

Council of State Governments issues report on States' use of ARP funds to support employment for people with disabilities. Read further for more information in this week's *Washington Weekly*.



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF STATE HEAD INJURY
ADMINISTRATORS**

Washington Weekly!

by the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators

February 11, 2022

Administration

HHS Awards Funding to Expand Outreach Efforts for COVID Vaccines

On Monday, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), announced \$66.5 million in American Rescue Plan funding to eight grantees to expand outreach efforts in 38 States and the District of Columbia to increase COVID-19 vaccine confidence and vaccinations.

Awardees also are engaging communities with access issues, including individuals with developmental and physical disabilities, by using mobile pop-up sites to ensure easy access in the community and accessible vans to transport patients to vaccination appointments. Examples of local partnerships and activities supported by the Community-based Workforce for COVID-19 Vaccine Program include:

1. Deploying community outreach workers fluent in multiple spoken languages and American Sign Language;
2. Organizing mobile vaccination clinics for farmworkers;
3. Partnering with Black churches to build vaccine confidence; and
4. Implementing culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach campaigns.

View the list of the award recipients [here](#).

NIH Seeks Input on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has issued an opportunity for public input on aspects of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA). Request for Information (RFI): Inviting Comments and Suggestions on a Framework for the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility invites comment on the proposed DEIA framework aimed to implement organizational practices to center and prioritize DEIA in the workforce, grow and sustain DEIA through structural and cultural change, and advance DEIA through research. Comments must be received by April 3rd.

The purpose of the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for DEIA is to articulate NIH's vision for embracing, integrating, and strengthening diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) across all NIH activities to achieve the NIH mission. The Strategic Plan will capture activities that NIH will undertake to meet the vision of the Strategic Plan, and will be organized around accomplishments, needs, opportunities, and challenges in addressing DEIA in the NIH workforce, its structure and culture, and the research it supports.

NHTSA Reports Increased Traffic-related Fatalities

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration released its early estimate of traffic fatalities for the first nine months of 2021. NHTSA projects that an estimated

31,720 people died in motor vehicle traffic crashes from January through September 2021, an increase of approximately 12% from the 28,325 fatalities projected for the first nine months of 2020. The projection is the highest number of fatalities during the first nine months of any year since 2006 and the highest percentage increase during the first nine months in the Fatality Analysis Reporting System's history.

The new estimates come days after the U.S. Department of Transportation released the federal government's first-ever [National Roadway Safety Strategy](#), a roadmap to address the national crisis in roadway fatalities and serious injuries. The early estimate report released also provides the first look at State-level traffic fatality estimates during the pandemic. Compared to 2020, NHTSA projects that during the first nine months of 2021, fatalities increased in 38 States, remained flat in two States, and decreased in 10 States and the District of Columbia.

According to the Federal Highway Administration, vehicle miles traveled in the first nine months of 2021 increased by about 244 billion miles, an 11.7% increase from the same time in 2020. The fatality rate for the first nine months of 2021 increased to 1.36 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, a marginal increase from the projected rate of 1.35 fatalities in the same time in 2020. However, the fatality rates in the second and third quarters of 2021 declined compared to 2020. View the press release [here](#).

Reports and Resources

NASDDDS Releases Annual Staff Stability Report

The National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS) has produced an annual staff stability report that provides data on the nature and scope of the workforce crisis:

- [2020 NCI-IDD Staff Stability Survey Report](#)
- [2020 NCI-IDD Staff Stability Survey Report -- COVID-19 SUPPLEMENT](#)

National Core Indicators®- Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (NCI®-IDD), a collaboration between the NASDDDS and the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI), released the 2020 Staff Stability Report and COVID-Supplement that represents information from nearly 3,000 providers from 26 States and the District of Columbia offering an important picture of the circumstances faced by intellectual and developmental disabilities support providers during the height of the pandemic.

Findings:

- **Turnover Across States** -- the turnover rate for DSPs in 2020 ranged from 26.7% to 79.5%; the weighted average turnover rate was 43.6%.
- **Vacancy Rates** -- Among responding provider agencies who distinguish between fulltime and part-time DSP positions (82.8%), vacancy rates for full-time positions ranged from 2.2% to 17.2% with an NCI-IDD Average of 12.3%. Vacancy rates for part-time positions ranged from 2.4% to 29.8% with an NCI-IDD Average of 16.4%.

NAMD Publishes Policy Brief on Crisis Response System

The National Association of Medicaid Directors (NAMD) has published a federal policy brief, "Crisis Response," with regard to need to build out robust crisis systems that serve Medicaid members. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently released guidance on the mobile crisis state option and clarified that Medicaid administrative claiming funds could be used to help fund crisis call centers. These are important first steps, but States report ongoing regulatory, financial, and operational barriers to creating accessible, scalable, and well-coordinated 24/7 crisis response systems. The policy brief offers recommendations for assisting with implementation.

CSG Reports on States use of ARP to Support Workers with Disabilities

The Council of State Government has published a report on States' use of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for combatting the economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 relief and recovery funds to assist people with disabilities with employment.

As of January 2022, all 50 States have submitted recovery plans to the U.S. Treasury. Of the submitted plans, only four States have outlined their intent to devote funds to programs that directly support workers with disabilities. Supported programs include those that provide job training or coaching to students with disabilities, and State Developmental Disability Services agencies that help improve employment outcomes of people with disabilities. Read the article [here](#).

DD Programs Offer COVID Vaccine PSAs

To address the significant health risks for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and direct support workers, the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota, in partnership with National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) and support from AUCD, is producing a series of public service announcements encouraging direct support workers to get vaccinated. Please share these [captioned videos](#) across your networks.

RRTC Seeks Participants for Study to Test Measures to Improve HCBS

The NIDILRR-funded [Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Home and Community-Based Services Outcome Measures \(RTC OM\)](#) seeks [guardians of people with disabilities and other adults who know an adult with a disability](#) to test measures to improve home- and community-based services (HCBS) outcomes for people with disabilities. Participants must be at least 18 years old and know well someone who has a disability and receives services or supports for their disability. Participants will take part in a 60- to 90-minute interview over video and will receive a \$20 gift card for their time. For more information or to participate in the study, contact Matt Roberts at robe0290@umn.edu or 612/624-1489.

Upcoming Webinars and Conferences

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.

The webinar will report on two articles published last fall: "[Differences in State Traumatic Brain Injury – Related Deaths, by Principal Mechanism of Injury, Intent, and Percentage of Population Living in Rural Areas – United States, 2016-2018](#)," published in the *Morbidity and Mortality Report (MMWR)*, Oct. 15, 2021; and "[Traumatic Brain Injury-Related Hospitalizations and Deaths in Urban and Rural Counties – 2017](#)," published in *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, Nov. 3, 2021.

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.

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