

What Have We Done for You Lately? – August 2019

OUR STORY | AUGUST 28, 2019 | BY GERALYN MAGAN

Here's an overview of our work for you in August 2019.

TOOK A STAND IN SUPPORT OF OLDER ADULTS LIVING IN POVERTY

LeadingAge President and CEO Katie Smith Sloan used [an Aug. 7 blog](#), published by Community Catalyst, to bring public attention to potential changes in how the federal government measures poverty. The poverty threshold is used to determine the federal poverty level, which is then used to determine eligibility for a wide range of programs important to older adults and aging services providers.

A recent proposal from the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) calls for using inflation measures other than the Consumer Price Index for Urban Consumers to calculate increases to the poverty threshold. If OMB implements its proposed changes, wrote Sloan, fewer older adults would be eligible for publicly-funded aging services over time, and aging services providers would be unable to serve the growing numbers of older adults with low incomes who need those supports.

“The proposed changes in calculating the poverty threshold would establish a downward spiral over time in the numbers of older adults who would otherwise have met the eligibility standard,” wrote Sloan, who urged OMB to “support regulations that lift people up, not keep them down.”

TOOK STEPS TO INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT ACTION

August was filled with opportunities for LeadingAge to try to influence government actions that affect LeadingAge members, including:

Draft Electronic Signature Rule: We welcomed proposed plans from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to:

- Permit, but not require, its industry partners to use electronic signatures for project-based Section 8 and other multifamily subsidized housing programs.
- Permit electronic transmission and storage of files.
- Offer new opportunities for owners/agents to use technology tools to automate processes, manage data and documents, and potentially free up resources.

Patients Over Paperwork: In our comments on this new initiative, we suggested ways that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services could reduce burdensome regulations. We:

- Emphasized the burden of excessive and duplicative documentation requirements.
- Reiterated our position on the number of quality measures that members must report.
- Outlined the benefits of interoperable health information systems.
- Pointed out inconsistencies in the survey and certification processes.
- Urged elimination of the inpatient status distinction from the 3-day qualifying stay required for skilled nursing eligibility.

APM Concepts: LeadingAge staff and members joined staff and members from 4 other post-acute provider associations at an August meeting with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI). We discussed draft alternative payment model (APM) concepts for CMMI to consider in developing a new APM led by post-acute care.

RELEASED IMPORTANT RESOURCES

We were busy in August producing resources to help members do their important work. Check out these offerings:

Guidance on Nursing Settings in Life Plan Communities: A new brief, *“Right-Sizing” Nursing Care Settings in a Life Plan Community*, is designed to help life plan communities make decisions about the “right size” of their Medicare-certified skilled nursing setting and their non-Medicare long-term care setting. The brief will guide your analysis of issues related to residents, payment/reimbursement, and operations.

Clarity on Medicare Advantage Payments: Another new brief, *Medicare Advantage Plan Payment Obligations to Out-of-Network Providers*, aims to clear up the confusion about how a skilled nursing or home health member can get paid by a Medicare Advantage plan when it doesn't have a contract and isn't a network provider.

Tools for Housing Plus Services Programs: The LeadingAge LTSS Center @UMass Boston released a *newly repackaged set of tools* to help support the development of programs that use affordable senior housing communities as a platform for the delivery of health and support services to vulnerable older adults with low incomes.

Updated Technology Tool: LeadingAge CAST updated its *Shared Care Planning and Coordination Technology Online Tool*, which provides hands-on resources to help providers plan for, choose, and adopt appropriate technology.

Toolkit for Chats with Congress: We urged LeadingAge members to use our *Coffee Chats with Congress Toolkit* to host members of Congress at their communities during the Congressional recess in August. Members took advantage of the summer pause to talk with legislators about our advocacy agenda, including fiscal 2020 spending levels for senior housing and home and community-based services programs.

Another LeadingAge Catalyst: LeadingAge recognized *Maple Knoll Communities*, based in Cincinnati, OH, for excellence in technology innovation.

PREPARED FOR A BUSY FALL

August may be a great time to go to the beach. But it's also a great time to get ready for the excitement coming in September and October. This August, our team members began preparing for:

Workforce Development Month: We plan to spend September celebrating the LTSS workforce. We hope you'll join us in educating the public about exciting career opportunities in the aging services field. Keep an eye on the LeadingAge *website*, our social media channels, and *LeadingAge* magazine for more information. And check out our *workforce resources* on the Learning Hub.

Leadership Academy: We were pleased to make an August announcement about the **48 new Leadership Academy Fellows** who will meet throughout 2020 to enhance their leadership skills and core competencies. Learn more about how your team members can apply for the 2021 **Leadership Academy**.

PDPM: We don't have to remind our nursing home members that the Medicare Patient-Driven Payment Model (PDPM) goes into effect **Oct. 1**. The LeadingAge Learning Hub features **a variety of resources** to help you get ready for this major overhaul to the current skilled nursing facility prospective payment system.

Annual Meeting: We're almost ready to welcome you to San Diego on **Oct. 27-30** for the 2019 LeadingAge Annual Meeting & EXPO. Enjoy inspiring keynotes, informative sessions, a variety of networking events, and a robust EXPO featuring new partners to serve your evolving needs. **Register today**.

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