

Congress increases funding for the ACL TBI program in the FY 2022 spending bill passed this week. 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 Sends FY 2022 Spending Bill to the President for His Signature

This week, the House of Representatives and Senate agreed to an omnibus spending package to fund government through September 30, 2022. Congress increased the appropriations by \$4 million for the Administration for Community Living (ACL) Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) program authorized by the TBI Program Reauthorization Act of 2018. In addition, Congress appropriated for the first time \$2 million for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to implement the National Concussion Surveillance System also authorized by the 2018 TBI reauthorization. The omnibus spending bill also includes funds to increase annual grant funding to competitively funded model systems centers, and a \$100,000 increase for the TBI Model Systems National Data and Statistical Center within the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR). The bill is on its way to the President's desk for his signature. Watch for more information regarding funding amounts for disability and brain injury programs in an upcoming *Capitol News*.

HHS Awards Funding for Mental Health Support for Children and Young Adults

This week, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) – through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and the Office of Minority Health (OMH) – announced nearly \$35 million in funding opportunities to strengthen and expand community mental health services and suicide prevention programs for America's children and young adults. The American Rescue Plan provided funding in the amount of \$9.2 million to address this issue. This announcement is part of a new Administration-wide initiative to tackle the nation's mental health crisis. For more information and to view the grants awarded view the [press release](#).

DOJ Finds that Colorado Violated the ADA for People with Physical Disabilities in Nursing Facilities

Earlier this week, the U.S Department of Justice (DOJ) issued a press release that it had found that Colorado unnecessarily segregates people with physical disabilities in nursing facilities, in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Supreme Court's decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.* The department's [findings](#), detailed in a letter to Colorado Governor Jared Polis, following a thorough and multi-year investigation into the State's system of care for people with physical disabilities.

The department's investigation found that a significant number of Colorado's Medicaid-funded nursing facility residents are interested in transitioning to community-based settings and could successfully do so with appropriate supports. However, few Coloradans with physical disabilities who want to move out of their nursing facilities are able to do so. The investigation found that

most residents are unaware of the services available to help them move and live successfully in the community. This investigation was conducted by the Civil Rights Division's Disability Rights Section with the assistance of the U.S. Attorney's Office of the District of Colorado. The full findings letter can be found [here](#).

White House Announces Nursing Home Reforms

President Biden has announced a set of reforms developed by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to improve the safety and quality of nursing home care. The reforms are intended to ensure the following:

- Every nursing home provides a sufficient number of staff who are adequately trained to provide high-quality care,
- Poorly performing nursing homes are held accountable for improper and unsafe care and immediately improve their services or are cut off from taxpayer dollars,
- The public has better information about nursing home conditions so that they can find the best available options.

The White House cites a [recent study](#) that found that residents in nursing homes acquired by private equity were 11.1% more likely to have a preventable emergency department visit and 8.7% more likely to experience a preventable hospitalization, when compared to residents of for-profit nursing homes not associated with private equity. View the White House brief [here](#).

Federal Funding Opportunities

OSEP Announces Funding Opportunities

The U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has announced funding opportunities this week, including:

- **Innovative Technology-Based Approaches for Assessing Children with Disabilities.** The purpose of the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities Program (ETechM2 Program) is to improve results for students with disabilities by: (1) promoting the development, demonstration, and use of technology; (2) supporting educational media activities designed to be of educational value in the classroom for students with disabilities; (3) providing support for captioning and video description that is appropriate for use in the classroom; and (4) providing accessible educational materials to students with disabilities in a timely manner. The [announcement was posted March 3, and closes May 2, 2022](#). Click [here](#) for more information.
- **National Center for Development and Dissemination of Digital Open Educational Resources that Translate Research to Practice for Building the Capacity of Personnel Serving Students with Disabilities.** The announcement was posted March 3, and closes May 2, 2022. Click [here](#) for more information.

For more information about these funding opportunities and other grants, go [here](#).

Reports and Resources

National Academies of Science Issues Report Calling for New Classification of TBI

The labels of "mild," "moderate," and "severe" to classify traumatic brain injury (TBI) are outdated, imprecise, and do not effectively serve patients, clinicians, or payers, says a [new report](#) issued recently by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. The

report recommends the creation of an updated TBI classification system to better guide patient care and inform research across the phases of TBI injury and rehabilitation. TBI should not be treated as an isolated event, but as an evolving condition that may have long-term effects, says [***Traumatic Brain Injury: A Roadmap for Accelerating Progress***](#). Providers and health care organizations should adjust treatments, assessments, and community resources as the patient's status and needs change. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and private payers should also ensure coverage for all phases of TBI care and rehabilitation is consistent with the latest clinical guidelines, the report recommends.

KFF Issues Brief on the Medical Debt of Americans

Yesterday, the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) released a report, "The Burden of Medical Debt in the United States," which provides an [**analysis**](#) of government data estimates that 9% of adults – or roughly 23 million people – owe more than \$250 due to health costs. About half of those reporting significant medical debt owe more than \$2,000. A small share (representing about 1 percent of all adults) owes more than \$10,000, and the group accounts for the vast majority of all medical debt owed by people in the United States. The report also examines variations in medical debt by age, race and ethnicity, health status, and for people with a disability. Access the report [**here**](#).

Upcoming Webinars and Conferences

VA DARS to Hold Webinar on Using Data to Improve Outcomes

On Tuesday, March 15, the Virginia Department for Aging & Rehabilitative Services (DARS) will hold a webinar, "Using Data to Improve Outcomes: Sharing Experiences with Brain Injury Data," to describe their work to identify data specific to and that includes information related to brain injury from a variety of sources. The results will be used to establish a plan for organizing and supporting the efforts of State agencies to create the most comprehensive snapshot possible of what traumatic brain injury and life afterwards looks like for Virginians. The webinar will be held from 12:00pm to 1:30pm (ET). Register [**here**](#).

NCAPPS Schedules HCBS through the Lens of Person-Centered Practices Webinar

On March 31, 2022, the National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems (NCAPPS) will offer the webinar, "Understanding and Addressing Unmet Needs in HCBS; Through the Person-Centered Practices," from 3:00pm – 4:00pm (ET). While studies have found a connection between unmet HCBS needs and adverse outcomes, including hospitalization, institutionalization, and death; few have examined user-reported perspectives about the quality and sufficiency of HCBS and their relationship to key health and community living outcomes. Researchers at the Lurie Institute for Disability Policy conducted a study to learn how many people who use HCBS need more services than they receive and understand the connection between unmet HCBS needs and health and community living outcomes.

Panelists will discuss what implications the results of the study have in regard to person-centered planning in HCBS, highlight opportunities for improvement, and discuss how to overcome challenges to advancing person-centered practices. Register [**here**](#).

New Housing TAC Offers Next Webinar of the Two-part Series

The newly created Housing and Services Resource Center ((HSRC) is offering a two-part webinar series that started March 7. The next session will be held March 15, 2:30 – 4:00pm (ET). The title is, "State and Local Partnerships for Housing Stability." Presenters from housing, home- and community-based services, and health services will feature their successful approaches. After a showcase of innovative collaborations that braid funding for housing and services, webinar participants will have ample time to ask questions. [**Register for the webinar.**](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. Also, the webinar will include real-time captioning and American Sign Language remote

video interpreting. If you need any additional accommodations or have any questions, please send an email to the Housing with Services Resource Center at HSRC@acl.hhs.gov.

The Housing and Services Resource Center is part of a partnership between the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to make community living a reality for all. This partnership will expand accessible, affordable housing; help people exit homelessness; improve home and community-based services; and address the institutional bias in America's long-term care system.

ARCH and Respite Care Association to Co-host National Lifespan Respite Conference

ARCH has announced that we it 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 deadline for the Call for Presentations for the national conference to submit a proposal is March 1, 2022. Please visit the website for more information. Registration coming soon!



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**33rd Annual State of the States
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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF STATE HEAD INJURY
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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.

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