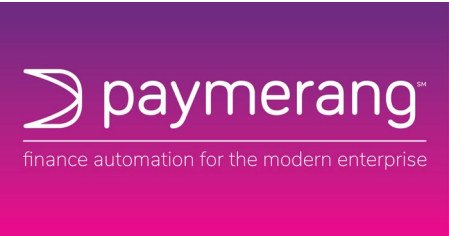


Thank you to our 2021 LeadingAge Kansas Partners



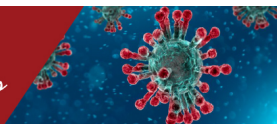
LeadingAge Kansas
COVID-19 Weekly Update
October 29, 2021

Special Presentation

Vaccination rates

Ricky Turley Administrator from Lakeview Village

86.6% Vaccination rate for employees



Federal Update

President Releases Build Back Better [1,684 page bill](#)

- \$450 Million for Section 202
- \$150 Billion for HCBS expansion
- Medicare benefit for hearing
- Permanent reauthorization of the Money Follows the Person program
- Permanently aligns HCBS spousal impoverishment protections with nursing home provisions
- Nursing home enforcement funding: penalties for failing to accurately report required staffing data, resident assessment data and quality measures beginning 2026. The study on minimum staffing is included (without added Medicaid funds, which we will continue to advocate for). And \$325 Million is allocated to CMS to improve the survey process, provide resources to improve the recruitment and training of surveyors. [Here](#) is an article on the health provisions

Federal Update

Build Back Better – Part 2: Workforce Investments

An article on workforce funding is available [here](#) and the following are a few highlights:

- \$1.6 billion for Nursing Home Workforce Training Grants
- \$150 billion Medicaid HCBS Expansion (see item 4, above; much of this is for workforce support)
- \$425 million to expand the Health Profession Opportunity Grants
- \$1 billion for Direct Care Workforce Competitive Grants
- \$20 million for Technical Assistance Center for Supporting Direct Care and Caregiving
- \$40 million in Funding to Support Unpaid Caregivers to address behavioral needs of unpaid caregivers
- \$20 million for Hospice and Palliative Nursing initiatives

Federal Update

Limited Deadline Extension for Completing Phase 4 and ARP Rural Provider Relief Application. Providers who submitted their Tax Identification Numbers (TINs) for validation prior to the October 26 application deadline and who subsequently have those TINs validated by the IRS, have until November 3 at 11:59 PM ET to complete and submit the remainder of their application (the financial portion). Providers can access the needed resources to complete the application [here](#)

EEOC Updates Guidance on Religious Exemptions to Vaccine Mandates. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) updated its [guidance](#) on federal anti-discrimination laws and religious exemptions to COVID-19 vaccine mandates. The highlights of the updated guidance include:

- Employees must inform their employer if they are requesting an exception to a vaccination, but they do not need to use any "magic words," such as "religious accommodation" or "Title VII," when making the request.
- An employer should assume that religious accommodation requests are because of sincerely held religious beliefs, but if an employer has an objective basis for questioning an employee's sincerity, the employer could make a limited factual inquiry and seek additional supporting information.
- Employers should consider all possible reasonable accommodations for an employee's religious belief, including telework and reassignment, but the employer is not required to provide the accommodation if it would create an "undue hardship" on its operations.
- An employer that grants some employees a religious accommodation from a vaccination requirement is not required to grant the requests of all employees who seek such an accommodation.
- An employer is not required to provide the religious accommodation preferred by an employee if other possible accommodations exist that also would effectively eliminate the religious conflict and do not cause an undue hardship.

State Update

Revised Visitation Guidance coming soon from KDADS

- Adding guidelines for Essential Caregiver Program – NOT MANDATORY
- State Licensed Only providers (AL/HP/RHCF) will use CDC transmission rate to determine visitation restrictions. Nursing facilities will still follow CMS guidelines

KDADS will be sending out communication to Administrators about changes in required categories for CE hours (as in there are none anymore)

LeadingAge Kansas Advocacy

Select Committee on Government Overreach and the Impact of COVID-19 Mandates meeting today (Oct 29) and hearing public testimony on Saturday, Oct 30th.

- LeadingAge Kansas submitted written testimony (see handout)

ARPA Employee Retention Program

- Still trying to determine what will work for long term care providers
 - [This is the application](#) set up for hospitals (pg 10) and we need feedback! Specifically – does your organization do a full financial audit with accompanying policies and procedures? Do you do any federal grant management and reporting?

Value First PPE and Testing Update

- McKesson, Value First's preferred distribution partner, supply chain update:
 - The Abbott BinaxNow rapid test continues to be under allocation however the Quidel Quickvue has been removed from that restriction.
 - McKesson does still suggest ordering the two rapid tests available at least two weeks in advance of the need. That is the CareStart and Quickvue rapid antigen tests.
 - Due to the high demand, they may request limiting orders to 30 day supply.
 - McKesson does still have inventory on Gowns, Gloves as well as Honeywell N95 masks.
 - Continue to be in close contact with your McKesson representative with the additional needs you might have. , Scott Fleet.
(816.305.7177) scott.fleet@mckesson.com

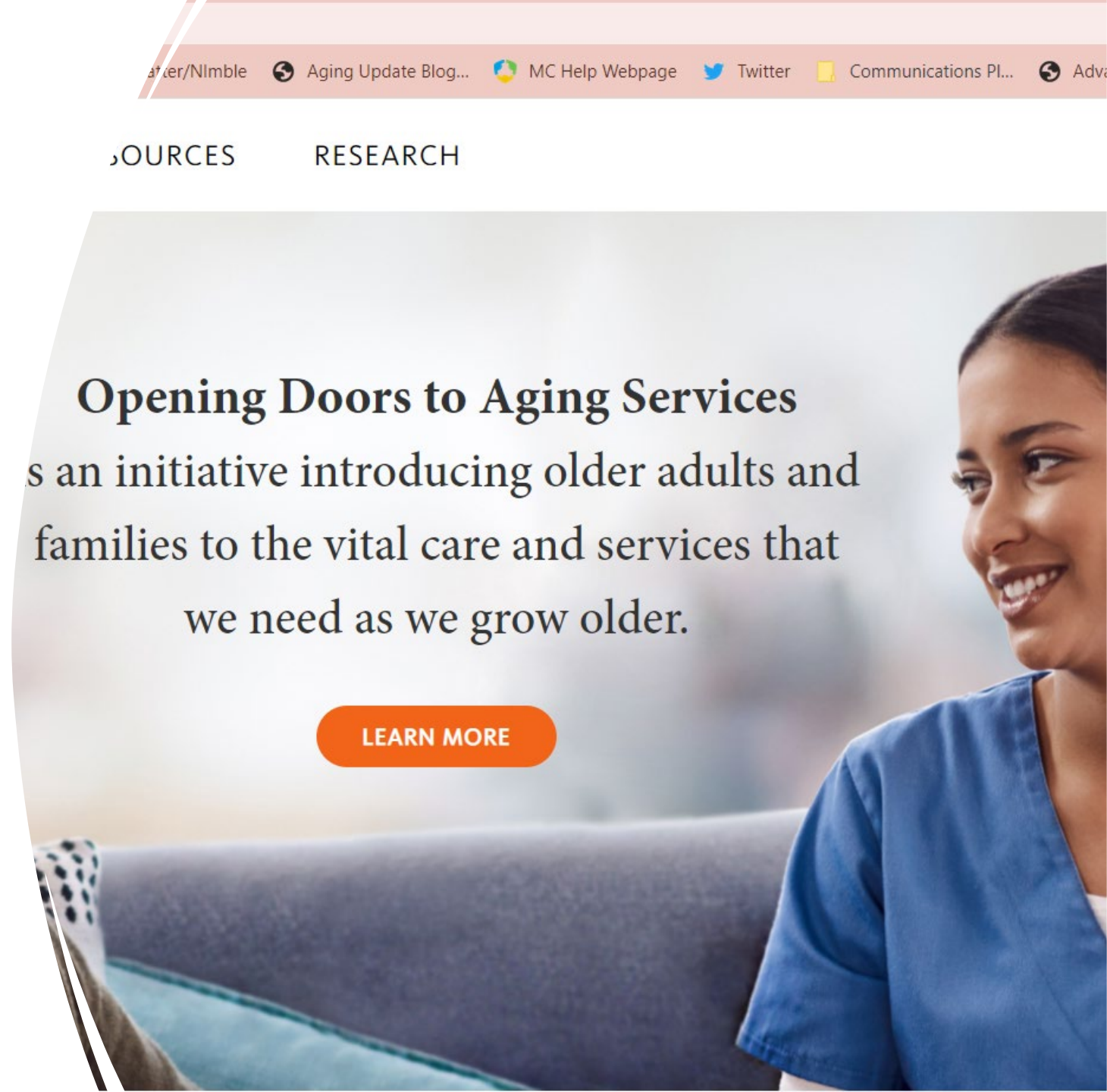
You may also reach out to ann@leadingagekansas.org

Opening Doors.org

- PR Initiative for Aging Services
- Tools, information, for members, consumers, media, etc
- Trying to tell a similar story
- [Research Executive Summary](#)

Opening Doors to Aging Services
is an initiative introducing older adults and families to the vital care and services that we need as we grow older.

LEARN MORE



Webinars for Your Accounts Payable Staff

The Path to Perfect Payment

November 4th | 1:00-2:00 PM

Accounts Payable (AP) departments are busier than ever, and AP leaders are eager to improve operation efficiency. With fraud threats on the rise, it's imperative to have accurate, secure, and centralized data within your accounting system. In this webinar series, we will introduce you to our top curated best practices to help your AP department become more efficient, effective, and secure in 2021. Earn 1.0 CEU.

[Click to Register](#)

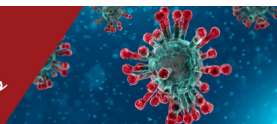
Electronic Payments Save Time and Money and Allow AP to Focus on Mission Critical Tasks

November 18th | 1:00-2:00 PM

Accounts payable staff are busier than ever, and AP leaders are eager to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness. Paying vendors electronically frees staff from the drudgery of manual check processing, allowing them to focus more of their time on higher-value activities such as data analysis and supplier management. Earn 1.0 CEU

[Click to Register](#)

Register today with the discount code "50" and get 50% off.



New Webinar

Kansas NF Cost Report 101

Tuesday, November 9th | 1:00-2:00 PM

Kansas NF Cost Report 101 – KDADS staff along with MSLC will review the MS-2004 NF Cost Report, provide a “how to” complete schedule K and review the Common Adjustment on the NF Cost Report. Earn 1.0 CEU.

Presented by:

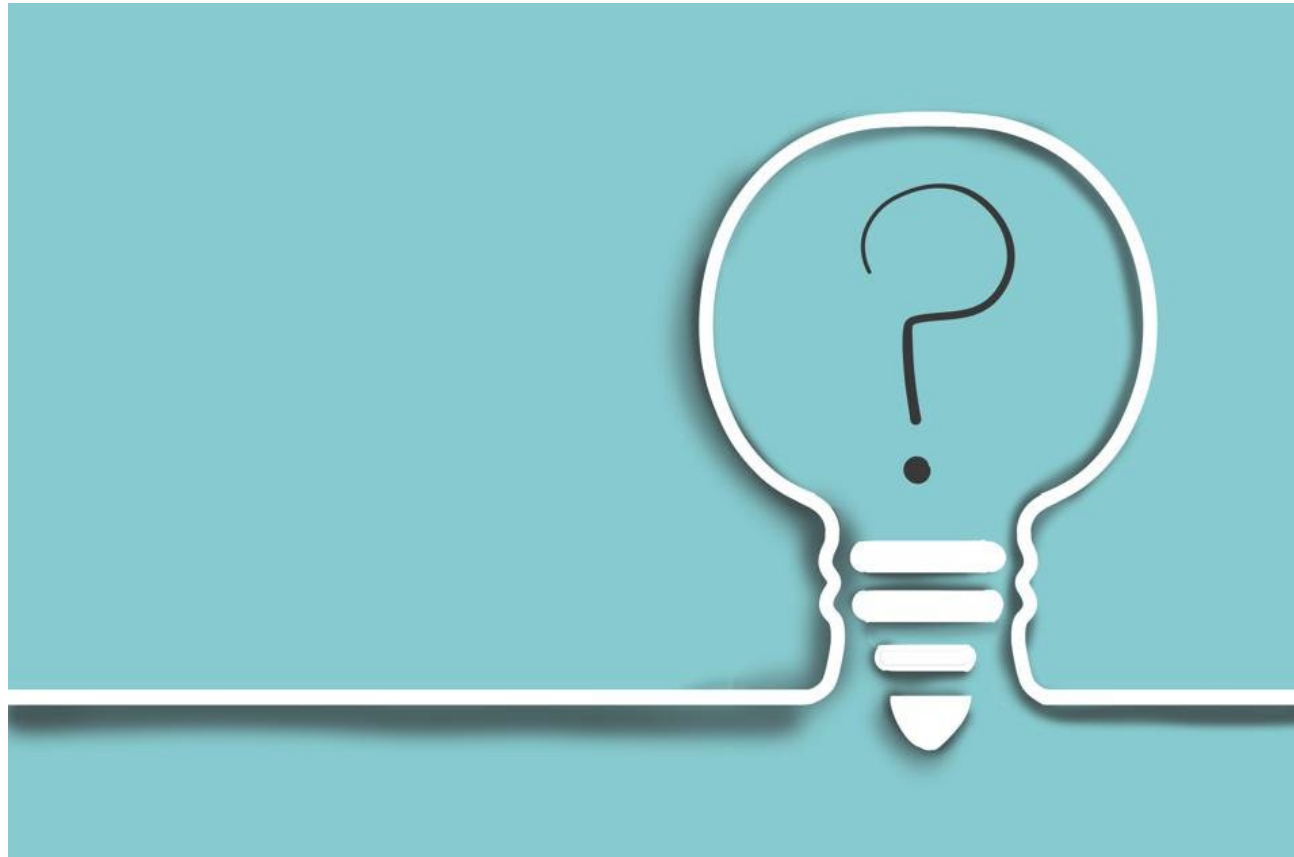
David Halferty - Myers & Stauffer

Shirley Chung - KDADS Audit Manager

Trescia Power - KDADS Program Finance Oversight Manager

[Click to Register](#)





www.leadingagekansas.org/covid19





To: Chairwoman Erickson, Vice-Chair Landwehr, and Members, 2021 Special Committee on Government Overreach and the Impact of COVID-19 Mandates

From: Rachel Monger, Chief Advocacy Officer

Date: October 30, 2021

Comments on COVID-19 Vaccination Mandate as a Condition of Participation in Medicaid or Medicare Programs

LeadingAge Kansas opposes any federal edict requiring ANY type of health care provider to mandate staff COVID-19 vaccination as a Condition of Participation in Medicaid or Medicare.

This will constitute an ill-conceived government action, fraught with potential for serious negative consequences to the entire healthcare system and the people it serves.

The Biden administration recently announced its intention to mandate COVID-19 vaccination for all staff of nursing homes as a condition to receive Medicare and Medicaid funding. An Interim Final Rule (IFR) will be published in October, with the effective date coming shortly thereafter. Full details will not be available until the publication of the IFR.

Access to the COVID-19 vaccination has been the most critical development of the pandemic for older Kansans and the people who care for them. LeadingAge Kansas members have been working diligently for months to vaccinate staff, and to educate and encourage vaccination among those who are vaccine-hesitant and vaccine-opposed. LeadingAge Kansas and our national association LeadingAge have provided a steady stream of resources and education to assist them in their efforts. Nevertheless, vaccine hesitancy and opposition among our workers is as real as it is in communities across Kansas.

After 18 months of crisis, many long-term care providers are already on the brink of collapse. A September 2021 survey of Kansas long-term care providers shows that staffing shortages and financial instability have reached dangerous new levels. Our members fear for the people they serve, who desperately need our care now and into the future. Some are losing hope of recovery. This will worsen with a federal mandate forcing nursing home staff to decide to be vaccinated or leave employment.

The federal vaccine mandate constitutes a:

Threat to Access to Care – For the first time in living memory, we are facing the possibility of massive closure of nursing home beds and whole facilities throughout Kansas. The federal mandate will escalate this prospect, for the aforementioned reasons. Some Kansans will be

forced to move outside their home community for nursing home care. Their spouses and other loved ones will have to find a way to get there, or not go as frequently as they want to. This reality will be especially painful for ruralelders.

- **Financial Threat** - So many providers are only staying afloat for the time being through emergency dollars. On average in Kansas, nursing homes rely on Medicaid and Medicare for over 70% of their funding. Taking the draconian step of withdrawing Medicaid and Medicare funding from nursing home care providers who continue to fight on the frontlines would be a tragic misstep.
- **Workforce Threat** – In September 2021, 60% of our surveyed nursing homes reported that they are not taking new admissions due to shortage of workers. There is justifiable concern that the federal mandate will exacerbate this shortage, as workers that are vaccine-hesitant or vaccine-opposed leave for other jobs. The vaccine mandate will force nursing homes to rely even more on temporary staffing agencies – further annihilating any existing financial stability. Vaccinated or unvaccinated, our staff are heroes who have persevered in caring for frail older Kansans during the worst and most prolonged public health crisis in living memory. We need to honor them, not condemn them, and not chase them off with no alternatives to a government-mandated vaccine.



September Membership Survey Results

Respondents include 71 Non-Profit Long Term Care Providers Across Kansas

- 68% report poor and declining financial health
- 60% report denying new admission due to lack of staff
- Providers have an average of 15 nursing positions open
- On average survey respondents are spending \$29,000/day on temporary nurse agency staff