

04/29/2022

Hello REDC Members,

Here is this week's policy update.

REDC Virtual Advocacy Day

- Date: Wednesday, June 22 from 9am to 4pm EDT
- Where: Virtual, through Zoom
- Register here: [REDC Consortium Advocacy Day Registration](#)
 - Registration closes Monday, May 30.
- This advocacy day, you will meet with Congressional staff to discuss:
 - Maintaining telehealth flexibilities that have been expanded during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Ensuring telehealth as a service modality for MH/SUD is at parity with telehealth offerings for medical/surgical services.

TELEHEALTH

- **House Committee on Energy & Commerce Holds Hearing on Health & Human Services Budget**
 - Earlier this week, the committee held a hearing with HHS Secretary Becerra to review the FY23 budget for the agency.
 - In Becerra's submitted testimony, he thanked Congress for their 5-month extension of the telehealth flexibilities afforded during the pandemic, which was one of the initiatives REDC successfully led!
 - Much of the discussion was on funding for mental health supports and services—especially for children.
 - A full memo is attached, which includes a link to Secretary Becerra's testimony.
- **Kaiser Family Foundation Holds Discussion on “Future of Mental Health Care Access”**
 - The panel consisted of experts from Inseparable, Well Being Trust, and Anthem.
 - **Key takeaways on telehealth:**
 - Telehealth expanded the demographic of people willing to get therapy.
 - The opportunities with telehealth provide more flexibility and access to care.
 - 1/3 of mental health outpatient sessions were through telehealth.
 - Telehealth doesn't solve all the problems though, and it is difficult to provide team base care through telehealth, and some patients need in person care.

- **Key takeaways on the 988 Suicide Prevention Hotline:**
 - We are not ready for the new hotline and lack capacity to take all the calls.
 - Call centers are not uniformly trained to get all the mental health's calls they get.
 - Not all hotline calls can be resolved with just a phone call. Some people will need crisis residential services.
 - 988 is the hotline number, only 4% of public is aware of 988.

PARITY

- Kennedy Forum & National Association for Behavioral Healthcare Hosts Webinar, "Mental Health and Addiction Parity: Ensuring Equal Coverage in Medicaid and Marketplace Plans"
 - The webinar featured HHS Secretary Becerra, SAMHSA Assistant Secretary Delphin-Rittmon, Former President of the AMA Dr. Harris, CEO of NABH Mr. Coughlin and Former U.S. Rep. Kennedy.
- During the webinar, Assistant Secretary Delphin-Rittmon announced the release of several parity tools created by SAMHSA in conjunction with DOL and Treasury.
 - [Know Your Rights](#)
 - [Understanding Parity: A Guide to Resources for Families and Caretakers](#)
 - [The Essential Aspects of Parity: A Training Tool for Policymakers](#)
- The recording of the webinar can be [viewed here](#).

INSURANCE

- **House Education and Labor Committee Ranking Member Foxx (R-NC) Hosts Insurance Roundtable**
 - Earlier this week, Ranking Member Foxx hosted a roundtable with party members and industry representatives to discuss employer-sponsored insurance.
 - Panelists included AHIP, National Federation of Independent Business' and Council for Affordable Health Coverage.
 - Ranking Member Foxx has been an outspoken critic of the Biden Administration's insurance policies arguing the administration is "usurping" congressional authority and pushing more people on "government-controlled insurance."

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

- The REDC joined a letter led by the National Association of School Psychologists supporting a \$1 billion investment split between the School Based Mental Health Services Professional Demonstration Grant and the School Based Mental Health Services Grant Program to address the severe shortages of school-based mental health professionals.
- The letter was sent to House and Senate Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Subcommittee leadership on the Appropriations Committee.
- The letter is attached.

TREATMENT CENTER VISITS

- Thank you to The Emily Program of Columbus, OH for hosting Representative Troy Balderson (R-OH-12) this week!
- If you are interested in having a Member of Congress visit your treatment center, please reach out to Emily Rosenberg at emily.rosenberg@centerroadsolutions.com.

Have a great weekend!

Best,
Center Road Solutions Team