

ACL names new Administration on Disabilities (AoD) Commissioner. Read further for more information in this week's *Washington Weekly*.



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF STATE HEAD INJURY
ADMINISTRATORS**

Washington Weekly!

by National Association of State Head Injury Administrators

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Administration

Congress Approves CR to Keep Government Funded

Yesterday, the Senate approved the Continuing Resolution (CR) which was first passed by the House of Representatives to fund the federal government through March 11. The previous CR ended at midnight tonight, thus the CR prevents a government shutdown. The measure now heads to President Biden's desk. As Congress has yet to pass spending bills, it has passed short-term CRs at the same funding levels as last year or referred to as level funding.

ACL Announces New AoD Commissioner

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) announced this week that Jill Jacobs is the new Commissioner for the Administration on Disabilities (AoD). Ms. Jacobs has more than two decades of professional experience managing disability services organizations, analyzing policy, and working toward improved health and disability programs and services at local, state, and federal levels. In addition, Ms. Jacobs brings to the role the lived experience of her own disability and as the mother of two disabled adults.

Before joining ACL, Ms. Jacobs served as the Executive Director of the ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia (ECNV), a center for independent living. Previously, Ms. Jacobs founded and served for sixteen years as the CEO of Ability Unleashed, a coordination and facilitation agency for Medicaid home and community-based services. She has held executive positions at several non-profit and government entities and served on the boards of a number of disability advocacy organizations, including the National Council on Independent Living and United Cerebral Palsy of Washington & Northern Virginia. For her work advancing rights and access of disabled military family members while she was an Army spouse, the United States Army awarded Jill the Dr. Mary E. Walker Medal of Honor. Ms. Jacobs is a graduate of Texas A&M at Central Texas and received social work training at Army Social Work Services at Fort Hood, Texas.

Senate Confirms FDA Commissioner

This week, the Senate confirmed Robert McKinnon Califf from North Carolina to be the Commissioner of the Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Yesterday, HHS Secretary released a statement welcoming Dr. Califf back to HHS as FDA Commissioner as he previously served in that position during the last year of the Obama-Biden Administration and as the agency's deputy commissioner of medical products and tobacco prior to that.

NABMRR Posts Minutes from Their Meeting

The minutes from the December 2021 National Advisory Board for Medical Rehabilitation Research (NABMRR) meeting have been posted on the NCMRR [website](#). Full videos of both

days of the December meeting are also available through the NIH Videocast archive site ([Day 1 link](#), [Day 2 link](#)). Legislation mandated that the National Institutes of Health (NIH) director establish the National Advisory Board on Medical Rehabilitation Research (NABMRR). The Board advises the directors of NIH, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), and the [National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research \(NCMRR\)](#) on matters and policies relating to NCMRR's programs. The Board comprises 12 members representing health and scientific disciplines related to medical rehabilitation and 6 members representing persons with disabilities.

HUD Relaxes Spending Deadline for Emergency Solutions Grants

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is relaxing one of the deadlines in Notice CPD-21-08 for recipients to spend the CARES Act's Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG-CV), which can be used to provide urgent assistance to households experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic. HUD is currently considering whether it is necessary to establish a later deadline to replace the March 31, 2022, deadline for expending 80% of each ESG-CV grant. HUD is also considering whether it is necessary to establish a new overall ESG-CV expenditure deadline that is later than the current September 30, 2022, deadline. [Read HUD's full letter to ESG recipients.](#)

HHS Participates on Virtual Roundtable with Lawmakers on HCBS

On February 17, 2022, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra participated in a virtual roundtable with Senator Bob Casey (D-PA), Representative Debbie Dingell (D-MI), and other organizations on the need for Build Back Better's critical investments in Home and Community Based Services (HCBS). Secretary Becerra highlighted the importance of HCBS that make it possible for millions of seniors and people with disabilities and chronic illnesses to live in community and avoid institutions. He provided examples of actions HHS has taken over the past year to help strengthen the HCBS system, under the Biden-Harris Administration.

With funding from the American Rescue Plan, HHS was able to begin expanding HCBS, reauthorize the Money Follows the Person program, and provide guidance to States on receiving an additional 10 percentage point increase in HCBS federal matching funds, an estimated \$12.7 billion increase in federal spending nationally. HHS also began implementing the Medicaid HCBS Settings Rule, which defined and set standards for "community-based" for the first time and helps move state HCBS systems towards more individualized, smaller settings and away from larger congregate settings.

HRSA Awards Funding to Health Centers to Increase Health Care Access

On Monday, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), awarded nearly \$55 million to 29 HRSA-funded health centers to increase health care access and quality for underserved populations through virtual care such as telehealth, remote patient monitoring, digital patient tools, and health information technology platforms. This funding builds on over \$7.3 billion in American Rescue Plan funding invested in community health centers over the past year to help mitigate the impact of COVID-19. For a list of award recipients, visit [here](#).

DETAC Reminds TBI Grantees of TA Opportunities

The Disability Employment Technical Assistance Center (DETAC), funded by the Administration on Disabilities (AoD), reminds AoD grantees of upcoming opportunities to learn about assistive technology and other technical assistance opportunities. DETAC announced in January the "New Results in Systems Excellence (RISE) Peer e-Learning Community: Assistive Technology & Employment." The session will be launched Feb 24th. Click [here](#) for more information and how to participate in this opportunity.

ODEP Honors Black Leaders with Disabilities

In celebration of Black History Month, Jennifer Thomas, policy advisor in the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy, [posted a blog](#) on "Honoring the Contributions of Black Leaders with Disabilities." In the blog, she reflected on the importance of recognizing leaders with disabilities as part of Black history month. "This Black History Month, I encourage

you to learn more about them, especially those who worked to increase employment and economic opportunities for Black Americans, Americans with disabilities and others from historically marginalized communities,” said Thomas. “Their stories inspire those of us in the Office of Disability Employment Policy to do what we do every month.”

Biden-Harris Administration Announces RFI on Access to Medicaid and Chip

As part of the Biden-Harris Administration’s work to advance health equity and reduce health disparities, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is seeking feedback on topics related to health care access, such as enrolling in and maintaining coverage, accessing health care services and supports, and ensuring adequate provider payment rates to encourage provider availability and quality. This Request for Information (RFI) is one of many actions CMS is taking to develop a more comprehensive access strategy in its Medicaid and CHIP programs.

Feedback obtained from the RFI will aid in CMS’ understanding of enrollees’ barriers to enrolling in and maintaining coverage and accessing needed health care services and support through Medicaid and CHIP. This information will help inform future policies, monitoring, and regulatory actions, helping ensure beneficiaries have equitable access to high-quality and appropriate care across all Medicaid and CHIP payment and delivery systems, including fee-for-service, managed care, and alternative payment models. The RFI submissions will also inform CMS’ work to ensure timely access to critical services, such as behavioral health care and home and community-based services.

The RFI seeks feedback from a diverse set of stakeholders on a broad set of topics from ensuring adequate payment rates to encouraging provider availability and quality, to culturally and linguistically competent care and reducing gaps in health care coverage. Interested parties may access the RFI questions and provide comment on [Medicaid.gov](https://www.medicaid.gov). The RFI is open for a 60-day public comment period beginning February 17, 2022.

To read the RFI, visit [here](#).

Federal Funding Opportunities

NIDILRR Publishes Funding Opportunities

The National Institute on Disability Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) has published its funding opportunities for this fiscal year to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). All open opportunities are listed below.

- **UPDATED!** Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living -- [Switzer Research Fellowships Program Synopsis 4](#). The notice of funding opportunity for FY 2022 Switzer Fellowships has been modified to delete the requirements related to DUNS numbers and SAM registration from Section IV.1. The due date has been modified to March 8, 2022.
- Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living -- Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRP) Program: [Center on Knowledge Translation for Disability and Rehabilitation Research Synopsis 1](#)
- Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living -- Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRP) Program: [Community Living and Participation \(Research\) Synopsis 1](#)
- Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living -- Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRP) Program: [Community Living and Participation \(Development\) Synopsis 1](#)

- Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living -- Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERC) Program: [RERC on Rehabilitation Strategies, Techniques, and Interventions Synopsis 1](#)
 - Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living -- Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRP) Program: [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) National Network Collaborative Research Project Synopsis 2](#)
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Reports and Resources

NINDS and NCMRR Publishes Neurorehab Common Data Elements

The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) and the National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research (NCMRR) have published the first iteration of the [Neurorehab Common Data Elements \(CDE\)](#) for use in neurorehab clinical research. The CDEs and other data standards for neurorehab can be found [here](#).

KFF Examines Medicaid in 2022

In a January issues brief, Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) discusses “Medicaid: What to Watch in 2022,” as a number of issues are at play that could affect coverage and financing under Medicaid, the primary program providing comprehensive health and long-term care coverage to low-income Americans. Governors are about to or have released proposed budgets amid continued uncertainty about the health and economic trajectory of the pandemic, while the Biden Administration continues to use its authority to address the pandemic and to further strategic goals to expand coverage and access and to improve equity. Within this context, this issues brief examines key issues to watch in Medicaid in 2022. Read the brief [here](#).

Upcoming Webinars and Conferences

BIAA Offers Webinar on Sexuality and Intimacy After Brain Injury

The Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) is offering a David Strauss Clinical Webinar, “Sexuality and Intimacy After Brain Injury: Changing Attitudes and Changing Practice,” on February 24, 2022, at 3:00pm (ET). Join [Kathryn Farris](#), OTR/L, February 24 for a discussion on biopsychosocial factors, types of sexual dysfunction, and the impact on the person with a brain injury and their partners. She will also discuss cultural and interpersonal considerations and approaches to communication. Register [here](#).

CDC Hosts Webinar on Geographic Disparities March 7

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Injury Center (CDC) is holding a webinar, “Where Americans Live Impacts Their Chance of a TBI-related Death,” March 7 at 2:00pm (ET) to coincide with March Brain Injury Awareness Month. While TBIs can happen anywhere, some groups are at increased risk. CDC’s Dr. Jill Daugherty will share findings from recent CDC reports about how where Americans live impacts their chance of a TBI-related death. She will also explore how other sociodemographic factors result in differences in TBI care and outcomes and why better surveillance and programmatic efforts may be needed to bridge these gaps. Register [here](#) for the webinar.

ARCH Announces 2022 National Lifespan Respite Conference

ARCH National Respite Network has announced that the Network will be co-hosting the 2022 National Lifespan Respite Conference with the Respite Care Association of Wisconsin in Madison, WI, September 13-15, 2022. The theme is *Reimagine Respite!* The Lifespan Respite Grantee and Partner Learning Symposium will be held on September 13th, prior to the conference. The [Call for Presentations](#) for the national conference is now open. Deadline to

submit a proposal is March 1, 2022. Please visit the [website](#) for more information. Registration coming soon!

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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.

