

02/19/2021

Good Evening REDC Members,

Below is your policy update for the week:

I. SERVE Act/Military Eating Disorders

- **House Introduction of the SERVE Act:**

- The House of Representatives SERVE Act is expected to be introduced next week during eating disorders awareness week. The Office of Legislative Counsel is still finalizing the text, so should have that to everyone early next week.
- Currently, we have Rep. Moulton (D-MA) and Escobar (D-TX) as our co-leads of the bipartisan bills, as Rep. Mast (R-FL) was asked to step down given the recent events. Rep. Bacon (R-NE) is considering being the co-lead on HASC, however, nothing is confirmed. Rep. Moulton's office has limited the Rs they will co-lead with (does not apply to co-sponsors) to Members of Congress who voted to certify the 2020 election, which leaves only a handful of Rs.
- This however does not preclude us from working with other Rs on Committee for their NDAA submissions or co-sponsorship of the bill.

- **Work with House Armed Services Committee:**

- We've been working directly with leadership on the House Armed Services Committee, providing them with detailed information on TRICARE contracting issues experienced by REDC Members.
- The Committee was very thankful for the amount of detail REDC members were able to provide, as they are used to advocates only being able to provide basic detail of "there is a barrier or issue in payments". Thank you to all Centers who helped to provide valuable anecdotal examples.
- The Committee is considering asking the DoD's Defense Health Agency the following two questions in upcoming discussions:
 - There are reports of overdue payments for mental health services dating back to 2018 and 2019. What is the DoD's plan to resolve those payment issues so to prevent the payments from incurring further interest and maintaining those mental health/eating disorder treatment providers within the network?
 - Given the recent Defense Health Board recommendations on eating disorders and provisions within both the House & Senate NDAA report, does DoD plan to take further action to enact those report provisions and recommendations?

- **TRICARE for Kids Coalition:**

- There is still heightened concern around when the DoD will make the T5 adjustment which could add more payers into the TRICARE System and adjust the regions.
- We're monitoring this issue closely, but DoD has not released any information on when this may occur.
- Additionally the Coalition is very interested in advocating for a system that would allow patients and providers to submit complaints about issues with TRICARE East and West directly to DHA. We have offered to help as the Coalition finds the mental health area to be of biggest concern.
- **Reminder: REDC Congressional Briefing on the SERVE Act Next Thursday**
 - **Please share this information and register!**
 - **Feb. 25th 12:30-1:30PM EST**
 - Congressional Briefing in coordination with the Congressional Mental Health Caucus and Congressional Military Family Caucus entitled, "SERVE Military Members and Families."
 - Hosted by the REDC Consortium, the EDC, and the National Military Family Association (NMFA).
 - See the attached invitation for more information on the briefing.
 - To register for the briefing, click [here](#).

II. Telehealth

- The Telehealth Working Group met with Rep. Bill Johnson's (R-OH) office earlier this week to share the working group's top priorities.
 - Rep. Johnson's office stated that KEEP Telehealth Options Act is set for reintroduction next week.
 - The KEEP Telehealth Options Act would direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct studies and report to Congress on actions taken to expand access to telehealth services under the Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance programs during the COVID-19 emergency.
- **TREAT Act Update**
 - We had a call with Sen. Murphy (D-CT) and Rep. Latta's (R-OH) offices this week to get an update on the status of the TREAT Act.
 - As a refresher, this bill would increase access to health care services during the national COVID-19 public health emergency by allowing practitioners with valid licenses to provide services, including telehealth services, in all states for the duration of the public health emergency.

- The bill would only apply to this pandemic (not future pandemics) and practitioners would need to follow the state licensure laws of the state the patient resides in.
- The bill leads are making a big push to get this legislation included in the COVID-19 relief package. The committees of jurisdiction are not completely keen to the idea of the legislation, so I will be reaching out to select centers to send emails to the Chairmen/women of these Committees to push for its inclusion.
- Additionally, we have finalized our organizational support letter for the bill and that will go out to the committees of jurisdiction to push them again.

III. ACA

- ACA marketplaces are open again for a 3-month special enrollment period, which includes a \$50 million outreach campaign.
 - An estimated 9 million people could be eligible for free or subsidized coverage through the ACA markets.
 - The Biden Administration has also begun unraveling Medicaid work requirements put in place during the Trump Administration.
- Chiquita Brooks-LaSure is the frontrunner to lead the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.
 - During her time as a consultant at Manatt Health, she laid out state-level options for implementing a public insurance option and testified in 2019 that offering a public option would stabilize the individual insurance market while preserving the current Medicare program.
 - In line with Biden's broader focus on health equity, Brooks-LaSure has written extensively on disparities and barriers to care, focusing in particular on maternal mortality.

Have a great weekend,

The Center Road Solutions Team