



Newsletter

Monday, March 18, 2013

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

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Affordable Care Act Extended Free Preventive Care to 71 Million Americans with Private Health Insurance

Health Care Law's third anniversary sees health costs slowing down, more value for consumers

Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced today that about 71 million Americans in private health insurance plans received coverage for at least one free preventive health care service, such as a mammogram or flu shot, in 2011 and 2012 because of the Affordable Care Act. The new data was released today in the issues brief [Seventy-One Million Additional Americans Are Receiving Preventive Services Coverage without Cost-Sharing under the Affordable Care Act.](#)

Additionally, an estimated 34 million Americans in traditional Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans have received at least one preventive service, such as an annual wellness visit at no out of pocket cost because of the health care law.

[Read more.](#)

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President Obama Appoints Three to Federal Long-Term Care Commission

Last week, President Obama named his three appointees to the [Federal Commission on Long-Term Care](#). The President tapped Henry Claypool, executive vice president of the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) who helped to create the Administration for Community Living and until recently served as its principal deputy secretary; Julian Harris, director of the Office of Medicaid in Massachusetts; and Carol Raphael, vice chairwoman of the AARP Board of Directors.

The three White House appointees fill out the 15-member panel that includes nine Democratic picks and six Republican choices. The commission was created in January as part of the same legislation that repealed the CLASS Act.

The Commission on Long-Term Care is responsible for developing a comprehensive and coordinated plan to ensure long-term supports and services for people with disabilities. The Commission will address the interaction of a long-term services and support system with existing programs, including Medicare, Medicaid, and private long-term care insurance.

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DD Awareness: Continuing to Share our Stories

ACL.gov Blog by *Sharon Lewis, Commissioner, Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, ACL*

Tracy is a young woman who shares a home in Missouri with a roommate, in a house that is bright and attractively furnished. Her days are filled with trips to the park, lunch at neighborhood restaurants, naps, games, and other recreational activities in the community. By contrast, when Tracy lived at the Northwest Habilitation Center for four years, “there was almost a complete lack of interaction with the general population. She never went out. She lost weight. There definitely was a manpower problem,” according to Tracy’s father.

For the first 26 years of her life, Tracy lived at home with her parents. It was only when Tracy’s mom became ill that they were forced to explore other options. First, they sent her to a day program to get her used to being away from home and, then, to the institution. “Our daughter Nancy, who had worked for several years with people with developmental disabilities, wanted us to consider community living,” recalls Tracy’s dad. “We were reluctant because we had heard so many negative stories about it.”

Seven years ago, Tracy moved to the community and according to her father, it is a decision the family has never regretted. “Tracy has improved in so many ways,” says Tracy’s mother. “She communicates more. She does more. She interacts more with people. She goes out and does things she’s interested in doing. She’s definitely happier. She comes to our home about once a month

and on holidays. When we bring her back to her house and pull into the driveway, she can't wait to get out of the car."

It is amazing that nearly 50 years after the passage of the first version of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act), we still need to tell stories like Tracy's, and we all need to continue to work hard to ensure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have the right and opportunity to live and participate in the community.

[Continue reading.](#)

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HHS Seeking Nominations for Two Advisory Councils

1. Members of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health](#) (OASH) is seeking nominations of qualified individuals to be considered for appointment as members of the [Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS \(PACHA\)](#).

The PACHA is a Federal advisory committee that provides advice, information, and recommendations to the Secretary regarding programs and policies intended to promote effective prevention of HIV disease, and to advance research on HIV and AIDS. The White House asks PACHA to provide, on an ongoing basis, recommendations on how to effectively implement the [National HIV/AIDS Strategy](#) and to monitor the [Strategy's implementation](#). The functions of the Council are solely advisory in nature.

Nominations must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. EDT on April 1, 2013.

[Click here](#) for more information, including guidance on the nomination criteria and submission requirements.

2. Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) is soliciting nominations for a new, non-Federal member of the Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services to fill the position of representative of a voluntary health association as described in [Public Law 111-375 \(42 U.S.C. 11225\)](#).

The Advisory Council consists of at least 22 members and meets quarterly to discuss the efficacy of government programs targeting the needs of individuals and caregivers coping with the consequences of Alzheimer's Disease and

Related Dementias (ADRD). This Advisory Council provided comments on the [National Plan](#) for ADRD which was developed by HHS. On an annual basis, the Advisory Council shall evaluate the implementation of the recommendations through an updated [National Plan](#).

Nominations must be submitted before COB on April 12, 2013 to Helen Lamont, PhD at Helen.Lamont@hhs.gov. All inquiries should be directed to Dr. Lamont.

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Older Americans Month Website Updated for 2013

Each May our nation celebrates Older Americans Month. To help communities get ready for this year's celebration—now it its 50th year—the Administration for Community Living (ACL) has updated its [Older Americans Month](#) website for 2013.

The Older Americans Month website contains resources and ways to help you spread the word about Older Americans Month and plan an event in your community. On the website, you will find information on:

- “Unleash the Power” Challenge. Get information about how to participate in the “Unleash the Power of Age in Your Community Challenge”—a contest in which organizations can nominate individuals who have used their talents and expertise to make a positive impact in their communities. (See below for more information.)
- Activity Ideas. Get inspirations and ideas on how you can celebrate Older Americans Month locally by unleashing the power of age through community and creativity.
- Social Media Gallery. Get content you can use to promote Older Americans Month to your social media networks. This page also includes images and content you can post on Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. With the growing use of Pinterest (a social network based on sharing images), ACL has created its own “[Pinboard](#)” about unleashing the power of age that you can check out and pin your own content.
- Download Center. Access a collection of images for your organization's website, and text for newsletters. ACL has also provided a template for a proclamation your community can use to officially designate May as Older Americans Month.

Visit the [Older Americans Month](#) website for more information.

Nominate someone in the *“Unleash the Power of Age in Your Community Challenge”*

The Administration for Community Living is pleased to announce the “Unleash the Power in Your Community Challenge.” This challenge, in celebration of Older Americans Month 2013, invites organizations to recognize older Americans by nominating people 60 or older who are putting their talents and expertise toward inspirational achievements in their communities and beyond.

Nominees can be volunteers or paid professionals whose contributions are improving society as a whole. Examples of eligible activities include civic engagement, creative arts, and technology and innovation.

After an initial screening process to eliminate submissions that do not adhere to contest rules, nominations will be evaluated by a panel of judges, who will then select the top 10 entries. These finalists will be posted on Challenge.gov, and the public will be invited to vote to select the most inspirational individuals.

[Click here](#) to find out more and to nominate someone.

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“Good Nutrition Is a Key to Health: A Conversation with Kathy Greenlee, Assistant Secretary for Aging”

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 (ASA).”

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.

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Stay Informed

AARP Webinar on *The Health Care Law: Things You Need to Know*

If you are like many people, you may have questions about what the health care law means for you. This free webinar gives you an overview of the changes and improvements in the law. Learn what the health care law means for:

- People with insurance
- People who are uninsured or buy their own coverage
- Small business owners
- People with Medicare and
- People planning for long-term care

This 60-minute web event will also include time for you to ask questions of AARP experts.

Date: Thursday, March 21, 2013

Time: 2:00 p.m. ET

[Register.](#)

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Tools & Information

New Resource on Dementia Care

Alzheimer's Disease and other forms of dementia are among the most significant issues facing the elderly and their loved ones. Because people with dementia often lose the ability to communicate over time, they are especially vulnerable and need special care.

To help improve care and the public's understanding of dementia care standards, the Long Term Care Community Coalition (LTCCC) has developed a new brochure designed especially for families and individuals affected by Alzheimer's Disease and other dementias. This resource, [*Get the Facts about Antipsychotic Drugs and Dementia Care*](#), developed with support from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, will help people understand important issues surrounding the use of antipsychotic medications in people with dementia, know what kinds of questions to ask and where to go for further help and information.

For other dementia-related resources, please visit the [LTCC](#) website and its [Nursing Home 411](#) website.

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SAMSHA Mental Health Brochure Now Available in Spanish

Determining whether you have a mental health or substance use disorder is the first step to seeking and receiving treatment.

Produced by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA), [*Should You Talk to Someone About a Drug, Alcohol, or Mental Health Problem?*](#) is a consumer brochure that contains a series of 12 questions people can ask themselves to help decide whether to seek treatment for a mental health or substance use disorder (or both). The brochure urges those who answer "yes" to any of the questions listed to seek help. Resources on where to find more information are included.

This free resource is now available for download in [Spanish](#).

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Number of Organizations Participating in CCTP Crosses Century Mark

With the recent addition of [20 new sites](#), the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) Community-based Care Transitions Program ([CCTP](#)) now has 102 participating organizations. CCTP, an initiative created by the Affordable Act, tests models for improving care transitions from the hospital to other settings and reducing readmissions for high-risk Medicare beneficiaries.

The goals of the CCTP are to:

- Improve transitions of beneficiaries from the inpatient hospital setting to other care settings.

- Improve quality of care, to reduce readmissions for high risk beneficiaries.
- Document measurable savings to the Medicare program.

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News from the AHRQ

1. Body and Soul Program

The latest addition to the US Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Health Care Innovations Exchange is [Body and Soul](#), a health care innovation that seeks to improve the health of African American church congregants by encouraging them to eat more fruits and vegetables.

[Read more about the Body and Soul.](#)

[AHRQ Health Care Innovation Exchange](#) helps to reduce health disparities, solve health problems and improve health care quality.

2. New Toolkit to Reduce Hospital Readmissions

Every year millions of patients are readmitted to hospitals, and many of those stays could have been prevented. The Re-Engineered Discharge (RED) Toolkit can help hospitals reduce readmission rates by replicating the discharge process that resulted in 30 percent fewer hospital readmissions and emergency room visits. Developed by the Boston University Medical Center, the newly expanded toolkit provides guidance to implement the RED for all patients, including those with limited English proficiency and from diverse cultural backgrounds. By helping hospitals plan and monitor the implementation of the RED process, the toolkit ensures a smooth and effective transition from hospital to home. [Download the toolkit.](#)

To order copies of the instructional manual, contact the AHRQ Publications Clearinghouse at AHRQPubs@ahrq.hhs.gov or call (800) 358-9295.

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2013 Associated Press Stylebook to Include Guidance on Mental Health and Mental Illness

In a first, the “journalist’s bible,” the *Associated Press (AP) Stylebook*, considered the essential reference guide for print, broadcast and online newsrooms and journalism classrooms, directs news media to avoid describing people as mentally ill unless someone’s mental health is clearly pertinent to a

story and the person’s diagnosis is properly sourced. It also suggests a more precise use of language, such as avoiding derogatory terms in health and non-health stories. The AP Stylebook also includes entries for autism, disabled, handicapped, impaired and Asperger’s syndrome.

While the entry for “mental illness” is new, this is not the first time that the guide has been updated to clarify how journalists should refer to those with various disabilities. In 2008, the manual was updated to indicate that the term “mentally retarded” was no longer acceptable, replacing it with “mentally disabled.”

The new listing was immediately added to the online version of the AP Stylebook and will be included in the 2013 print edition which is expected to be published this spring. For more information or to place an order, go to the [AP Stylebook website](#).

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Recent Reports

[*Implementing the Affordable Care Act: Choosing an Essential Health Benefits Benchmark Plan*](#)

Source: The Commonwealth Fund
Date: March 12, 2013

[*Pensions & Retirement Security 2013: A Roadmap for Policy Makers*](#)

Source: National Institute on Retirement Security
Date: February 2013

[*Health IT in Long-Term and Post-Acute Care*](#)

Source: Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology
Date: March 15, 2013

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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: [Administration on Aging Nutrition Program](#) and [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](#)

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