



CMS Snapshot

August 6-13, 2020

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

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, August 6 through 2pm Thursday, August 13, 2020.

News Releases

*August 6- [HHS Awards Contract to TrialCard to Help Reduce New HIV Infections in America](#).

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will continue to expand access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) HIV prevention medications at no cost to eligible individuals without prescription drug coverage through a \$4 million contract with TrialCard for one year with four one-year option periods.

*August 7- [HHS Announces Allocations of CARES Act Provider Relief Fund for Nursing Homes](#).

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), is announcing the details of the next CARES Act-authorized nursing home Provider Relief Fund (PRF) distribution.

*August 10- [HHS Secretary Azar Meets with President Tsai of Taiwan and Praises Taiwan's Transparent COVID-19 Response](#). Today, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar and members of the U.S. delegation to Taiwan met with Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen at the Presidential Office Building. Secretary Azar congratulated President Tsai on beginning her second term earlier this year, stating that her courage and vision in leading Taiwan's democracy are an inspiration to the region and the world, and thanked her for welcoming him so warmly to Taiwan.

*August 10- [HHS Secretary Azar Signs Joint Statement with Taiwan Minister of Health and Welfare](#). On August 10, The American Institute in Taiwan and Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECRO) signed a memorandum of understanding to expand upon the more than 20 years of collaboration between U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Taiwan Ministry of Health and Welfare on a wide range of health issues.

*August 10- [Secretary Azar Statement on Meeting with Taiwan President Tsai](#). "Thank you, President Tsai, for welcoming me to Taiwan today. It is a true honor to be here to convey a message of strong support and friendship from President Trump to Taiwan.

"I would like to congratulate President Tsai on beginning her second term earlier this year. As Secretary Pompeo said in marking her inauguration in May, President Tsai's courage and vision in leading Taiwan's vibrant democracy are an inspiration to the region and the world."

*August 10- [HHS Provider Relief Fund Phase 2 General Distribution Now Accepting Additional Applicants](#). On July 31, 2020, HHS [announced](#) that certain Medicare providers would be given another opportunity to receive additional Provider Relief Fund payments. These are providers who previously missed the June 3, 2020 deadline to apply for additional funding equal to 2 percent of their total patient care revenue from the \$20 billion portion of the \$50 billion Phase 1 General Distribution, including many Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and dental providers with low Medicare revenues. In addition, certain providers who experienced a change in ownership, making them previously ineligible for Phase 1 funding, will also be given an opportunity to apply for financial relief.

*August 10- [HHS Releases July - December COVID-19 State Testing Plans](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) publicly posted the July through December COVID-19 Testing Plans from all states, territories, and localities on HHS.gov. The State Testing Plans serve as a roadmap developed in partnership with the Federal government for each jurisdiction's monthly 2020 testing strategy for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. The plans include details on responding to surges in cases and reaching vulnerable populations including minorities, immunocompromised individuals and older adults.

*August 11- [Secretary Azar Highlights the Importance of Open, Transparent Global Health Leadership During Visit to Taiwan](#). On Tuesday, U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar and the U.S. delegation met with Foreign Minister Wu for a conversation on the U.S.-Taiwan friendship and Taiwan's global health leadership. Secretary Azar congratulated Minister Wu for all that Taiwan has done for global health, and stated the belief of the United States that Taiwan's accomplishments should be recognized on the world stage, and that Taiwan should be able to share these lessons and its world-class expertise in international forums, such as the World Health Assembly. Secretary Azar has made this point repeatedly to the World Health Organization, from which Taiwan has been excluded as an observer for the last four years. They also discussed how Taiwan is an important partner for economic progress and security in the Indo-Pacific Region.

*August 11- [Trump Administration collaborates with Moderna to produce 100 million doses of COVID-19 investigational vaccine](#). Under the leadership of President Trump, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Department of Defense (DoD) today announced an agreement with Moderna, Inc. to manufacture and deliver 100 million doses of the company's COVID-19 vaccine candidate. The federal government will own these vaccine doses.

*August 11- [Trump Administration Announces Initiative to Transform Rural Health](#). The Trump Administration today announced it is further transforming the nation's rural health care system by unleashing innovation through new funding opportunities that will increase access and improve quality. The Community Health Access and Rural Transformation (CHART) Model delivers on President Trump's Executive Order from last week on Improving Rural Health and Telehealth Access as well as the President's Medicare Executive Order and CMS's Rethinking Rural Health initiative. Collectively, the Administration aims to ensure individuals in rural America have access to high quality, affordable health care.

*August 12- [HHS Announces Investments for Health Information Exchanges to Strengthen their Ability to Support State and Local Public Health Agencies](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) today issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity to expand and accelerate innovative uses of electronic health information via health information exchanges (HIEs) to support state and local public health agencies. Strengthening health data exchange and use between HIEs and state and local public health agencies will help communities to better prevent, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies, including disasters and pandemics such as COVID-19.

*August 12- [CMS Proposes Updates to Coverage Policy for Artificial Hearts and Ventricular Assist Devices \(VADs\)](#). Today the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) proposed updates to coverage policies for artificial hearts and ventricular assist devices (VADs), both of which are used to treat patients with life-threatening advanced heart failure.

*August 13- [HHS Invests in Diagnostic Labs to Expand COVID-19 Testing Capacity in the United States](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced combined investments of \$6.5 million in two commercial diagnostic laboratories to expand capacity to conduct up to 4 million additional SARS-CoV-2 per month. SARS-CoV-2 is the virus that causes COVID-19. The investments in [Aegis Sciences Corporation](#) and in [Sonic Healthcare USA](#) will provide critical laboratory equipment supplied by [Beckman Coulter Life Sciences](#) and [Thermo Fisher Scientific](#) and increase staffing and infrastructure to allow the U.S. to perform an additional 1 million tests each week by early October.

Fact Sheets

*August 7- [Explaining Operation Warp Speed](#). What's the goal? Operation Warp Speed (OWS) aims to deliver 300 million doses of a safe, effective vaccine for COVID-19 by January 2021, as part of a broader strategy to accelerate the development, manufacturing, and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics (collectively known as countermeasures).

*August 11- [Community Health Access and Rural Transformation \(CHART\) Model Fact Sheet](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Innovation Center is announcing a new

Model, the Community Health Access and Rural Transformation (CHART) Model (or the “Model”).

Blogs

*August 12- [Pneumonia prevention with a vaccine](#). Did you know that about 1 million Americans go to the hospital with pneumonia every year? Pneumonia is a lung infection caused by pneumococcal disease, which can also cause blood infections and meningitis. The bacteria that causes pneumococcal disease spreads by direct person-to-person contact. A pneumonia vaccine can help prevent pneumonia, but only 67% of adults 65 and over have ever gotten it.

CMS has developed a [Virtual Toolkit](#) to help you stay informed on CMS and HHS materials available on the COVID-19. Please share these materials, bookmark the page, and check back often for the most up-to-date information. For more information, please email partnership@cms.hhs.gov