

01/08/2021

Good Afternoon REDC!

We're back at it...with a very rocky start here in DC! Here is your weekly update:

REDC Consortium Virtual Advocacy Day, February 10, 2021

Friendly reminder to register for the annual REDC Consortium Advocacy Day here: <https://rb.gy/kheqnh> (registration is open through January 15)

- We will be hosting two, 1-hour training sessions to assist you in learning more about the SERVE Act and how to run your meetings. **You only need to sign up for one of the sessions and can do so here:**
 - February 9th training from 3 pm – 4 pm
EST: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEtc-urqTgoGNwz1BX5b2lqRD7Rq26Rnyfl>
 - February 10th training from 9 am – 10 am
EST: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEud--qrzotGNz-L-ViCM7PFIFWVZby4GQb>

SERVE Act and TRICARE West Updates:

- I. NDAAs Passes: NDAAs Finally Passed last Friday, January 1st, after President Trump vetoed the legislation! This passed with an overwhelming majority in the Senate and House, which overturned the veto.
 - a. What this means is that now DHA is turning towards this final legislation and report language. Technically they should have already been doing this for the Senate passed report language, but now that the NDAAs are passed, they will be focusing on it (including the SERVE Act provisions).
- II. TRICARE West: In working with one REDC Member to become TRICARE West contracted for RTC, their lead for Behavioral Health Services indicated that they want to have as many eating disorders providers in their network as possible because they are seeing a significant need. **In turn, if you are interested in becoming TRICARE West contracted- please let me know and I can connect you. This direct connection can help to smooth the way to be less complicated than the normal application process!**
- III. New Democrat Supermajority Affects on SERVE Act: Given the new change in the Senate and Presidency, there offers a larger opportunity to get SERVE Act passed into law. While the Senate and even the House is going to try to stay moderate to keep those vulnerable seats for 2022, they will very likely working to increase overall spending---including mandatory spending

which was the biggest cost issue for the SERVE Act. There may also be more than one opportunity outside of the NDAA including through budget reconciliation. More to come, but should be a busy year!

COVID-19 Updates

I. Public Health Emergency Declaration Extended

- a. HHS Secretary Azar has extended the public health emergency an additional 90 days from January 21 through late April.
- b. The extension will enable the continuation of enhanced Medicare payments for telehealth and subsequent coverage for a broad list of services

II. COVID-19 Vaccine for MH/SUD Providers (full letter attached)

- a. The REDC Consortium joined close to 50 MH/SUD organizations and providers in a letter to HHS Secretary Azar urging him to direct CDC to issue guidance advising states to include MH/SUD treatment providers, including behavioral healthcare practitioners and staff designated as critical essential workers by the Department of Homeland Security, and patients in inpatient psychiatric and residential treatment and community-based treatment settings among the prioritized groups receiving the COVID-19 vaccines.

ACA Watch

I. Open Enrollment

- a. 11 states and D.C. have extended their open enrollment periods through the end of January.
- b. President-elect Biden is under pressure to reopen open enrollment for the individual market after he takes office next month.
- c. The enrollment figures from Healthcare.gov are roughly even with last year, with 8.2 million Americans signing up for coverage.

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