

01/29/2021

Happy Friday, REDC Consortium Members!

Below is your weekly policy update and a couple event reminders to share with your colleagues and communications team:

REDC Consortium Advocacy Day, Wednesday, February 10!

- **Our team has created a social media toolkit for your colleagues, treatment centers and related networks to utilize on Wednesday, February 10 to amplify Congressional support for the SERVE Act.**
- **The toolkit is attached** with social media template messaging and graphics.
 - Please only utilize the toolkit on February 10 as that will be our "call to action" day to coincide with advocacy day.
 - If you have any questions about the toolkit, please email Luke Kopetsky: Luke.Kopetsky@centerroadsolutions.com

SAVE THE DATE: REDC Consortium Congressional Briefing, Thursday, February 25

- The REDC Consortium has partnered with the National Military Families Association and the Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action for a Congressional briefing during Eating Disorders Awareness Week and is related to the SERVE Act.
- The briefing will take place on Thursday, February 25 from 12:30-1:30 pm EST.
 - Registration will be opening soon, so stay tuned!

I. SERVE Act

We've secured our Senate Republican co-lead, Sen. Tillis (R-NC)! Last congress he was the Chairman of the Subcommittee of Jurisdiction- the Subcommittee on Personnel.

1. We don't know if he will be Ranking this year with the Senate flip, but it is GREAT for our work that he sits in such a powerful leadership role.
2. Big changes to the language include:
 1. **Adding in telehealth for outpatient TRICARE care for dependents** (not this in practice will likely transfer over to servicemembers too)
 2. **Adding in criteria and guidelines creation from DoD and VA, using "nonprofit clinical specialty organization criteria"----cough cough REDCs**
 3. **Expanding the age limit from up to 20 years old to up to Medicare eligibility age**

3. Overall the expectation is to **introduce the Senate bill on Wednesday and potentially House by end of next week.**

II. HASC Meeting

1. Tuesday we had a meeting with House Armed Service Committee leadership on issues faced by REDC Members who are TRICARE contracted or trying to contract (overdue payments, odd contracting barriers, etc.).
2. They want detailed information on what is happening, so please know I will be reaching out to some of your/your team to collect some data to



share with them .

3. Lastly, they said that with us limiting the score for SERVE, there is more likelihood for them to move this.

III. Army Dietitians

Randomly a group of Army dietitians called me about wanting to help with SERVE. I got a lot of great information about what they experience, but just wanted to flag they found out about it from our April 2020 briefing!

IV. Telehealth

The REDC Consortium Board has decided to contract for 1 year of telehealth services, which will include federal and state issues related to coverage and continuation of telehealth flexibilities.

1. The Department of Health & Human Services sent a letter to governors ensuring that the Public Health Emergency declaration will likely continue through the entirety of 2021. The full letter can be read [here](#).
 1. The federal government can only extend the PHE for 90 days at a time, so this guidance letter helps clear up any worry about a "telehealth cliff" for Medicare plans.
2. The letter assures states that HHS will provide 60 days notice when the PHE declaration will be terminated.
 1. This is GREAT news and allows states to continue their telehealth flexibilities and other policy changes without concern that the federal government will terminate the declaration at a moment's notice.
 2. This also puts MH/SUD providers like the REDC Consortium in a prime position to push insurance companies to extend their telehealth coverage through the end of 2021 at a minimum.
 3. The REDC Consortium will leading a thank you letter on behalf of the Mental Health Liaison Group thanking HHS for this guidance and cc the National Association of State Insurance Commissioners to express how critical continuity of care and treatment planning is.
3. Ensuring Parity in Medicare Advantage for Audio-Only Telehealth Act

1. This legislation led by Sens. Cortez-Masto (D-NV) and Scott (R-FL) would direct CMS to consider payments for audio-only diagnoses for Medicare Advantage patients at the same level as in-person visits during the PHE.

V. ACA

1. President Biden has signed an Executive Order (EO) to reopen the ACA federal marketplaces from February 15 - May 15.
 1. This EO will allow the 36 states that utilize the ACA federal website to shop for health insurance coverage, which is estimated to be about 9 million Americans.
 2. Under the Trump Administration, more than \$1 billion in unspent federal user fee revenue has accumulated. These fees are collected to provide a budget for marketing and outreach efforts to get Americans enrolled in coverage and was left unspent.
 1. The Biden Administration plans to spend \$50 million in advertising and outreach for this special enrollment period as many Americans will be able to qualify for free or subsidized health insurance.

Wishing all of you a great weekend,
Allison, Katrina & Luke