

08/11/2022

Hello REDC Members,

As a reminder, with Congress out for the month of August, we will be sending policy updates on Thursdays through Labor Day.

Here is this week's update.

Story Collection on Insurance Discrimination

- We are continuing to collect stories on insurance discrimination to send to the Department of Labor.
- Please provide examples for a payer/plan(s) discriminatory practice in covering eating disorders care over the last three years.
- Complete the survey here: <https://forms.gle/wSYoKoTN56YHGHLw9>.

Public Health Emergency Declaration Update

- The Biden Administration has indicated they will be extending the PHE again, which would take us into January 2023.
- The current PHE expires in mid-October, and we anticipate a formal renewal closer to that date.

Telehealth

Telehealth Parity Act ([H.R. 8229](#))

This is REDC's legislation, which clarifies existing federal parity law that MH/SUD services delivered via telehealth are protected by parity has secured two additional cosponsors:

- Rep. Wild (D-PA)
- Rep. Levin (D-CA)—the Congressman cosponsored legislation after his district staff toured Montecatini.

Alliance for Connected Care State Telehealth Expansion and Licensure Waiver Tracker

- The organization has updated their tracker as of August 3.
- 14 states still have licensure flexibilities in place.
- You can find more information [here](#).

United Health Group Release Report on Telehealth Utilization

- According to UHG's [report](#), telehealth flexibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to a 26% spike in overall utilization of in-network outpatient behavioral health.
- UHG used data from commercially insured Optum Behavioral Health plan members to compare behavioral health care utilization from before the pandemic to utilization after the pandemic started.
- In 2019, 99% of outpatient behavioral health care was conducted in an office. However, by the second quarter of 2021, only 35% of all outpatient behavioral health care visits were in an office.

Study from JMIR Medical Informatics Shows Telehealth Burnout

- The study shows that telehealth is associated with an increase in doctors' workloads after business hours.
- The study reviewed how 2,129 doctors interacted with NYU Langone Health's EHR system between January and August 2020.
 - The data revealed that doctors who used telemedicine most intensely logged more after-hours work. The study concludes that telehealth is not currently as efficient as in-person care for doctors
 - New technology tends to burden doctors before it starts to help them. Previous studies have found that electronic health record systems [contribute to doctor burnout](#).

Affordable Care Act

Inflation Reduction Act

- Senate Democrats passed their reconciliation bill last weekend and is now awaiting the House to pass the bill on Friday.
 - Reconciliation is a procedural tool that allows the Senate to pass legislation with a simple majority.
- The bill includes several provisions related to climate, energy, and health care, including the extension of premium ACA subsidies into 2025.
 - The enhanced subsidies were originally granted by the American Rescue Act and set to expire at the end of the year.
 - The provision is anticipated to save ACA enrollees an average of \$800 per year on premiums.

Have a great weekend!

Center Road Solutions Team