

11/18/2022

Good Evening REDC Members,

Below is your weekly policy update. Please note that Center Road Solutions will be closed on Friday, November 25 and our weekly update will resume on Friday, December 2.

Wishing each of you a very happy holiday!
Center Road Solutions Team

COVID-19

- The current Public Health Emergency (PHE) declaration is currently in effect until January 11, 2023.
 - The Biden Administration has said it will give 60-day notice before ending the PHE and since that notice was not issued in November 2022, it is expected the PHE will be extended again.

TELEHEALTH

- HHS Secretary Becerra wants Congress to take legislative action to permanently expand access to telehealth.
- House Republicans who will be in the majority next year hope to pass a permanent telehealth extension bill in the new Congress.
- Secretary Becerra also stated that Congress must act to facilitate cross-state telehealth “to the satisfaction of the different states because there are different standards.”
 - While some stakeholders continue to support existing interstate licensing compacts, other stakeholders and industry lobbyist support encouraging states to join a registration system like the Uniform Law Commission’s model telehealth legislation, which would register providers with a state medical board without mandating they obtain an additional license.
 - The White House may be exploring multiple pathways to accomplish interstate licensing for mental health as summarized in the policy update last week.

HIGH DEDUCTIBLE HEALTH PLANS

- Employers, patient advocacy groups, health care companies, unions and consumer groups urged Congress earlier this week to extend a pandemic waiver that allows pre-deductible coverage of telehealth in high deductible health plans linked to health savings accounts.
 - If Congress does not act, the waiver will expire December 31, 2022.

- The over 350 stakeholders organized by the Alliance to Fight for Health Care say the telehealth provision made available through the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, and subsequently extended to the end of 2022, has received abounding support from both employees and employers -- especially because of its applications for Telemental health.

SIGN ON LETTERS

- The REDC signed onto a letter led by the American Telehealth Association, American Psychiatric Association and the American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency inquiring what the agency is doing to ensure substance use treatment can continue via telehealth after the end of the PHE.
 - The letter was cosigned by 115 signatories and is attached.
- The REDC signed onto a letter led by Mental Health America in support of a provision in the Senate Finance Committee's discussion draft on Integration, Coordination, and Access to Care that would add a mobile crisis response intervention service provided by mobile crisis teams to the Medicare program.
 - The letter urges Congress to include this provision in an end of year package.
 - The letter was cosigned by 50 national organizations and is attached.