

02/25/2022

Hello REDC Members,

Here is this week's policy update.

REDC Advocacy Day Registration Opened

- April 26th from 9am to 4pm EST
- Required training on April 25th from 3pm to 4pm.
- **Register here:** <https://redcadvocacyday.eventbrite.com>
- Registration open till April 1st.

Public Health Emergency Declaration Extended

- The PHE was renewed and is extended until June 1, 2022.
- The decision comes after 70 House Republicans penned a letter urging President Biden and HHS Secretary Becerra to end the PHE (set to expire on April 14), citing access to vaccines and treatments as well as mental health effects of isolation.
- The COVID-19 pandemic is claiming 2,000 lives per day and 8,000 people per day are being diagnosed with the virus.

Telehealth State Updates

- 25 states have ended their emergency declarations: AL, AK, AR, CO, FL, GA, HI, ME, MA, MI, MN, MS, MO, MT, NE, NH, ND, OH, OK, PA, SC, SD, TN, VT, WI.
 - PA, however, has licensure flexibilities in place through March.
- 25 states and D.C. continue to have emergency declarations in place: AZ, CA, CT, DE, DC, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, MD, NJ, NV, NC, OR, RI, TX, UT, VA, WA, WV, WY.
- In total, 24 states still have licensure flexibilities in place.
 - AZ and FL allow out-of-state providers to register with the state to practice telemedicine in the state.
 - CT passed a bill that will allow out-of-state providers to provide telehealth services to patients in CT through June 30, 2023.
 - WV passed a bill to allow health practitioners licensed and in good standing in another jurisdiction to pay a fee to become registered with the appropriate medical board and become an interstate telehealth practitioner in the state.
 - AK passed a bill that allows a licensed health care provider in good standing in another jurisdiction to provide services via telemedicine to AK patients, with the exception of prescribing controlled substances during a declared state of emergency.

- State telehealth policies can be followed here: <https://connectwithcare.org/state-telehealth-and-licensure-expansion-covid-19-chart/>

Health Insurance

- The Department of Justice (DOJ) and two states sued to block the proposed merger between insurer UnitedHealth Group and Change Healthcare, arguing the \$13B health tech deal would give the insurer access to too much sensitive data about its rivals.
- The deal first announced in January 2021, would give the combined company control over a monopoly of the market, the DOJ, NY and MN said in a complaint filed in Washington, DC federal court.
 - About 5,000 hospitals and 100,000 physicians in the US use OptumInsight to submit bills to insurance companies for reimbursement.
 - Another 5,000 hospitals and 90,000 physicians use Change for the same services.

988 Implementation Act Support Letter

- Attached is the final organizational support letter cosigned by the REDC.
- The bill would require coverage for crisis services by Medicare, Medicaid, and other forms of health insurance. Additionally, the bill invests in behavioral health workforce training programs and builds on existing best practices by expanding the Medicaid Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic demo program.

Have a great weekend!

Center Road Solutions Team