



Washington Weekly!

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Administration

HUD Awards Funding to Build Systems for Homeless Youth

On Monday, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced that the agency had awarded \$83.7 million to build systems to end youth homelessness in 17 local communities, including 6 rural communities. The funding was awarded through HUD's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) to support a wide range of housing programs including rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, and host homes. YHDP recipients will use their funding to address youth homelessness that is specifically tailored to their needs, including funding for housing units, wrap-around services, and housing support. YHDP will also support youth-focused performance measurement and coordinated entry systems. Over the next several months, selected communities will work with their youth advisory boards, child welfare agencies, and other community partners to create a comprehensive community plan to end youth homelessness. Learn more [here](#).

DOT Announces Guidance to Improve Safety for Vulnerable Road Users

As part of its ongoing efforts through the [National Roadway Safety Strategy](#) (NRSS) to prioritize safety and meet milestones laid out in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced [new guidance](#) to help States address the crisis of roadway deaths across our nation. Vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, cyclists, and people who use wheelchairs, accounted for approximately 20% of the 42,915 people who were killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2021, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), an increase of 13% over 2020.

In developing Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment, a new safety approach established under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, FHWA is encouraging States to work with institutional, advocacy, and community groups, particularly those that represent populations that are involved in these crashes and reside in the locations where fatalities and serious injuries are occurring.

NIDILRR Awards Two New DDRP Programs

The Administration for Community Living's (ACL) National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) has announced two new Disability and Rehabilitation Research grantees:

- **DDRP on Community Living and Participation** to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with an estimated funding amount of \$500,000 per year for five years. In partnership with key stakeholders, this project will develop eLearning Modules and a virtual toolkit to improve community participation for young adults with intellectual disabilities. [View more details about this project.](#)
- **DDRP Center on Knowledge Translation for Disability and Rehabilitation Research** to the American Institutes for Research in the Behavioral Sciences with an estimated

funding amount of \$750,000 per year for five years. This project will promote the use of high-quality disability, independent living, and rehabilitation research relevant to intended audiences' needs by serving as the main knowledge translation resource for other NIDILRR grantees. [View more details about this project.](#)

USDA Announces Grants and Loans to Rural Communities for High-Speed Internet

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced yesterday that it is making available \$759 million in grants and loans to enable rural communities to access [high-speed internet](#), as part of the broader \$65 billion push for high-speed connectivity from last year's [infrastructure law](#). Funding will be made available to 49 recipients in 24 States, Puerto Rico, Guam and Palau. USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to support infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural, tribal and high-poverty areas. Read the press release [here](#).

NIDILRR Announces SCIMS Collaborative Research Project Grant

Today, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) announced that the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) is awarding a 2022 [Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems](#) (SCIMS) Collaborative Research Project grant award to the Kessler Foundation, East Hanover, NJ. The project, titled "The Context of Living with Spinal Cord Injury: A Program of Collaborative Research Advancing the Science of Environmental Factors and Disability," is to build the research infrastructure needed to generate actionable information about how communities shape the disability experience. This information will inform ongoing policy efforts to maintain the hard-fought gains for social inclusion for people with disabilities. [View more details about this project.](#)

CMS to Increase Scrutiny and Oversight of Poorest-Performing Nursing Homes

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is increasing scrutiny and oversight over the country's poorest-performing nursing facilities in an effort to immediately improve the care they deliver. In a series of revisions to the Special Focus Facility (SFF) Program, CMS will toughen requirements for completion of the program and increase enforcement actions for facilities that fail to demonstrate improvement. CMS is also calling on States to consider a facility's staffing level in determining which facilities enter the SFF Program. CMS is advising State Survey Agencies to consider a facility's staffing level, in addition to its compliance history, when selecting candidates from their State for inclusion into the SFF Program. This recommendation is the latest action by CMS to focus on the importance of staffing to quality care. The changes announced this week are designed to incentivize facilities to quickly improve their quality and safety performance, allow the SFF Program to scrutinize more facilities over time by moving facilities through the Program more quickly, and promote sustainability of facilities' improvements to ensure they do not regress post-program. Learn more [here](#).

SAMHSA Awards Funding to States for Mental Health Emergency Preparedness

Last Friday, Oct 21st, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), announced more than \$100 million worth of funding from the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA) to States and territories for mental health emergency preparedness, crisis response, and the expansion of 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline services. BSCA, signed into law by President Biden earlier this year, provided unprecedented funding to address the nation's mental health crisis and make our communities safer.

On Monday, Oct. 17th, HHS awarded \$59.4 million to [States and territories](#) through the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant ([MHBG](#)) program, with the recommendation that the funding be spent to address mental health emergency preparedness and crisis response efforts. SAMHSA sent a [letter - PDF](#) to State mental health commissioners recommending that State behavioral health systems examine requirements to address mental health needs in communities in the aftermath of traumatic events such as mass shootings.

HHS also announced last Friday the availability of another \$50 million in [supplemental grant funding](#), provided by BSCA, to help States and territories expand and enhance 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline services. The funding is available to the [54 States and territories](#) that received

\$105 million in American Rescue Plan funding earlier this year. These State and territory supplemental awards will range from about \$458,000 to \$2 million and will be distributed before Dec. 31st. In total, the Administration has invested over \$432 million in Fiscal Year 2022 for the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline – 18 times more funding than the previous administration – to build capacity and to get the hotline up and running.

The block grants and supplemental funding build on several other mental health announcements HHS made last week, including more than \$300 million to support and expand Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics nationwide, as reported in last Friday's *Washington Weekly*. SAMHSA has recommended that States and territories use the MHBG supplemental funding from BSCA to, among other things: develop statewide mental health emergency preparedness and response plans focused on collaboration with law enforcement and other local agencies; identify mobile crisis teams that can be deployed rapidly throughout the State to address mental health during an emergency; provide behavioral health crisis response trainings to agencies and providers; identify culturally and linguistically appropriate support for diverse populations; and build and leverage relationships with 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline call centers, child welfare organizations, schools and others.

On July 16th, the U.S. transitioned to 988 as a new way to reach the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (formerly the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline). This easy-to-remember, three-digit resource provides access to trained counselors for suicide, mental health and substance use-related crises 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Reports and Resources

CDC Announces New HEADS UP Online Concussion Training

This week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced new **HEADS UP to Sports Officials: Online Concussion Training** which was developed through a partnership between the CDC and the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) to share the latest guidance on concussion safety and prevention. The training provides essential information to help sports officials spot possible concussion signs and symptoms that can help keep athletes safe. Training was developed to target to:

- Training for **coaches**
- Training for **school professionals**
- Training for **athletic trainers**
- Training for **healthcare providers**
- Videos on **concussion safety**
- **Graphics and infographics**

ADvancing States Announces NCI-AD Information is Now on Facebook and Twitter

ADvancing States has announced that the National Core Indicators – Aging and Disabilities (NCI-AD™) with regard to State spotlights, insightful data and announcements on latest projects and webinars will be featured on their Facebook page, as well as Twitter. **NCI-AD™** is a voluntary effort by State Medicaid, aging, and disability agencies to measure and track their own performance. The core indicators are standard measures used across States to assess the outcomes of services provided to individuals and families. Indicators address key areas of concern including service planning, rights, community inclusion, choice, health and care coordination, safety and relationships. NCI-AD™ is a collaboration of **participating States**, **ADvancing States** (formerly NASUAD), and **HSRI**.

You can follow these activities here:

- **Click here** to follow the Facebook Page.
- **Click here** to follow Twitter.

KFF Brief Surveys State Medicaid Agencies and the PHE

KFF has published new brief on the unwinding of the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) following a survey of State Medicaid agencies. KFF reports that State Medicaid agencies anticipate enrollment to decline, total spending growth to slow and State spending to rise after the expiration of the COVID-19 PHE, which most States anticipated would end by mid-FY 2023. KFF's 22nd annual survey of State Medicaid directors, which also includes findings about State Medicaid policies in areas such as delivery systems, health equity, benefits, telehealth, provider rates & taxes, pharmacy, and more. Read the brief [here](#).

RSA Partners with Other Federal Agencies to Improve Competitive Integrated Employment

Last week, the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) shared with its vocational rehabilitation network its partnership with the Administration for Community Living's Administration on Disabilities (AoD) and other federal partners for the purpose of improving competitive integrated employment and economic outcomes for individuals with an array of abilities. In its online newsletter, RSA informed its network that AoD funds the [Disability Employment Technical Assistance Center](#) (DETAC) that provides evidence-based technical assistance to eligible AoD grantees and has made available several resources produced by the DETAC that VR professionals may find useful in working with individuals with traumatic brain injuries (TBIs). These materials were developed in collaboration with NASHIA.

[AoD grantees](#) include Centers for Independent Living (CIL), State Councils on Developmental Disabilities (Councils), University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), State Protection and Advocacy Systems (P&A), Traumatic Brain Injury State Partnership Programs (TBI), and Projects of National Significance (PNS) Community Collaborations for Employment (CCE). AoD grantees partner with [RSA's State Vocational Rehabilitation \(VR\) Services Programs](#) and have created valuable resources for VR professionals. These are published on the [DETAC](#) website under [Resources for AoD Grantees](#) and [Community of Practice](#).

Upcoming Webinars and Conferences

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](#).

APHSA Hosts Webinar on Unwinding PHE Coverage for Medicaid Populations

On Wednesday, November 9th, at 2:00pm (ET), the American Public Health Services Administration (APHSA) will offer the webinar, "Supporting PHE Coverage and Navigating Transitions for Medicaid Populations." As Medicaid agencies prepare for public health emergency (PHE) unwinding, there are a range of strategies that can be offered to improve access and support independence and decision-making for Medicaid recipients. This webinar will focus on key challenges and focus areas of the PHE Unwind that address the impact of losing Medicaid coverage and associated benefits, once the continuous coverage requirement is no longer in effect. The webinar will also identify ways to minimize disruptions for enrollees, while discussing areas of system improvements and effective communication strategies that promote and provide clear and accessible information to individuals utilizing long-term services and supports.

Panelists:

- **Carl Feldman**, Acting Deputy Director of Policy, Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
- **Pam Smith**, Director, Division of Long-Term Services and Supports, Department for Medicaid Services, Commonwealth of Kentucky
- **Scott Workman**, Managing Director, Deloitte
- **Jeff Burke**, Principal, Deloitte
- **Martha Donnelly**, Specialist Leader, Deloitte
- **Kate Holman**, Senior Manager, Deloitte

Moderators:

- **Rebecca Hildebrand**, Principal, Deloitte
- **Jess Maneely**, Manager, Process Innovation, APHSA

Register [here](#).

Applied Self-Direction Offers Webinar on Disabling Ableism on November 10th

On November 10th, 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.



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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.



NASHIA

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