

03/04/2022

Hello REDC Members,

Here is this week's policy update.

REDC Advocacy Day Registration Open

- 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.

President Biden's State of the Union Address

- President Biden had his first State of the Union Address on Tuesday.
- He shared a three-prong proposal to address the harms of social media on youth mental health including building a system of care, connecting kids to care, and having more support on the ground and online.
- Actions to reach these goals include:

(1) increasing the supply and diversification of the mental health workforce to be culturally and linguistically competent;

(2) expanding care and coverage, and **enforcing mental health parity**, including integration of care into the primary care setting and untraditional settings like the community; and

(3) expanding services upstream and downstream to address vulnerable populations and people in transition periods, including youth, LGBTQ+ individuals, and formally incarcerated individuals.

Telehealth

• Omnibus Discussions

- Congress is frantically figuring out the omnibus package that would finalize funding for this fiscal year before their self-imposed deadline of March 11.
- We have been working with Rep. Doris Matsui's (D-CA) office on securing a two-year delay in implementation of the in-person requirement for tele-mental health services.
 - This policy goes into effect at the conclusion of the Public Health Emergency, which currently runs into mid-July.
 - This in-person requirement would only apply to Medicare.

- Another rider being pushed is the continuation of all the telehealth flexibilities afforded under CMS for an additional two years to give Congress time to determine what services should remain permanent.
 - However, just keeping the telehealth flexibilities through the end of 2022 has a price tag of \$5 billion given the Congressional Budget Office costs these service flexibilities out as additional services versus a replacement for some in-person services.
 - Advocates are now trying to push for a flexibility extension through September 30, 2022.
- **REDC Consortium Joins Letter to Drug Enforcement Agency**
 - The American Telemedicine Association and the American Psychiatric Association led a letter to the DEA and HHS requesting to permanently to waive the requirement that patients receive an in-person evaluation prior to being prescribed controlled substances via telemedicine.
 - The full letter is attached and press releases for ATA and APA can be found [here](#) and [here](#).
- **Telehealth Use Most Popular Among Young Women**
 - About 60% of telehealth users are female and they mostly use virtual care for behavioral health services a [new report](#) by Trilliant Health states.
 - The two main types of patients that engaged in telehealth use during the pandemic were single users who prioritized COVID-19 safety and testing and women between the ages of 21 and 40 who primarily sought out behavioral health services.

Have a great weekend,

Center Road Solutions Team