

03/26/2021

Below is your policy update for the week. One timely item:

### **EDC Virtual Advocacy Day, May 6, 2021**

- Registration is open through Friday, April 9 for individuals interested in participating in the Eating Disorders Coalition's annual advocacy day.
  - You can visit the registration page at the link [here](#).
  - EDC is advocating for the Nutrition CARE Act, which would provide Medicare Part B coverage for outpatient dietitian services for individuals with eating disorders.

### **I. SERVE Act**

- The REDC Consortium, in partnership with the Tricare for Kids Coalition developed mental health recommendations for Congress to consider within the FY22 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).
- Attached you will find the recommendations, an executive summary, and a 1-pager.

### **II. Telehealth**

- Milliman released a brief (attached) on the utilization of behavioral health care via telehealth.
  - The brief looks to identify patterns in the use of behavioral healthcare services in the commercial, Medicaid, and Medicare markets.
  - The analysis represents 12.5 million individuals across the U.S.
- **Key findings include:**
  - Behavioral health inpatient admissions increased from May through August 2020 at a much higher rate than was seen with medical services.
    - Admission rates exceeded 2019 levels in the third quarter with a particularly pronounced increase in the Medicaid population.
  - Visits to primary care providers dropped significantly in March through May 2020 across all lines of business.
    - However, visits that included behavioral health diagnoses dropped significantly less during the same period and then rose above 2019 levels starting in June for the commercial and Medicaid populations.
  - Telehealth visits increased the most for Medicaid beneficiaries.
    - Telehealth use was more than 300x higher in April compared to 2019 levels and remained at least 200x higher through the rest of the study period.

- Use of telehealth tapered down somewhat in August for the commercial and Medicare beneficiaries, but remained at levels far higher than had been seen before the pandemic.
  - In prior years, less than 1% or less of behavioral health professional visits were provided via telehealth.
  - In 2020, as much as 75% of behavioral health visits in May and June were provided via telehealth for those with commercial insurance.

### III. ACA

- **American Rescue Plan Provisions**

- The Kaiser Family Foundation is out with a new analysis showing 3.7 million Americans are newly eligible (a 20% increase) for subsidized ACA marketplace health insurance.
- For people already buying their own insurance, average premium savings in the marketplace plans will be an estimated \$70 per month-- a reduction of about 25% from the current premiums.
- Further, 5.2 million current enrollees and potential marketplace shoppers now have guaranteed access to platinum-like ACA plans that will cost them nothing for monthly premiums.
  - For more information on the ARP ACA provisions, you can check out KFF's slide presentation [here](#).

- **Biden Administration Extends Special Enrollment Period**

- The ACA marketplace special enrollment period has been extended to August 15, giving consumers in 36 states three more months to sign up for coverage.
- This extension will allow more Americans to take advantage of greater financial assistance for marketplace plans.
- Earlier this week marked the 11th anniversary of the ACA with more than 200,000 Americans opting to sign up for health insurance.
  - This figure is up from 76,000 and 60,000 seen during the first two weeks of open enrollment in 2020 and 2019.
  - Some of the states that saw a high volume of enrollments in new plan selection include Texas, Illinois, North Carolina, Florida, and Georgia.

Best,  
Allison & the Center Road Solutions Team