



CMS Snapshot

February 8-15, 2024

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

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, February 8 through 2pm Thursday, February 15, 2024.

News Releases

*February 9- [CMS Roundup \(Feb. 9, 2024\)](#). Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) provides an at-a-glance summary of news from around the agency.

*February 9- [HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra Urges Nation to Shift from an “Illness-Care System” to a “Wellness-Care System” at National Press Club Luncheon](#). *Highlights HHS’s Work to Increase Access to Quality, Affordable Health Care, Lower Health Care Costs, and Protect Access to Reproductive Care.* On Thursday, February 8, 2024, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra addressed the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. for its historic Headliners Luncheon.

*February 9- [New Biden Administration Rule Removes Burdens to Support Growth of Tribal Child Support Programs](#). *Eliminates burdensome costs for Tribes to operate a program.* Today, the Biden-Harris Administration’s U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), announced a [final rule](#) to eliminate a burdensome cost sharing requirement for Tribal child support programs. The new rule is consistent with President Biden’s recent [executive order](#) on *Reforming Federal Funding and Support for Tribal Nations to Better Embrace Our Trust Responsibilities and Promote the Next Era of Tribal Self-Determination* and part of a Biden Administration push to more effectively support Tribal governments. The rule cuts red tape and improves the flexibility and accessibility of federal funding so that Tribes can grow their economies and provide their citizens with vital and innovative services.

*February 12- [HHS Expands TEFCA by Adding Two Additional QHINs](#). *Seven QHINs will now safely and securely exchange critical health information for patient care.* The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC), announced today that two additional organizations—CommonWell Health Alliance and Kno2—have been designated as Qualified Health Information Networks™ (QHINs™) capable of nationwide health data exchange governed by the Trusted Exchange Framework and Common AgreementSM (TEFCASM). ONC has led a multi-year, public-

private process alongside its Recognized Coordinating Entity®, The Sequoia Project, Inc., to implement TEFCA, which was envisioned by the 21st Century Cures Act to support nationwide interoperability. TEFCA [became operational](#) in December 2023 with the designation of the first five QHINs—eHealth Exchange, Epic Nexus, Health Gorilla, KONZA, and MedAllies.

*February 13- [Biden-Harris Administration Holds First-Ever Interagency Youth Policy Summit: Cultivating Possibilities](#). The Biden-Harris Administration brought together nearly 90 young people from across the nation at the U.S. Department of Education today for the first-ever interagency Youth Policy Summit: *Cultivating Possibilities*.

*February 14- [HHS Announces Final Phase Winners in Challenge to Address Racial Equity in Postpartum Care](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [Office on Women's Health \(OWH\)](#) and the [Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services \(CMS\)](#) have awarded winners in the second and final phase of the \$1.8 million [HHS Racial Equity in Postpartum Care Challenge](#). This national competition was developed to improve equity in postpartum care for Black or African American and American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) women enrolled in Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). This is one initiative by HHS and the Biden-Harris Administration to fulfill the President's Unity Agenda and continue implementation of the [White House Blueprint for Addressing the Maternal Health Crisis - PDF](#), a whole-of-government strategy to combat maternal mortality and improve maternal and infant health, particularly in underserved communities.

*February 14- [HHS Releases 2023 Update to Equity Action Plan, Outlines New Commitments to Advance Equity](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released the 2023 update to its Equity Action Plan, in coordination with the [Biden-Harris Administration's whole-of-government equity agenda](#). This Equity Action Plan is part of the Department's efforts to implement the President's Executive Order on "[Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through The Federal Government](#)," which reaffirmed the Administration's commitment to deliver equity and build an America in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential.

*February 14- [FTC, HHS Seek Public Comment on Generic Drug Shortages and Competition Amongst Powerful Middlemen](#). *Joint request seeks information on impact of group purchasing organizations and drug wholesalers on access to generic pharmaceuticals.* Today the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) jointly issued a Request for Information to understand how the practices of two types of pharmaceutical drug middlemen groups—group purchasing organizations (GPOs) and drug wholesalers—may be contributing to generic drug shortages.

*February 14- [HHS Launches Postpartum Maternal Health Collaborative](#). *Secretary Becerra announced that six states will participate in a new collaborative effort to address postpartum mortality.* On Wednesday, February 14, 2024, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra and leaders from across HHS met with state leaders and

representatives from the National Governors Association (NGA) to announce the launch of HHS Secretary's Postpartum Maternal Health Collaborative. The six states that have agreed to participate in the Postpartum Maternal Health Collaborative are Iowa, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, and New Mexico.

*February 15- [New HHS Study Finds Nearly \\$124 Billion Positive Fiscal Impact of Refugees and Asylees on the American Economy in a 15-Year Period](#). Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) published a groundbreaking report, [The Fiscal Impact of Refugees and Asylees at The Federal, State and Local Levels From 2005-2019](#). This in-depth analysis examines the fiscal impact of refugees and asylees on the U.S. government and economy. This report sheds light on the significant contributions made by refugees and asylees to the U.S. economy and society. These findings can inform decision-making on resettlement services and contribute to the broader research on the positive impacts of refugees in American communities.

*February 15- [Readout of HHS Secretary Becerra's Roundtable with National Black Leaders Commemorating Black History Month](#). *Secretary Becerra reiterated HHS's commitment to continued partnerships to improve health outcomes in the Black community.* On Wednesday, February 14, 2024, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra met with leaders from national Black civil rights, faith-based, and health organizations to discuss efforts to improve health and human services outcomes in the Black community and further advance health equity. This meeting builds upon a series of conversations and engagements between Black community leaders and HHS.

Fact Sheet

*February 8- [Accrediting Organization Proposed Rule Fact Sheet](#). *Strengthening CMS Oversight of Accrediting Organizations.* Each year, Accrediting Organizations (AOs) with a CMS-approved program survey over 9,000 accredited health care providers and suppliers participating in the Medicare/Medicaid program for compliance with health and safety requirements. These accredited facilities must meet all applicable federal participation requirements and are deemed to meet them through their CMS-approved AO accreditation.

Blog

*February 9- [Now that you're covered, know how to use your insurance!](#) Get the most out of your Marketplace coverage with answers to some common questions, like how to use your coverage and what's covered.

