



CMS Snapshot

February 29-March 7, 2024

Delivered to you by the Partner Relations Group in the Office of Communications

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, February 29 through 2pm Thursday, March 7, 2024.

News Releases

*February 29- [Biden-Harris Administration Issues Final Guidance to Help People with Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage Manage Prescription Drug Costs](#). Continuing the ongoing implementation of President Biden's prescription drug pricing law, the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the [final part one guidance](#) for the new [Medicare Prescription Payment Plan](#). Today's guidance helps ensure that Medicare Part D plan sponsors can successfully implement the Medicare Prescription Payment Plan and effectively build the necessary infrastructure to provide a seamless experience for people enrolled in a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan who elect to participate in this program.

*February 29- [In Wake of Alabama Supreme Court IVF Decision, U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra Visits Birmingham](#). *In Birmingham, Secretary Becerra hears from families and health care professionals impacted by the court's decision.* On Tuesday, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra visited Birmingham, Alabama, in the wake of the Alabama Supreme Court's recent ruling on IVF. In Birmingham, Secretary Becerra sat down with patients and providers who have been directly impacted by the IVF decision to hear their stories. Secretary Becerra also visited Planned Parenthood's Birmingham clinic — the last Planned Parenthood left operating in the state of Alabama to speak with advocates and patients about their fight for reproductive freedoms.

*February 29- [Biden-Harris Administration Issues Final Guidance to Help People with Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage Manage Prescription Drug Costs](#). Continuing the ongoing implementation of President Biden's prescription drug pricing law, the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the [final part one guidance - PDF](#) for the new [Medicare Prescription Payment Plan](#). Today's guidance helps ensure that Medicare Part D plan sponsors can successfully implement the Medicare Prescription Payment Plan and effectively build the necessary infrastructure to provide a seamless

experience for people enrolled in a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan who elect to participate in this program.

*March 1- [Biden-Harris Administration Restores Important Protections for Beneficiaries of Federally Funded Social Services](#). Today, nine federal agencies are further advancing President Biden's call for religious freedom and equity for all by [finalizing a rule](#) that restores important religious liberty protections for beneficiaries of federally funded social services, such as job training and job search assistance, academic enrichment opportunities, and housing services. These protections were rescinded by the previous Administration.

*March 1- [Readout of HHS Roundtable on Congenital Syphilis with National Provider Organizations](#). *ADM Levine reiterated HHS's commitment to taking action to flatten the curve on congenital syphilis with a focus on those most significantly impacted.* On Wednesday, February 28, 2024, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Assistant Secretary for Health ADM Rachel L. Levine and members of the National Syphilis and Congenital Syphilis Syndemic Federal Task Force (Task Force) met with leaders from national provider organizations to discuss efforts to protect the health of our nation's patients and their babies. This meeting builds upon a series of conversations and engagements to respond to the U.S. syphilis and congenital syphilis epidemic.

*March 1- [Readout of HHS Black Health Forum](#). *In honor of Black History Month, HHS hosted a forum to highlight the progress made to advance Black health equity under the Biden-Harris Administration.* In honor of Black History Month, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) hosted a Black Health Forum on Wednesday, February 28, 2024. The forum built on the 2023 HHS Black Health Summit to bring together senior leaders from the Biden-Harris Administration, state and local governments, the medical community, research institutions, advocacy, the private sector, and philanthropy. They discussed the progress made to advance Black health equity under the Biden-Harris Administration, learned from experts about ongoing health challenges in the Black community, fostered connections with others working in this space, and recommitted to building on the progress made to advance Black health and wellbeing.

*March 4- [Biden-Harris Administration Receives Counteroffers from Drug Companies as Part of Ongoing Negotiations to Lower Drug Prices](#). *HHS also releases new research detailing how the Inflation Reduction Act will improve the health and financial well-being of people with Medicare who live in rural areas.* The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), announced today that all manufacturers participating in the first cycle of Medicare drug price negotiations have responded with counteroffers. This news comes after HHS sent initial offers on February 1, as the agency was empowered to do by President Biden's lower cost prescription drug law, the Inflation Reduction Act. This law is a cornerstone of the Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to lower prescription drug costs.

*March 5- [HHS Statement Regarding the Cyberattack on Change Healthcare](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is aware that Change Healthcare – a unit of UnitedHealth Group (UHG) – was impacted by a cybersecurity incident in late February. HHS recognizes the impact this attack has had on health care operations across the country. HHS' first priority is to help coordinate efforts to avoid disruptions to care throughout the health care system.

*March 5- [HHS Office for Civil Rights Works with Hospital to Improve Access to Kosher Electronic Devices Used for Virtual Patient Visitation](#). *OCR worked with NewYork-Presbyterian to make virtual visitation accessible to Jewish patients.* Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office for Civil Rights (OCR), finalized its work with NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital to ensure virtual visitation is accessible to Jewish patients. OCR received complaints that Jewish patients and their loved ones were not accommodated with kosher electronic devices for virtual visits at NewYork-Presbyterian, a major New York healthcare system with hospitals in Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn, and Westchester. Federal law prohibits hospitals that participate in Medicaid and Medicare from restricting patient visitation in a manner that discriminates on the basis of religion. OCR reviewed NewYork-Presbyterian's policies and practices and worked with the healthcare system while it updated its policies and procedures to ensure full compliance with federal law.

*March 5- [Issue Request for Public Input as Part of Inquiry into Impacts of Corporate Ownership Trend in Health Care](#). *Agencies Seek Info on Transactions, Including Non-Reportable Deals, That May Harm Patients' Health, Workers' Safety, Quality of Care and Affordability.* WASHINGTON – The Justice Department's Antitrust Division, Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) jointly launched a cross-government public inquiry into private-equity and other corporations' increasing control over health care.

*March 6- [CMS Statement on Change Healthcare Cyberattack](#). "At the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), we recognize the impact that the cyberattack on UnitedHealth Group's subsidiary Change Healthcare has had on physicians and other providers – and we are particularly concerned about small practices and community-based providers. We are actively examining our authority to help support these critical providers at this time and working with states to do the same.

*March 6- [Biden-Harris Administration Announces Launch of Nearly \\$50 Million Initiative to Support Opioid Treatment and Recovery Services in Rural Communities](#). *In support of President Biden's Unity Agenda, this HRSA initiative will support rural areas in responding to the opioid crisis; expand the rural substance use treatment workforce; support key populations like adolescents, young adults, and individuals with justice involvement; and respond to rural communities' needs.* Today, in support of President Biden's Unity Agenda, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) announced the launch of nearly \$50 million for HRSA's Rural Opioid Treatment and Recovery Initiative and released the initiative's funding application. Funding will support establishing and

expanding comprehensive substance use disorder treatment and recovery services in rural areas, including by increasing access to medications for opioid use disorder, such as buprenorphine.

Blog

*March 7- [File your taxes using Form 1095-A, Health Insurance Marketplace Statement[®]](#). The tax filing deadline is April 15, 2024. If anyone in your household had a Marketplace plan in 2023, use Form 1095-A, Health Insurance Marketplace[®], to file your federal taxes. You'll get this form from the Marketplace, not the IRS.