretary Palm, and HHS leadership unveiled the [HHS Roadmap for Behavioral Health Integration](#) ("HHS Roadmap") to prioritize bold policy actions that significantly advance access to care. On December 2, they further articulated this vision in a jointly authored [Health Affairs Forefront Article](#).

HHS calls on States, territories, tribes, and local governments, the behavioral health and medical communities, industry, individuals, including youth and families, community partners, and Congress to help move our current system of care towards an integrated and equitable model. HHS will continue to provide bold leadership to advance our nation's behavioral health. Read today's [press release](#) further to learn opportunities that HHS has identified to expand access to behavioral health by integrating behavioral health into primary care settings.

### NIDILRR Seeks Peer Reviewers for Upcoming Competitions

The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) is seeking expert peer reviewers for several upcoming disability and rehabilitation research grant competitions. NIDILRR is seeking expertise in all areas of disability and rehabilitation research. NIDILRR conducts all review meetings virtually, so reviewers do not have to travel to participate. Interested individuals who would like to be considered for NIDILRR's peer review panels may submit their CV to [NIDILRR-Grants@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:NIDILRR-Grants@acl.hhs.gov).

### HHS Releases Long COVID Report

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released a new report highlighting patients' experience of Long COVID to better understand its complexities and drive creative responses by government leaders, clinicians, patient advocates and others. Researchers have cataloged more than 50 conditions linked to Long COVID that impact nearly every organ system. Estimates vary, but research suggests that between 5 percent and 30 percent of those who had COVID-19 may have Long COVID symptoms, and roughly one million people are out of the workforce at any given time due to Long COVID. This figure equates to approximately \$50 billion annually in lost salaries. Read the [Health+ Long COVID Report](#) to learn more.

### DOJ Secures Agreement with UC Berkeley to Make Online Content Accessible

Last Monday, November 21, the Department of Justice (DOJ) announced that it has filed a proposed consent decree in federal court to resolve allegations that the Regents of the University of California on behalf of the University of California, Berkeley (collectively, UC Berkeley) violated Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) because much of UC Berkeley's free online content is inaccessible to individuals with hearing, vision, and manual disabilities. The

proposed consent decree was filed together with a complaint setting forth the allegations of discrimination.

---

## Federal Funding Opportunities

### **SARTAC is Accepting Applications for Fellows for 2023 Projects**

The Self Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center (SARTAC) is now accepting applications for fellows for a one-year self-advocacy project. SARTAC will select six fellows, who will grow their leadership skills as they work on their projects with host organizations. Fellows will work on their projects about 14 hours per month and will receive \$5,000 to complete their one-year project. The fellowship begins on March 1, 2023 and ends February 28, 2024. Application deadline is Monday, January 9, 2023; 9:00pm (ET). Apply for the fellowship [here](#). Learn more about the fellowship and find past and present projects and examples of final products on the SARTAC [website](#). For more information, please contact Candace Cunningham or call 816-235-5833.

### **NCIPC Seeks Research Proposals**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC) is soliciting investigator-initiated research proposals to conduct a well-designed, longitudinal study within a large pediatric healthcare system(s) serving a diverse patient population, to derive and validate a new prognostic tool that identifies adolescents (ages 11-17 years) at increased risk for mental health sequelae or a worsening of an existing mental health condition(s). Of particular interest is research that focuses on adolescent populations shown to have higher rates of traumatic brain injury (TBI) incidence or greater risk of negative post-TBI outcomes (e.g., Black and Hispanic youth, youth living in rural areas, and those without insurance). The closing day for this funding opportunity is Jan. 24, 2023.

For more information please see the [funding announcement](#). If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Maria Susana Panero at [MPanero@cdc.gov](mailto:MPanero@cdc.gov).

---

## Federal Proposed Rules and RFI

### **HHS Proposes Changes to Care Coordination and Confidentiality for Patients with SUD**

On Monday, the U.S. Health and Human Services Department, through the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), announced proposed changes to the Confidentiality of Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Patient Records under 42 CFR part 2 ("Part 2"), which protects patient privacy and records concerning treatment related to substance use challenges from unauthorized disclosures. Specifically, the proposed rule increases coordination among providers in treatment for substance use challenges and increases protections for patients concerning records disclosure to avoid discrimination in treatment.

Part 2 currently imposes different requirements for SUD treatment records protected by Part 2 than the HIPAA Privacy Rule, which can create barriers to information sharing by patients and among health care providers and create dual obligations and compliance challenges for regulated entities. Public comments on the NPRM are due 60 days after publication of the NPRM in the *Federal Register*. The NPRM may be viewed or downloaded [here](#). View a fact sheet [here](#).

### **NQF Seeks Comment on 52 Quality Measures for 17 Federal Healthcare Programs**

Yesterday, a group of healthcare leaders and experts convened by the National Quality Forum (NQF) announced that it will begin its review of performance quality measures under consideration for use in federal healthcare. The review is part of the Measure Applications Partnership (MAP), a public-private partnership that has been convened annually by NQF since 2011 and is funded by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). MAP will review a

total of 52 unique measures and 81 measure combinations affecting 17 public programs overseen by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The measures being reviewed are under consideration include Home Health Quality Reporting Program; Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program; Hospital Outpatient Quality Reporting Program; Hospital Value-Based Purchasing Program; Hospital-Acquired Condition Reduction Program; Inpatient Psychiatric Facility Quality Reporting Program; Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility Quality Reporting Program; Long-Term Care (LTC) Hospital Quality Reporting Program; Rural Emergency Hospital Quality Reporting Program; Skilled Nursing Facility Quality Reporting Program; and Skilled Nursing Facility Value-Based Purchasing Program.

Visit the NQF [website](#) for the full list of Measures Under Consideration—often referred to as “the MUC List”—or to submit comments. Comments are due until 6:00pm (ET) on December 7.

The National Quality Forum (NQF) works with members of the healthcare community to drive measurable health improvements together. NQF is a not-for-profit, membership-based organization that gives all healthcare stakeholders a voice in advancing quality measures and improvement strategies that lead to better outcomes and greater value. Learn more at [www.qualityforum.org](http://www.qualityforum.org).

---

## Reports and Resources

### **WHO Report Coincides with Dec. 3 International Day of Persons with Disabilities**

Since 1992, the United Nations has designated Dec. 3 as the annual observance of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD). The observance of the Day aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. Learn more [here](#).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 1 billion people worldwide experience disability, and that number is growing. On December 2nd, [WHO will launch the Global Report on Health Equity for Persons with Disabilities](#) to raise awareness about health equity and mobilize action across a range of stakeholders.

### **NADTC Announces Grants to Address Equitable and Accessible Transportation**

The National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC) has awarded \$490,000 to implement innovative projects for equitable and accessible transportation to meet the needs of vulnerable and underserved populations, especially older adults and people with disabilities. Seven grantees were selected from among the nine transportation planning grants funded by NADTC in 2021. Communities receiving grants reside in these seven States: Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, New Mexico, New York and Oregon. Each grantee will receive up to \$70,000 under the NADTC 2022 Equity and Accessibility Implementation grant to implement a project, which addresses a need identified in the [planning phase](#). To learn more about these projects, visit the [website](#).

### **ARCH Newsletter Features Caregiver Resources**

The recent newsletter published by the ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center featured resources for caregivers. These resources include two signature programs from the [Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers](#): Operation Family Caregiver (OFC) and Operation Caregiver Support, which are designed to address the specific needs and concerns of military caregivers by teaching problem-solving skills and sharing resources.

Operation Family Caregiver (OFC) offers 8 sessions of intensive, confidential coaching to help caregivers navigate their caregiver journey. Caregivers work with their dedicated coach on problem-solving skills, self-care, safety, and more!

- [Self-referral link for caregivers](#)

- **[Partner referral link](#)**

Operation Caregiver Support (OCS) serves post-9/11 caregivers with a virtual support group that, like OFC, teaches skills in self-care, building a care team, safety, and finding resources. Most importantly, this group helps caregivers build a peer support system outside of the group setting. There is a group for Spanish-speaking caregivers and one for caregiver parents of post-9/11 service members or veterans.

- **[Operation Caregiver Support \(post- 9/11 group\)](#)**
- **[Operation Caregiver Support Spanish speakers group \(post-9/11 group\)](#)**

### **ACL Publishes Health Affairs Blog on Community Care Hubs for on Health and Well-being**

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) published a new Health Affairs **blog** this week that highlights the value of improving health and well-being through establishing community care hubs – community-focused entities supporting a network of community-based organizations providing services that address individuals’ health-related social needs. The blog, co-authored by leaders across the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, complements ACL’s investments to develop and scale community care hubs across the country. These investments include a recently launched National Learning Community, as well as plans to administer grants to support community care hub infrastructure.

### **Organizations Publish Information on Direct Care Workforce and Caregivers**

Several organizations have recently released publications relating to direct caregiver workforce and supporting caregivers. The National Governor’s Association released the publication, “Addressing Wages of the Direct Care Workforce through Medicaid Policies,” Nov. 1, that reports on strategies that States have used to improve recruitment and retention. With continued high inflation and a competitive employment market, it is important for States to evaluate current and future policies to achieve a sustainable living wage and pool of direct care workers. Read the **[report](#)**.

On Nov. 4, the National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) published “State Strategies to Support Family and Professional Caregivers.” The report highlights information shared during the NASHP’s Conference in Seattle, Washington, in September 2022 where State policymakers and national experts met at to share insights and promising practices to address the caregiver crises. Read more **[here](#)**.

The University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center published, “Who Will Care for Rural Older Adults? Measuring the Direct Care Workforce in Rural Areas,” in November. This policy brief examines existing disparities in the supply of home health aides and nursing assistants in rural areas compared to urban areas. It features statistics on the ratio of home health aides and nursing assistants relative to the population of adults age 65 and above, with breakdowns by urban and rural areas and by census region. Read the policy brief **[here](#)**.

### **NCAPPS Announces that Application Are Open for Racial Equity Learning**

This winter, NCAPPS is launching a second Racial Equity Learning Collaborative in partnership with colleagues at the Georgetown University National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC). From January to July of 2023, participants will engage in self-reflection and develop deep understanding of how each of us can promote racial equity within disability, aging, mental health, and related service settings. Participation is limited to 50 people who use or who work in Long-Term Service and Support (LTSS) settings such as provider organizations, State or county agencies, residential group settings, nursing facilities, etc.

Applicants can hold roles such as advocate, advisory board member, direct support professional, peer specialist, service or program coordinator, case or program managers, program administrators, and leadership. People with lived experience of using LTSS are especially encouraged to take part in this Learning Collaborative. NCAPPS staff, subject matter experts, and federal partners may also participate. Priority will be given to members of teams currently receiving technical assistance from NCAPPS.

Additional information about the Learning Collaborative and the application can be found in the links below. Applications are due by 9 pm Eastern on January 2, 2023. Questions can be addressed to NCAPPS Project Manager, Saska Rajcevic at [srajcevic@hsri.org](mailto:srajcevic@hsri.org). Read the [overview](#) of the Racial Equity Learning Collaborative for more information. Download the application for the Racial Equity Learning Collaborative [here](#).

---

## Upcoming Webinars and Conferences

### ACL to Host Webinar on Advocacy in the HCBS Settings

On Dec. 14, from 12:30pm – 2:00pm (ET), the Administration for Community Living (ACL) is hosting the webinar, “Strengthening Advocacy in the HCBS Settings Rule: Getting the Services You Need from the Waiver.” The HCBS Settings Rule can improve community-based services and supports for people with disabilities and older adults for decades to come.

This webinar will provide insight into one of the main strategies stakeholders can use to get the promise of the Rule into everyday life: influencing the services that are included in the waiver application. The webinar will highlight why you should pay attention to the waiver application and what is in an application, with a focus on appendix C – Services. It will also look at what States have to put into the application and highlight best practices for commenting on your State’s waiver application. Register for the webinar [here](#).

### Save the Date: Virtual Rural Disability Research and Practice Summit

The NIDILRR-funded [Rehabilitation Research and Training Center for Place-Based Solutions for Rural Community Participation, Health, and Employment](#) will host a virtual [Rural Disability Research and Practice Summit](#), January 10th and 11th, 2023, 3:00 – 4:30pm (ET) each day. The summit will explore timely issues affecting rural people with disabilities. Each session will feature presentations and panel discussions on personal assistance services and rural digital access. Subscribe to the [#RuralDisability eNews](#) for registration and agenda updates.

---

This update was prepared by:

**Susan L. Vaughn**, Director of Public Policy  
[publicpolicy@nashia.org](mailto:publicpolicy@nashia.org)

**Rebecca Wolfkiel**, Executive Director  
[execdirector@nashia.org](mailto:execdirector@nashia.org)

**Zaida Ricker**, Governmental Relations Consultant  
[zricker@ridgepolicygroup.com](mailto:zricker@ridgepolicygroup.com)

[Visit our website](#)

---

The National Association of State Head Injury Administrators assists State government in promoting partnerships and building systems to meet the needs of individuals with brain injuries and their families.

**Support States. Grow Leaders. Connect Partners.**



National Association of State Head Injury Administrators | PO Box 1878, Alabaster, AL 35007