



Newsletter

Monday, March 11, 2013

2013 Older Americans Month Theme: *Unleash the Power of Age*

In This Issue:

[Good News on Health Care Spending](#)

[Recent HHS Announcements](#)

[March Is National Nutrition Month](#)

[ACL to Fund Learning Collaborative Coalitions](#)

Funding Opportunities

[Cigna Foundation Invites Applications for Health Promotion Projects](#)

Stay Informed

[NASUAD I&R/A Support Center Call](#)

[Webinar Reminders](#)

Tools & Information

[New Tool Helps Pharmacies Assess Patient Safety Culture](#)

[WISER Forum - Save the Date](#)

[Recent Reports](#)

[March Observances](#)

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[Email this to a friend](#)

Don't forget to check-out the new [ACL website](#).

Good News on Health Care Spending

Healthcre.gov Blog by Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services, Posted March 7, 2013

For years, health care costs have been rising faster than inflation, driving up the cost of health care and making it less affordable for families and businesses.

But now, the good news about the slowing growth of health care spending nationwide is being increasingly recognized by independent analysts. Just this week, [USA Today](#) reported that according to the newspaper's own analysis that "health care spending last year rose at one of the lowest rates in a half-century." According to the paper, health care providers and analysts found that "cost-saving measures under the health care law appear to be keeping medical prices flat."

As USA Today put it, "Spending for medical care has increased modestly for five consecutive years, the longest period of slow growth since Medicare began in 1966." And, according to the newspaper's own number-crunching of Bureau of Economic Analysis data, health care spending shrank slightly as a share of the overall economy.

[Read more.](#)

Recent HHS Announcements

1. HHS and States Move Forward to Offer Quality, Affordable Health Coverage

With conditional approval given last week to Iowa, Michigan, New Hampshire, and West Virginia to operate State Partnership Marketplaces, which will be ready for open enrollment in October 2013, the total number of states that have been conditionally approved to partially or fully run their Marketplace increased to 24 states and the District of Columbia. In addition, several other

states have suggested their own approaches to contributing toward plan management in their Marketplace in 2014.

When this provision of the Affordable Care Act goes into effect in October, consumers in every state will be able to buy insurance from qualified health plans directly through a Marketplace and may be eligible for premium tax credits and cost sharing assistance to help lower their costs. These health plans will ensure consumers have the same kinds of valuable insurance choices as members of Congress, and cannot be denied coverage because of a pre-existing condition.

[Read more.](#)

[Click here](#) for more information on the new Health Insurance Marketplace.

2. HHS Announces 2013 Agenda to Bring Down Costs and Improve Quality of Care through Implementation of Health Information Technology

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Acting Administrator Marilyn Tavenner and the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology Farzad Mostashari, M.D., last Thursday announced the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) plan to accelerate health information exchange (HIE) and build a seamless and secure flow of information essential to transforming the health care system.

[Click here](#) to read more, including the goals set for 2013.

[Back to the top](#)

March Is National Nutrition Month

ACL Blog by Holly Greuling RD, LD/N, Nutritionist, Administration on Aging, ACL

Got good nutrition? We sure hope so. In March we celebrate how important good nutrition is for a person's health and well-being. Since the inception of the Older American Act (OAA) Nutrition Program in 1972, over eight billion meals and countless hours of nutrition education and socialization opportunities have been provided to older Americans. These meals and supportive services have helped older Americans eat more healthfully and have allowed many to remain active in their homes and communities. The OAA Nutrition Program is so much more than a meal program. It provides opportunities to socialize with neighbors, learn new things, volunteer to help others, and help the community by supporting homebound neighbors. Last year alone OAA funding helped serve over 235 million meals to 2,500,000 people.

[Read more.](#)

Join the Conversation

In honor of National Nutrition Month, the [National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging](#) will host “Good Nutrition Is a Key to Health: A Conversation with Kathy Greenlee, Assistant Secretary for Aging.” During the presentation, the ASA will speak directly to our many partners whose dedication and hard work help make the AoA Nutrition Program a success. ASA Greenlee will also answer questions posed by the network, and discuss her vision for the future as we jointly strive to serve the diverse generations of older Americans.

Participation is free and open to the public.

Date: Wednesday, March 27, 2013

Time: 11:00 a.m. ET

Be sure to join the conversation by visiting the [event website](#) on March 27th.

ACL to Fund Learning Collaborative Coalitions

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) recently announced an opportunity for up to ten (10) coalitions or networks of community-based aging and disability organizations to participate in a learning collaborative and receive targeted technical assistance related to business acumen. Applicants must be seeking to build their business capacity and align their service capabilities in order to contract with health care entities to provide community-based long-term services and supports. No direct funding will be provided through this initiative; rather, this collaborative will deliver targeted technical assistance through a variety of different means, as noted within the announcement. **Applications are due on Friday, March 29.**

[Read the announcement.](#)

[Back to the top](#)

Funding Opportunities

Cigna Foundation Invites Applications for Health Promotion Projects

The [Cigna Foundation](#), the charitable arm of the Cigna Corporation and its subsidiaries, supports organizations that share its commitment to enhancing the health of individuals and families, and the well-being of their communities,

with a special focus on those communities where Cigna employees live and work.

The foundation focuses its funding in four areas:

- Promoting wellness by building awareness, helping people manage their health challenges, and making health services available and affordable for all;
- Expanding opportunities by reaching across barriers to tap the talents of every person;
- Developing leaders by supporting the type of community service that gives talented individuals the experience to become future leaders; and
- Embracing communities by connecting neighbors to create networks to address complex social and environmental challenges.

There is no maximum or minimum grant. However, a typical first-time grant is \$5,000.

Applications are considered throughout the year. However, programs applying for a grant after October 15 cannot expect to receive funding until the next calendar year.

All organizations requesting funding must be recognized as a tax-exempt nonprofit organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. See the Cigna Web site for a FAQ page as well as eligibility and application guidelines.

[Grant guidelines, FAQs and Instructions.](#)

[Back to the top](#)

Stay Informed

NASUAD I&R/A Support Center Call

In celebration of National Nutrition Month, the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD) March I&R/A Support Center call will feature Linda Netterville, the [Meals On Wheels Association of America's](#) Vice President for Nutrition Innovation and Grants Management. She will discuss nutrition needs and resources specific to older adults including the [National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging](#). Additional discussion topics include:

- The nutritional needs of older adults in various settings;
- Looking beyond the Older Americans Act for nutrition funding;
- Resources offered by the National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging; and
- Effects of poor nutrition and hunger on older adults; the connection between nutrition and health.

Ms. Netterville also serves as State Nutritionist for the Texas Department on Aging and is a registered dietitian. She has over 25 years of experience, including serving as executive director of a rural nutrition program and nutrition program manager for an Area Agency on Aging.

Date: Thursday, March 14, 2013

Time: 3:00 p.m. ET.

Call number: 888-346-3659

Passcode: 39660

The PowerPoint presentation accompanying the call will be posted on the [Support Center's website](#) prior to the call.

[Back to the top](#)

Webinar Reminders

NLRC Webinar Explores What's in Store for Older Adults (50-64) Under Health Care Reform

2014 marks a new era for health insurance in the United States. The establishment of health insurance exchanges, or marketplaces, and the expansion of Medicaid eligibility in many states will enable millions of people to access affordable insurance. Prior to health reform, older adults, between 50 and 64, faced significant challenges accessing insurance, including limited coverage in Medicaid, unaffordable premiums on the private insurance market,

and policies on pre-existing conditions that render many effectively "uninsurable."

This webinar will focus on how key provisions of the Affordable Care Act can help older adults access the insurance and benefits they need, such as:

- Expanded Medicaid eligibility to 138% Federal Poverty Limit (FPL) for adults under 65;
- Access to federal subsidies to help pay for insurance premiums for individuals and families up to 400% FPL;
- Required Essential Health Benefits, including no cost sharing preventive screening and annual wellness visits;
- Limitations on how much extra a plan can charge for premiums based on the beneficiary's age;
- Guaranteed issue insurance that forbids health plans from denying coverage or charging extra for pre-existing conditions; and
- Delivery system innovations, including initiatives to coordinate care like the health homes

Presenters:

David Machledt, Ph.D., Policy Analyst, NHeLP
Leonardo Cuello, J.D., Director of Health Reform, NHeLP

Date: Wednesday, March 13, 2013
Time: 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. EDT

[Reserve](#) your Webinar seat now.

Hosted by the National Health Law Program ([NHeLP](#)), additional sponsorship for this webinar is provided by a grant from the Administration on Aging/Administration for Community Living. This webinar is part of a series of National Elder Rights Training Project webinars for the National Legal Resource Center.

[Back to the top](#)

HHS Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships (HHS Partnership Center) continues to host a series of webinars for faith and community leaders. All webinars are open to the public and include a question and answer session where you can ask HHS staff any questions you may have. We also encourage you to submit questions you would like to have answered on the webinars to ACA101@hhs.gov.

To participate in this webinar, click on the webinar title below to access the registration website. After registering you will receive an e-mail confirmation containing information about joining the webinar. Please contact the HHS Partnership Center at ACA101@hhs.gov if you have problems registering or if you have any questions about the health care law.

[The Health Care Law 101 \(in Spanish\)](#) - A presentation on the main provisions in the Affordable Care Act, the health care law, and how to access care in your community in Spanish.

Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2013

Time: 3:00 p.m. ET

[Back to the top](#)

Tools & Information

New Tool Helps Pharmacies Assess Patient Safety Culture

The Pharmacy Survey on Patient Safety Culture is a new resource tool provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). By using the survey, community pharmacies can assess their culture of patient safety and identify areas for improvement. The survey is designed for pharmacy staff, including clerks, technicians and pharmacists.

The survey measures 11 areas of patient safety culture such as physical space and environment, patient counseling, communication about prescriptions across shifts, and teamwork. It also includes items about the frequency of documenting mistakes and an overall rating on patient safety. [Download](#) the survey.

The Pharmacy Survey on Patient Safety Culture is part of a family of tools that AHRQ has developed to help health care providers measure their safety culture. Other surveys are available for hospitals, nursing homes and medical offices. [Click here](#) for more information on AHRQ's safety culture tools.

[Back to the top](#)

WISER Forum - Save the Date

The forum *Expanding Savings & Retirement Opportunities: A Dialogue among Generations*, hosted by the Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement (WISER), will feature the [iOme Challenge](#) winners—students from the University of

Tennessee at Knoxville who will discuss their [essay response](#) to the challenge question, “Prepare a policy proposal for Congress that creates incentives and removes barriers to financial savings that exist for the Millennial generation.”

A panel of congressional staff leaders will also discuss current legislative activities. A reception will follow honoring the iOme Challenge winners.

Date: Tuesday, April 16, 2013

Time: 3:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. (Forum); 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. (Reception)

Site: Capitol View Conference Center, 101 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20001

To RSVP now, email your contact information to Lara Hinz:

Lhinz@wiserwomen.org

More details and a complete agenda will follow soon.

If you have questions, call (202) 393-5452

[Back to the top](#)

Recent Reports

[*Making Health Care Safer II: An Updated Critical Analysis of the Evidence for Patient Safety Practices*](#)

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

Date: March 2013

[Back to the top](#)

March Observances

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Theme: “Look Beyond”

Resources:

[The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Community Living Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities](#)

[The Arc](#)

National Nutrition Month

Theme: “Eat Right, Your Way, Every Day”

Resource: [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#)

Women’s History Month

Theme: “Women Inspiring Innovation through Imagination:
Celebrating Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics”
Resource: [National Women’s History Project
Presidential Proclamation](#)

[Back to the top](#)

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