



Washington Weekly!

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Administration

ACL to Establish a National Resource Center on Building Direct Care Workforce Capacity

Today, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) announced that it has awarded a five-year grant totaling over \$6 million to establish a national center to expand and strengthen the direct care workforce across the country. This initiative will provide technical assistance to States and service providers and facilitate collaboration with stakeholders to improve recruitment, retention, training, and professional development of the direct care workers who provide the critical services that make it possible for people with disabilities and older adults to live in their own homes and communities.

The center will harness the power of a team of organizations with expertise in disability, aging, and workforce issues, including several organizations that are part of [ACL's disability and aging networks](#). Led by the [National Council on Aging](#), partners include [the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities](#), [ADvancing States](#), [Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute \(PHI\)](#), [the University of Minnesota's Institute on Community Integration](#), [the National Alliance for Caregiving](#), [Lincoln University Paula J. Carter Center on Minority Health and Aging](#), [the Green House Project](#), [Social Policy Research Associates](#), and [Housing Innovations](#).

This initiative builds upon the ongoing collaboration to strengthen the direct care workforce between ACL, the Department of Labor, and other HHS agencies, including the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation.

DOJ Promotes Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Yesterday, United States Attorney for the Western District of Kentucky, Michael A. Bennett, joined the United States Department of Justice, the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), advocates, survivors, victim service providers, justice professionals, police and first responders, and communities across the United States in observing October as Domestic Violence Awareness month. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, more than 10 million adults experience domestic violence in the United States every year. Today is #PurpleThursday, a National Day of Action.

SAMHSA Announces Funding for Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), announced Monday a new **funding opportunity**, authorized by the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA), for States to develop and transform Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs) to address the country's mental health crisis. CCBHCs provide crisis services that are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and serve anyone who requests care for mental health or substance use, regardless of their ability to pay.

In addition to the nearly \$300 million awarded in September for new and existing CCBHCs, \$15 million in additional funding is now being announced for CCBHC planning. This additional round

of planning grants kicks off national CCBHC expansion under the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, and will expand access to planning grants for CCBHC's to all 50 States.

Ten States, Michigan, Missouri, Kentucky, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Oregon and Pennsylvania, were selected from among 24 States that received one-year planning grants from HHS. States must receive a planning grant in order to apply to be in the demonstration program. The remaining 40 States and the District of Columbia are eligible to submit applications for planning grants to develop CCBHCs in their States.

In early 2023, up to 15 States will be awarded up to \$1 million for one-year planning grants, and from those that submit a successful demonstration application, 10 will be selected to be in the actual CCBHC demonstration, starting in 2024. While 10 States will join the initiative in 2024, the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act allows for any State that has completed a planning grant and submits a successful application, to eventually join if they want. The CCBHC planning phase assists States in certifying clinics as CCBHCs, establish prospective payment systems for Medicaid reimbursable services, and prepare an application to participate in a four-year demonstration program.

NIDILRR Awards Grants to Expand Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems

The Administration for Community Living's (ACL) National Institute for Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) has awarded four additional Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems (SCIMS) Centers in FY 2022 to join the existing SCIMS program grantees. NIDILRR currently supports 18 SCIMS centers through this program. Grant recipients are:

- Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital Corporation, Charlestown, MA: New England Regional Spinal Cord Injury Care Center
- Regents of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI: Michigan Spinal Injury Model System
- Memorial Hermann Health System, Houston, TX: Texas Spinal Cord Injury Model System (SR-SCIMS)
- University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL: Alabama Spinal Cord Injury Model System

DOJ Awards Justice Grants

On Monday, U.S. Attorney W. Stephen Muldrow announced that the Department of Justice (DOJ) has awarded more than \$23 million in justice grants, including \$ 143,935 to support the Project Safe Neighborhoods Program in the District of Puerto Rico. Funding will support community efforts to address the epidemic of gun crime and serious violence in the district. The grant to the Puerto Rico Department of Housing is one of a number of awards being made to State and local agencies across the country. Funds are administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, part of the Department's Office of Justice Programs. The awards announced are being made as part of the regular end-of-fiscal year cycle. More information about awards under PSN and other OJP grants can be found on the [OJP Grant Awards Page](#).

NIDILRR Awards Rehab Engineering Research Centers Program Grants

The Administration for Community Living's (ACL) National Institute for Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) has announced three 2022 **Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERC) Program** grantees. The purpose of the **RERC program** is to improve the effectiveness of services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act by conducting advanced engineering research on and development of innovative technologies that are designed to solve particular rehabilitation problems or to remove environmental barriers. RERCs also demonstrate and evaluate such technologies, facilitate service delivery system changes, stimulate the production and distribution of new technologies and equipment in the private sector, and provide training opportunities. Grant recipients are:

- RERC on Recreational, Sport, and Exercise Technologies for People with Disabilities: University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL.
- RERC on Blindness and Low Vision: Smith-Kettlewell Eye Research Institute, San Francisco, CA.

- RERC on Rehabilitation Strategies, Techniques

Federal Rules and RIF

CMS Solicits Input for Proposed National Directory of Healthcare Providers

As part of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) ongoing work to improve access to care, reduce clinician burden, and support interoperability throughout the health sector, **CMS released a Request for Information (RFI) seeking public input** on the concept of CMS creating a directory with information on health care providers and services or a "National Directory of Healthcare Providers and Services" (NDH). CMS envisions that an NDH could serve as a "centralized data hub" for providers' directory and digital contact information, which would contain accurate, up-to-date, and validated data in a publicly accessible index. These data would be available for payers to use in their own network directories, lessening the burden to collect data directly from providers. Such a hub could improve interoperability, patient choice, care coordination, and reduce provider and payer administrative burden. The RFI is open for a 60-day public comment period through December 6, 2022. To read and respond to the RFI, visit [here](#).

Funding Opportunities

NIDILRR Publishes New Funding Opportunities

The Administration for Community Living's (ACL) National Institute for Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) has announced two new funding opportunities for this fiscal year, posted to [Grants.gov](#). All open opportunities are listed below.

- [Field Initiated Projects Program \(Research\) Synopsis 1](#)
- [Field Initiated Projects Program \(Development\) Synopsis 1](#)

CMS Announces NOFO on Connecting American Indian/Alaska Native Kids to Coverage

Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the Connecting Kids to Coverage (CKC) HEALTHY KIDS American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) 2023 Outreach and Enrollment Cooperative Agreements Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). The Outreach and Enrollment Cooperative Agreement program provides funding to reduce the number of AI/AN children who are eligible for, but not enrolled in, Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and to improve retention of eligible children who are enrolled in the programs. Eligibility for this NOFO is limited to applicants who are Indian Health Service providers, Indian tribes, or tribal entities. Learn more [here](#).

Safe States Solicits Seed Grants on Health Equity

Safe States is now [accepting applications](#) for **three seed grants of \$25,000 each** to advance the vision outlined through a special convening of the [Injury and Violence Prevention Network \(IVPN\)](#). In collaboration with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Injury Center, Safe States conducted an Injury and Violence Prevention (IVP) [Health Equity Scan](#) in 2021 to assess how IVP programs and entities across the country are addressing health and/or racial equity in their daily work. The report discusses a range of challenges these entities face and identifies technical assistance opportunities that can further support programs in their work to address both racial and broader health inequities.

Through this current [Request for Proposals \(RFP\)](#), Safe States will award up to three seed grants of \$25,000 each for use from December 2022 - August 2023 to operationalize and integrate equitable approaches to advance one or more of the needs identified in the [summary report](#) from the IVPN special convening. Learn more about the Equity-Focused Approaches to IVP seed grants and how to apply [here](#). Questions can be directed to shelli.stephens-stidham@safestates.org. Applications Due Friday, November 15, 2022. Learn more [here](#).

Reports and Resources

CMS Releases Resource for States Unwinding COVID-19 PHE

Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released a resource for States to support their unwinding efforts after the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) ends. This slide deck provides background information on ex parte renewal requirements and considerations, and offers strategies States can use to increase ex parte renewal rates, and other strategies to better automate eligibility renewals. During PHE, many States saw their ex parte rates fall; other States haven't maximized application of ex parte or fully leveraged its tools to automate the renewal process. States will have a large volume of eligibility and enrollment actions to complete during the unwinding period.

Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), States must seek to re-determine eligibility at renewal using electronic data matches with reliable sources of data prior to requiring enrollees to complete a renewal form or submit documentation. This process is technically called ex parte, but is often referred to as administrative renewal. Although ex parte renewals are also known as automated renewals, not all State systems are programmed to process ex parte renewals without worker action. Learn more about ex parte renewal [here](#).

CMS Releases Information on Ending Coverage in the Optional COVID-19 Group

As a result of changes in federal law related to the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE), States will have an unprecedented volume of work to complete when the PHE eventually ends. Some States expanded access to Medicaid coverage through a new optional COVID-19 eligibility group to ensure individuals who would otherwise be uninsured could access critical COVID-related services through the last day of the PHE.

States that adopted the optional COVID-19 group will need to prepare to end coverage for this eligibility group when statutory authority for the group ends (i.e., on the last day of the PHE), consistent with the guidance in this deck, as part of their efforts to restore normal operations when the PHE eventually ends. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has released numerous guidance documents and tools designed to help States prepare for the eventual end of the COVID-19 PHE including a State Health Official Letter, Promoting Continuity of Coverage and Distributing Eligibility and Enrollment Workload in Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and Basic Health Program (BHP)

CMS is releasing these answers to [frequently asked questions \(FAQs\)](#) regarding SHO #22-001 and related guidance. For more information, including resources, tools to support State unwinding efforts, and information shared during All State Calls, please visit [here](#).

CDC Shares Articles on Opioid Response in Journal

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shared articles recently published in the *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice* related to response to opioid crisis. These include:

- In a report on the rise of emergency department visits for opioid overdoses, CDC described the importance of coordinated, informed efforts with public safety, including first responders and law enforcement. Since 2015, CDC has awarded millions in funding to support overdose prevention and surveillance efforts through [Overdose Data to Action](#), the [Overdose Response Strategy](#), and the [Opioid Rapid Response Program](#). Improving partnerships between Public Health and Public Safety to reduce drug overdose deaths is a core component of these signature CDC programs.
- From Silos to Synergy: Public Health and Public Safety Collaborations to Reduce Drug Overdose, [Implementation and uptake of the Massachusetts Drug Supply Data Stream: A statewide public health-public safety partnership drug checking program](#).

- [Collaborative partnerships are key to address the overdose crisis: Public health and public safety.](#)
- [From silos to synergy: Public health and public safety collaborations to reduce drug overdose.](#)
- [Improving partnerships between public health and public safety to reduce overdose deaths: An inventory from the CDC overdose data to action funding initiative.](#)
- [Pilot case study: A framework for multisector public health and safety teams addressing the overdose epidemic.](#)
- [Facilitating overdose risk mitigation among patients following a clinician office closure: A Connecticut case study of the opioid rapid response program.](#)
- [The Martinsburg Initiative: A collaboration between public safety, public health, and schools to address trauma and substance use.](#)
- [The Overdose Response Strategy: Reducing drug overdose deaths through strategic partnership between public health and public safety.](#)
- [First responder assertive linkage programs: A scoping review of interventions to improve linkage to care for people who use drugs.](#)

Researchers Seek Input from Respite Providers, Grantees and Partners

Researchers at the University of Utah led by Dr. Rebecca Utz, who is a member of the **ARCH Committee for Advancement of Respite Research**, designed a program called **“Time for Living & Caring”** (TLC) to help caregivers more effectively use respite. Research from Dr. Dale Lund and Dr. Utz has shown that family caregivers benefit more from respite care if they are able to plan for and use their respite time in ways that are most meaningful for them.

They are looking for respite providers and professionals who advocate for and/or work with family caregivers to help with the final data collection effort of their National Institute for Aging-funded research grant by responding to a survey. The purpose of this provider survey is to get feedback that will help the TLC team to think about how to best disseminate the TLC tools into practice.

Participants will watch a 5-minute video describing the TLC app, and then answer a survey about how to best deliver support to caregivers in the community. Respite providers will answer additional questions at the end of the survey to help gather information to inform strategies to address the respite care provider shortage.

Participants are eligible for one (of 20) gift cards (\$50 value). The deadline is Oct. 31, 2022. Take the **survey**.

NARIC is Recruiting Stakeholders for Information on Needs Assessments

The NIDILRR-funded **National Rehabilitation Information Center (NARIC)** is recruiting participants for **stakeholder interviews to understand the information needs of the community**. Participation is open to all, including people with and without disabilities, researchers, practitioners, and others. If selected, individuals will participate in a 30- to 45-minute interview about what types of disability and rehabilitation information they use, where they find it, and how they use it, as well as what information needs they may have that are not being met. Participants who complete the interview will receive a \$25 gift card for their time. Complete the recruitment questionnaire or email naricinfo@heitechservices.com to volunteer.

Upcoming Webinars and Conferences

Federal Agencies Offer Webinar Series on Employment First

On Wednesday, October 26, from 3:00pm – 4:00pm (ET), the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services and members of Federal Community Engagement Cross-Agency Workgroup, will offer two-part webinar series on Understanding Community Engagement and its role in expanding Competitive Integrated Employment. Part One, “The Role of Non-Work Activities in Developing Critical Skills for Competitive, Integrated Employment,” will address the invaluable role non-work activities play in Community Engagement and building critical life and social skills needed to ultimately find success in employment. Register [here](#).

CSG Justice Center and NASHIA Offer Webinar on TBI and Criminal Justice

Hosted by The Council of State Governments (CSG) and the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators (NASHIA), a November 2nd webinar, “Understanding the Needs of People with Brain Injuries in the Justice System,” will cover available resources for people living with traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and for providers working with individuals with TBI in the criminal justice system. There will be a focus on brain injuries in the justice population to help participants understand environmental factors that and strategies for identification, support, and referral. The webinar will be held from 2:00pm – 3:30pm (ET). Register [here](#).

Applied Self-Direction Offers Webinar November 10

On November 10, the webinar, “Disabling Ableism: Tips for Partnering with Disabled People,” will be led by Erica Andres, a Training Consultant at Applied Self-Direction who has over 20 years of experience working in the Health and Human Services field and personal expertise living a self-directed life. While this session is primarily geared towards support brokers and other professionals working with self-direction programs, the key takeaways will be applicable to anyone who is nondisabled and working with people with disabilities. Self-direction is a model of long-term care that allows people to receive support in their homes and communities, the way they want it. Watch this video to learn more. This webinar will be held on Thursday, November 10, 2022 from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 pm (ET). [Click here](#) to register.

University of Toronto Offers Webinar on DSM-5TR and Neurocognitive Disorders

As part of the University of Toronto Traumatic Brain Injury: Addressing Inequities Speaker Series, the University will be hosting the webinar, “Updates to DSM-5-TR: A focus on neurocognitive disorders,” on October 27 from 2:00 – 1:00 pm (EST). Dr. Diana Clarke from the American Psychiatric Association will be discussing updates to the Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th edition, text revision (DSM-5-TR) focusing on neurocognitive disorders. The series is supported by the Canada Research Chair in TBI in Underserved Populations. Register [here](#) for the Oct. 27 webinar.

National Disability Forum to Hold Webinar on Homelessness and SSA Benefits

The National Disability Forum is hosting the webinar, “Homelessness: Working with Stakeholders to Improve Access to SSA Benefits and Services,” Part II, Wednesday, October 19 from 1:00pm – 3:00pm (ET). The NDF is an open forum of Social Security that gives all interested stakeholders an opportunity to share their unique insights on topics of particular interest to SSA early in the process and directly with policy makers. For more information, go to the [NDR website](#).



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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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