

08/12/2021

Hello REDC Board Members,

With Congress out for the month of August, we'll be sending policy updates on Thursdays until after Labor Day.

Here is this week's update!

## **I. Bipartisan Mental Health Letter to Senate Finance Committee**

- Senate Finance Committee released a call for proposals for mental health under the Medicaid, Medicare, CHIP and ACA systems. These proposal requests are for Senate Finance Committee Members, but will later be open to the public to comment.
- The areas particularly that they want to think through reforms include:
  - Workforce, including diversifying it
  - Integration, Coordination, and Access
  - Parity- including shortcoming with Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP, and ACA
  - Telehealth
- We'll be looking at this as a vehicle to move telehealth and working to further transform and enforce parity.
- Please see the attached document for further details.

## **II. SERVE Act/Military Eating Disorders:**

- The House and Senate are both now in August recess after the Senate passed bipartisan infrastructure and finished beginning votes on budget reconciliation.
- Currently our House leads are working with Leg Counsel and CBO to find a way to further decrease the direct spending for SERVE to be able to add it to the HASC markup.
  - Thank you to The Emily Program for their extensive advocacy of Chairman Adam Smith's (Seattle) office!
- Full Committee amendment strategy has been composed of the following steps:
  - (1) See if we can cut the mandatory spending even further, limiting it to active-duty TRICARE beneficiaries
  - (2) Pressuring Chairman Adam Smith (D-WA-9) in Seattle area and Ranking Member Mike Rogers (R-AL-3) from Eastern Alabama
  - (3) Securing a Republican from HASC to co-lead w/ Moulton a HASC Amt. for the Sept. 1st Full Committee markup, since Katko isn't on Committee
  - (4) Week before the markup, pressure HASC Members to co-sponsor the amendment and vote in favor of it
- We're working on media and Op-eds to have targeted pressure of the Chairman and Ranking Member, as well as the other Committee members

- August 23rd we'll be doing extensive grassroots & grassroots pressure, so please mark this week for Emily on our team to provide your Centers with scripts for calls/emails!
- **Task and Force Article**
  - Boosting again that we were quoted in the Task & Purpose article 'Inside the US Military's Pervasive Culture of Eating Disorders', which has been a huge boost as we follow up with congressional offices.
  - Full article can be read [here](#).

### III. Telehealth

- Last week, Mental Health America and the Black Women's Health Imperative held a virtual discussion where they discussed the pros and cons of digital therapeutics.
- Please see the attached document for a summary of the event.

### IV. Parity

- Last month, the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC) released a [brief](#) on the implementation of the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act in Medicaid and CHIP.
- The brief provides:
  - Background on federal parity laws
  - Describes Medicaid and CHIP requirements under MHPAEA
  - Findings from interviews with state Medicaid officials, managed care organizations, and beneficiary advocates in 3 states
- The conclusion of the brief states that despite state efforts to identify inequities in treatment limitations for behavioral health services, MHPAEA does not appear to have substantially improved access to behavioral health care for Medicaid and CHIP beneficiaries.

Best,  
Center Road Solutions Team