

Weekly Report - Agency

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WEEKLY REPORT

November 4, 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CABINET SECRETARY

FROM: SEAN MCCLUSKIE, CHIEF OF STAFF, HHS, (202) 740-3247

SUBJECT: HHS Weekly Report | Week ending November 5, 2021

**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN (ARP) / BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE
FRAMEWORK (BIF) / BUILD BACK BETTER AGENDA (BBB) /
ECONOMY**

- **Significant activity for consideration to raise to the attention of POTUS:**
 - **ARP Workforce Funding:** During the week of November 1st (tentative), the White House will announce the largest number of awards in history for its health workforce loan repayment and scholarship programs, the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) and Nurse Corps, which require participants to commit to working in underserved communities. The overall number of participants in these programs will top 22,700, with nearly 20,000 NHSC members, more than 2,500 Nurse Corps nurses, and approximately 250 awardees under a new program, the Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Recovery Loan Repayment Program. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) will also be announcing the release of the application cycles for the Fiscal Year 2022 NHSC Program, partially funded by ARP, including: \$282.5 million for the NHSC Loan Repayment Program; \$107 million for the NHSC Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Program; and \$55 million for the NHSC Rural Community Loan Repayment Program.
- **Past Week Accomplishments and Setbacks/Obstacles:**
 - **Center for Medicaid & Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Services (CMCS) Informational Bulletin: Basic**

- Health Program (BHP); Revised Federal Funding for New York and Minnesota:** On November 5th, CMS will publish the “Basic Health Program (BHP); Revised Federal Funding Methodologies for Program Years 2020 and 2021 and Operational Questions & Answers.” This CMCS Informational Bulletin (CIB) specifies updated values for factors needed to calculate the federal BHP payment rates for 2020 and 2021 as a result of ARP. The two states (Minnesota and New York) that operate BHPs will receive an increase in their federal BHP payments for 2020-2022 as a result of the changes to the BHP payment methodologies required by ARP. Through BHPs, states can provide coverage to individuals who are citizens or lawfully present non-citizens; who do not qualify for Medicaid, CHIP, or other minimum essential coverage; and who have incomes between 133% and 200% of the federal poverty level.
- **Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control Funding Award:** On October 27th, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) awarded \$885 million as part of a \$2.1 billion investment in ARP funding to expand efforts that protect Americans from COVID-19 infections and other emerging infectious diseases across healthcare settings.
 - **Administration for Community Living (ACL) Technical Assistance (TA) to Senate HELP and Finance and House Education & Labor Committees:** On October 30, ACL and the Assistant Secretary for Legislation (ASL) provided TA to staff from the Senate HELP and House Education & Labor committees regarding provisions in the reconciliation bill to implement Older Americans Act (OAA) home and community based supportive services, nutrition, caregiver, and other services and related infrastructure for older adults and the workforce that supports them. On November 1st and 2nd, ACL and ASL provided TA to Senate Finance committee related to Elder Justice Act programs and ombudsman programs in the Medicaid home and community-based services provisions.
 - **Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Office of Child Care (OCC) Participates in ARP TA Office Hours Opportunity:** On November 4th, ACF OCC TA Centers facilitated Office Hours opportunities to discuss TA questions, needs, and resources with grantees. The session included an

overview of available TA resources and stabilization grant topics.

- **Office of Population Affairs Telehealth Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO):** The Office of Population Affairs (OPA) within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH) anticipates releasing a \$35M funding competition to support telehealth enhancement and expansion in the Title X program to mitigate access barriers to quality family planning services for clients, especially for vulnerable and hard-to-reach populations. The NOFO, which is targeted for release the second week of November, is supported by COVID ARP funding, and will offer successful applicants of the Title X family planning service grants national competition the ability to request one-time awards to support telehealth in their systems. The NOFO is currently in the HHS clearance process and should move to OMB for clearance by November 1st.
- **Requests for White House Collaboration:**
 - N/A
- **Next Week – Upcoming Events / Tasks / Developments:**
 - **OPA Title X Dire Need NOFO:** On or around November 5th, OPA anticipates releasing a NOFO to address dire needs for family planning services. The \$9.25M competition, which was announced as part of HHS's response to Texas SB8, will support increased demand for emergency contraception and other Title X family planning services for clients both within and outside of Texas. The 15-month award, which is supported by COVID ARP funding, is the complement to HHS's action to provide approximately \$750,000 in supplemental funding to Every Body Texas, the primary Title X family planning grantee, for its increased need for emergency contraceptive and family planning services in the state.
 - **ACF Office of Early Childhood Development (ECD) Live Webinar on Early Childhood Policy Updates from the Biden-Harris Administration:** On November 9th, ACF ECD will describe efforts to build a strong and stable early childhood workforce and address current workforce shortages. They will also highlight how HHS will help the early childhood education

workforce access health benefits during the CMS Week of Action starting November 14th.

COVID-19

- **Significant activity for consideration to raise to the attention of POTUS:**
 - N/A
- **Past Week Accomplishments and Setbacks/Obstacles:**
 - **Availability of Vaccines:** On October 29th, FDA authorized the emergency use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine for the prevention of COVID-19 to include children 5 through 11 years of age, following a thorough review by the Agency and independent advice from FDA's Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee at a meeting on October 26.
 - **Health Care Staff Vaccinations Against COVID-19 for Medicare- and Medicaid-certified Health Providers [CLOSE HOLD]:** On November 4th, CMS will release an emergency regulation requiring staff vaccinations for 15 specific health care provider and supplier types participating in Medicare and Medicaid programs to address the urgent need to protect patients against COVID-19. These requirements will apply to approximately 50,000 providers and cover more than 17 million health care workers. Impacted health care providers will have 30 days from the publication of the regulation to establish a policy to ensure their staff have received a one-dose COVID-19 vaccine or the first dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine prior to providing any care, treatment, or other services. Sixty days after the publication of the regulation, staff for all health care provider and supplier types included in the regulation must be fully vaccinated.
 - **Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) Meeting:** On November 2nd and 3rd, CDC conducted a meeting of the ACIP that was open to the public and webcast live. The agenda included discussions on Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine use in children aged 5-11 years and a recommendation vote was scheduled to be conducted on November 2nd. Recommendation votes were scheduled to be conducted for

hepatitis, orthopoxviruses and Ebola vaccines, and the immunization schedule on November 3rd.

- **Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccine Update:** On November 3rd, CMS provided an update for stakeholders on pediatric COVID-19 vaccinations following the FDA authorization of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine for the prevention of COVID-19 in children 5 through 11 years of age and a recommendation from the CDC. CMS reminded eligible consumers that coverage is available without cost-sharing under Medicare, Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and in the commercial market for this critical protection from the virus. CMS also issued fact sheet updates regarding COVID-19 vaccinations.
- **COVID-19 Vaccines for Ages 5 to 11:** In anticipation of the November 2nd announcement approving the Pfizer vaccine for ages 5-11, the Indian Health Service (IHS) Vaccine Task Force assessed pediatric vaccine needs across Indian Country and continued to coordinate rollout, including efforts to prepare for distribution and administration logistics and disseminate clinical education.
- **COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force, Final Meeting October 28, 2021:** The COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force hosted its final meeting on Thursday October 28th. The meeting included a walkthrough of the final report, reflections and remarks from members, opportunity for public comment, and a vote on deliverables. Dr. Marcella Nunez- Smith provided opening and closing remarks, with the ASH, Admiral Rachel Levine, providing remarks during the meeting.
- **Availability of Diagnostics:** Between October 26th and 29th, FDA issued Emergency Use Authorizations (EUAs) to enable the emergency use of 1 diagnostic for COVID-19 (the 11th over-the-counter (OTC) COVID-19 test) and reissued 6 EUAs for diagnostics for COVID-19.
- **New CDC Study Shows Vaccination Offers Higher Protection than Previous COVID-19 Infection:** On October 29th, CDC issued a media statement on new science reinforcing that vaccination is the best protection against COVID-19. In a new *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* examining more than 7,000 people across 9 states who were hospitalized with COVID-like illness, CDC found that those who

were unvaccinated and had a recent infection were 5 times more likely to have COVID-19 than those who were recently fully vaccinated and did not have a prior infection.

- **Accepted Vaccines:** More than 765 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been accepted by the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR).
- **AstraZeneca International Donations:** Following the October 22nd FDA determination that two additional lots of AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine are acceptable for export, ASPR and AstraZeneca are in discussions and planning for international donations.
- **International Vaccine Donations:** ASPR continues working with the Countermeasures Acceleration Group (CAG) to provide on the ground support for international donations of vaccines. To date, vaccine transfers have been made to 95 countries and ASPR has directly supported vaccine transfers of over 87 million doses.
- **Delay of Regeneron Delivery:** Delayed release of Regeneron's co-formulated REGEN-COV has extended the delivery schedule by two weeks. The CAG distribution team is mitigating this delay to meet allocation demands. Supply continues to be limited for a few more weeks.
- **IHS/CDC Vaccination Program memorandum of agreement (MOA) Extension:** On October 28th, the MOA between the IHS and CDC regarding the CDC Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Federal Agency Vaccination Program was extended until November 17th, which reflects a one year extension from the initial agreement.
- **Vaccines and Testing in Indian Country:** IHS, tribal, and urban Indian program sites receiving the vaccine through the IHS have reported administering 1,722,756 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine as of October 31st. The IHS, tribal, and urban Indian program sites reporting to IHS performed a total of 3,227,274 COVID-19 tests as of October 30th, with 271,784 of those tests being positive.
- **CDC Safe Resumption of Global International Travel Order:** During the week of November 1st, CDC will publish a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing an Amended Order (including accompanying attestation form and technical instructions) signed by the CDC director on October 30th to implement the

new Biden administration travel policy to safely resume global travel to the United States. On November 8th, non-U.S. citizens who are not immigrants to the United States will be required to be fully vaccinated and provide proof of their vaccination status to fly to the United States, with only limited exceptions.

- **CDC Global Contact Tracing Order:** During the week of November 1st, CDC will publish a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing an Order (including accompanying technical instructions) signed by the CDC director on October 25th to require all airlines and operators of flights arriving into the United States from a foreign point of last departure to collect passenger and maintain crewmember contact information.
- **CDC Amendment of the Global Testing Order:** During the week of November 1st, CDC will publish a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing an Amended Order (including accompanying attestation form) signed by the CDC director on October 25th requiring negative pre-departure COVID-19 test results or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 for all airline or other aircraft passengers arriving into the United States from any foreign country. This Amended Order supersedes the previous Order signed on January 25, 2021.
- **Phase Two of Mask Innovation Challenge:** ASPR will launch phase two of the Mask Innovation Challenge on November 3rd. Phase two of the challenge focuses on laboratory testing and prototype development of more effective, comfortable face masks for personal use that resolve common concerns about wearing masks. Prototypes will be tested by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and partner labs.
- **COVID-19 Surge Support:** ASPR continues to support COVID-19 Surge with National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) and Health and Medical Task Force (HMTF) teams responding to COVID-19 in the AK, MT, NY, WI, and the District of Columbia: The week of November 8th, ASPR will mobilize teams in UT, WI and potentially in MN, CO, and NM. Media, relevant Congressional delegations, and key stakeholders will be apprised of the teams' activities.

- **Deployment of Strategic National Stockpile Materiel:** ASPR delivered the following assets to support surge requirements over the course of the last several weeks.
 - WI: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) push package and fit test cache
 - MT: Forty-five ventilators along with resupply Kits
 - AK: Five dialysis machines and one service contract
 - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) (Washington, DC): A controlled substance cache for replenishment of the national medical transport and support ambulance contract
- **Rural Vaccine Distribution:** As of November 1st, 177 Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) in 28 states are participating in the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) RHC COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Program and have placed orders for a total of 163,480 doses of COVID-19 vaccines.
- **Vaccine Administration:** As of October 22nd, a total of 6,823,344 COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered through the Health Center COVID-19 Vaccine Program; 76 percent to racial and/or ethnic minority patients. In total, 15,425,031 COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered by health centers; 67 percent to racial and/or ethnic minority patients. Specifically, 7.8 million patients initiated a vaccination series; 7.5 million patients completed a vaccination; and 177,178 patients received an additional booster vaccine. The total number of vaccine doses administered increased from 15,175,856 to 15,425,031 (a 1.6 percent increase) in the last two weeks.
- **Vaccine Administration to Adolescents:** Through October 22nd, health centers have administered 593,612 COVID-19 vaccine doses to children aged 12 to 17 years old provided through the Health Center COVID-19 Vaccine Program.
- **Vaccine Distribution:** For delivery during the week of November 1st, the Health Center COVID-19 Vaccine Program approved orders for a total of 202,100 doses of COVID-19 vaccines. This includes 120,900 pediatric COVID-19 vaccine doses that health centers were able to order for the first time this week. The Program now has 872 participating health centers that have placed at least one order during any week. To

date, health centers have ordered 9,805,550 doses for 2,415 sites.

- **Monoclonal Antibodies:** Between August 14th and October 22nd, 113 health centers have administered 11,323 doses of monoclonal antibody therapy directly to patients.
- **Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccine Checklist:** In the October 22nd Primary Health Care Digest newsletter, HRSA's Bureau of Primary Health Care shared the HRSA/CDC Action Checklist of Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccination and additional CDC resources with the health center community.
- **COVID-19 Compensation Claims:** As of November 1st, 4,682 claims alleging injuries/deaths from COVID-19 countermeasures have been filed with the Countermeasures Injury Compensation Program, including 2,229 claims alleging injuries from COVID-19 vaccines; an increase of 133 in total claims over the prior week. About 90 percent of claims are awaiting medical records for review. To date, 91 claims are in medical review, 3 claims have been denied compensation, 1 claim has been determined medically eligible for compensation; however, the program is still working with the claimant to obtain the necessary information to determine the compensation amount.
- **Provider Relief Fund:** On October 21st, HRSA's Provider Relief Fund issued four Phase 3 reconsideration payments totaling approximately \$48,800.
- **COVID-19 Uninsured Program:** As of October 27th, HRSA's COVID-19 Uninsured Program has paid over 103.3 million claims, totaling over \$12.2 billion, to health care providers for testing, treatment, and vaccine administration for uninsured individuals. Approximately \$875 million has been paid for over 22.8 million vaccine claims, \$4.1 billion for about 9.3 million treatment claims, and \$7.2 billion for over 71.2 million testing claims.
- **COVID-19 Coverage Assistance Fund:** As of October 29th, 16,920 providers have enrolled in HRSA's COVID-19 Coverage Assistance Fund and 12,717 providers have been approved to submit claims. A total of 55,771 claims, totaling over \$1.4 million, have been paid to reimburse health care providers for costs associated with administering vaccines to underinsured individuals.

- **Decision-Support Tool for Individuals Deciding When to Test for COVID-19:** On November 3rd, the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB) announced the When to Test Calculator for Individuals, a free online tool that uses a mathematical model to determine an individual's relative risk of having or getting COVID-19 and spreading the infection to others. This project and the associated When to Test Calculator for Organizations were funded through the NIH Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics (RADx) Initiative.
- **Stakeholder Engagement on Health Equity: Vaccinating Children with Disabilities:** On November 5th, Acting ACL Administrator Alison Barkoff and team members from ACL, CDC, and Department of Education met with disability stakeholders regarding forthcoming vaccines for children with disabilities, given lessons learned from successes and barriers from the rollout to adolescents with disabilities.
- **Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR):** CDC released a series of COVID-19 related *MMWRs* (see Appendix)
- **Requests for White House Collaboration:**
 - N/A
- **Next Week – Upcoming Events / Tasks / Developments:**
 - **COVID-19 Vaccines for the Pediatric Population:** On November 12th, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Region 2 (New Jersey, New York, Virginia, Puerto Rico) is organizing and hosting a webinar in Spanish for HRSA supported Health Centers healthcare professionals in Puerto Rico on COVID-19 vaccines for the pediatric population and what health center clinicians should know about the upcoming recommendations for COVID-19 vaccinations in ages 5 to 11.
 - **Medicaid and CHIP Public Health Emergency Unwinding Punchlist:** On November 8th, CMS will publish a tool to help states identify and adopt strategies for maintaining continuity of coverage among eligible individuals during the COVID-19 unwinding period. This “punch list” of strategies includes operational and policy recommendations in several areas,

which states are encouraged to adopt to prevent inappropriate terminations when the public health emergency ends.

- **Health Equity Funding for COVID-19 Vaccines:** During the week of November 8th, (tentative), as part of a White House Health Equity Announcement, HRSA will announce over \$143 million to support community-based organizations that will provide information and education on COVID-19 vaccines to the medically vulnerable or underserved and racial and ethnic minority groups with low vaccination rates. This funding includes a new \$66.5 million funding opportunity announcement and \$77 million to support an additional nine Community-Based Workforce for COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach award recipients.
- **Medicaid and CHIP COVID-19 Data Snapshot:** On November 12th, CMS will release an updated Medicaid and CHIP data snapshot, providing insight into the impact of COVID-19 on beneficiaries and service utilization through May 2021. The snapshot includes updates to data released previously on COVID-19 testing, treatment, and acute care; service utilization for Medicaid and CHIP beneficiaries age 18 and under; services delivered via telehealth; and services for mental health and substance-use disorders. It also includes a new section on reproductive health services for female beneficiaries of reproductive age. The results demonstrate that, although telehealth services surged during the public health emergency and remain above prior years' rates, there has been a decline in use for many primary, preventive, behavioral, and reproductive health services
- **Medicaid Telehealth Toolkit Update:** On November 9th, CMS will release an update to the State Medicaid and CHIP Telehealth Toolkit: Policy Considerations for States Expanding Use of Telehealth, COVID-19 Version. This update will include revisions to a supplement clarifying the availability of audio-only telehealth in Medicaid regardless of the public health emergency. CMS has heard from stakeholders that there is confusion about payment for Medicaid services using audio-only technology; these revisions specify Medicaid's approach.

CLIMATE

- **Significant activity for consideration to raise to the attention of POTUS:**
 - N/A
- **Past Week Accomplishments and Setbacks/Obstacles:**
 - **Extreme Heat Interagency Working Group (IWG):** The Extreme Heat IWG was formally launched on October 27th. This IWG co-chair principles Secretary Becerra, Administrator Regan (EPA) and Administrator Spinrad (NOAA) joined the kick-off to provide remarks of support and marching to the steering committee. The outcomes of the discussion included the identification of deliverables and subsequently, the IWG will convene in the coming weeks to address next steps for achieving the deliverables.
 - **President's Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks (PTFCEH) Subcommittee on Climate, Environment, and Disasters:** The Principals of the PTFCEH met on October 28th to reinvigorate and charge the working group. As part of that meeting, a new Subcommittee on Climate, Environment and Disasters will be officially added to the PTFCEH.)
 - **ACF Office of Community Services (OCS) Participates in U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program Interagency Collaboration on Client Eligibility:** On November 4th, DOE hosted an interagency group meeting with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and ACF OCS's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). They reviewed grantee contact offices across the country for program coordination and technical assistance design.
- **Requests for White House Collaboration:**
 - N/A
- **Next Week – Upcoming Events / Tasks / Developments:**
 - **HHS Participation in Conference of Parties (COP26) in Glasgow, Scotland:** On November 8th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will travel to Glasgow, Scotland to

participate in the United Nations Climate Change Convention COP 26. The HHS delegation includes Assistant Secretary for Health Admiral Levine, Office for Global Affairs (OGA) staff Stephanie Psaki, Maya Levine and Noila Sorensen, and the Office of Climate Change and Health Equity (OCCHE) interim Director John Balbus.

- **HHS will participate in the COP26 Health Program:** On November 8, HHS/OCCHE will host an official side event at the US Center that will feature comments from Assistant Secretary for Health Admiral Rachel Levine, CDC National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH) Director Pat Breysse, and NOAA Administrator Rick Spinrad, before a panel discussion moderated by John Balbus featuring Admiral Levine, Trust for America's Health CEO Dr. Nadine Gracia, and Health Care Without Harm's Gary Cohen. HHS will also participate in other official and unofficial events at the COP. Several bilateral side meetings are being set up for the HHS delegation to meet with counterparts from the UK, Canada, and civil society.

EQUITY FOR UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

- **Significant activity for consideration to raise to the attention of POTUS:**
 - N/A
- **Past Week Accomplishments and Setbacks/Obstacles:**
 - **ACF ECD Discusses Build Back Better Agenda at Tribal Consultation:** On November 4th, Katie Hamm, Deputy Assistant Secretary for ECD, presented at a Tribal Consultation to discuss proposed Tribal Early Childhood Initiatives in BBB.
 - **G20 Finance and Health Ministerial (October 29) and G20 Leaders' Summit (October 30/31):** Both of these events laid groundwork to improve the sustainable financing of future global pandemic preparedness - 1) through the creation of a G20 Finance-Health Task Force to better connect health and finance officials for pandemic preparedness, and 2) through continued G20 consideration of a new financing mechanism for pandemic preparedness. HHS worked closely with Treasury and in support of NSC to help secure relevant text for these initiatives in the outcome documents for these events. Secretary Becerra participated in the G20 Finance and Health

Ministerial alongside Secretary Yellen. One setback was that we were unable to get specific mention of a Financial Intermediary Fund, our preference for a new financing mechanism, in either document; but we will continue to push for consideration of it as G20 discussions continue.

- **Medicaid and CHIP Afghan Evacuee Coverage Fact Sheet:** On November 1st, CMS posted an updated fact sheet to Medicaid.gov that provides information based on recent legislative changes on health coverage options for Afghan evacuees arriving in the United States. Most evacuees will be eligible for health insurance through Medicaid, CHIP, the Marketplace, Refugee Medical Assistance, or other coverage provided by the Office of Refugee Resettlement. The fact sheet will provide additional information on eligibility for each coverage program based on immigration status and state of residence.
- **Health Equity and Maternal Health:** On November 2nd, HRSA Region 7 (Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas) hosted the first session in a learning series on Advancing Equity in Maternal & Infant Health in collaboration with Region 7 Office of Assistant Secretary of Health for maternal health organizations, health care providers, health centers, rural health clinics, hospitals, community and faith-based organizations in Region 7. This three-part series defines health equity, highlights disparities in maternal and infant health outcomes among disproportionately affected populations in Region 7 and identifies systemic issues that are contributing to these health disparities.
- **National Institutes for Health (NIH) Study Suggests Health Care Costs for Rare Diseases Are Similar to Cancer and Heart Failure:** A new retrospective study of millions of medical and insurance records by the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) researchers and their collaborators indicates health care costs for individuals with a rare disease are three to five times greater than the costs for those without a rare disease, suggesting nationwide medical costs are similar to those for cancer and heart failure. The study provides new evidence of the potential impact of rare diseases on public health, suggesting that the number of individuals with rare diseases and their medical costs have been underestimated.

- **A Powerful Tool for Studying the Risk of Heart Disease:** (Update) Planned for November 10th, the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) will announce a large-scale study of people from diverse ancestries in which researchers narrowed down the number of genomic variants that are strongly associated with blood lipid levels and generated a polygenic risk score to predict elevated low-density lipoprotein cholesterol levels, a major risk factor for heart disease.
- **Federal Hypertension Control Leadership Council:** The Office on Women's Health (OWH) presented OWH's Hypertension Challenge Phase 1 results at the Federal Hypertension Control Leadership Council.
- **Health Equity Quarterly Newsletter:** On November 1st, CMS's Office of Minority Health distributed the third edition of Health Equity Quarterly, a newsletter highlighting recent CMS activities and recent reports.
- **Biomedical Advanced Development and Research Authority (BARDA) Industry Day:** Dr. Marcella Nunez-Smith, Senior Adviser to the White House COVID-19 response team and Chair of the Presidential COVID-19 Health Equity task force will be the keynote speaker for the upcoming BARDA Industry Day. She is expected to emphasize the importance of increasing representation in our workforce and among our leadership as well as equitable access to participation in clinical trials.
- **Requests for White House Collaboration:**
 - N/A
- **Next Week – Upcoming Events / Tasks / Developments:**
 - N/A

SIGNIFICANT EXECUTIVE ORDER (EO) & AGENCY ACTIVITY

- **Significant activity for consideration to raise to the attention of POTUS:**
 - **ACF Office of Community Services (OCS) Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Funding Release:** ACF's OCS announced the release of approximately \$3.37 billion of Federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 regular block

grant funding to LIHEAP grantees. Funds were certified October 29th, and a press release went out on November 1st. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, territories, and 122 tribes received their Notice of Award. This funding is provided under the Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act, which the President signed into law on September 30, 2021 (Public Law 117-43). This release will reflect 90 percent of the total or annualized amount of funds available under the Continuing Resolution (CR) to grantees at the beginning of the program year.

- **IHS Behavioral Health Funding Opportunities:** On November 4th, the IHS anticipates announcing six notice of funding opportunities totaling \$46 million to address suicide, domestic violence, substance abuse, and an integrative approach to the delivery of behavioral health services for American Indians and Alaska Natives.
- **CDC Updates Blood Lead Reference Value for Children:** On October 28th, CDC issued a press release announcing its recently updated blood lead reference value (BLRV) from 5 µg/dL to 3.5 µg/dL in response to the Lead Exposure Prevention and Advisory Committee recommendation made on May 14, 2021. The BLRV is intended to identify children with higher levels of lead in their blood compared to most children, based on the 97.5th percentile of the blood lead level distribution in U.S. children ages 1–5 years.
- **Past Week Accomplishments and Setbacks/Obstacles:**
 - **Marketplace Open Enrollment Campaign Announcement:** On November 1st, CMS announced the start of Marketplace open enrollment, which runs from November 1st, 2021-January 15th, 2022. Consumers can visit HealthCare.gov to enroll in health care plans for calendar year 2022 and take advantage of historically low premiums. To ensure more people have access to the health care they need, CMS is increasing consumer assistance on the ground to support the largest open enrollment outreach campaign to-date.
 - **Sidecar Health Qualified Health Plan Application Denial:** On November 3rd, CMS sent a third and final denial letter to Sidecar Health. This completes the appeal submitted by the

company regarding the denial of an application for its health plans to be considered as qualified health plans in 2023.

- **Calendar Year 2022 Medicare Outpatient Prospective Payment System and Ambulatory Surgical Center Payment System Final Rule:** On November 2nd, CMS posted the Calendar Year 2022 Medicare Outpatient Prospective Payment System and Ambulatory Surgical Center Payment System Final Rule in the Federal Register. The rule will finalize proposed payment policies for outpatient treatment and ambulatory surgical centers in Medicare.
- **Calendar Year 2022 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Final Rule:** On November 2nd, CMS posted the Calendar Year 2022 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Final Rule in the Federal Register. The rule will finalize proposed payment policies for physicians and other health professionals under Medicare.
- **Calendar Year 2022 Home Health Prospective Payment System Final Rule:** On November 2nd, CMS posted the Calendar Year 2022 Home Health Prospective Payment System Final Rule in the Federal Register. The rule finalizes proposed payment policies for Medicare home health care for older adults and people with disabilities.
- **The American Association for Blood Banks (AABB) States U.S Blood Supply is Classified as Red:** AABB reports that the status of the U.S. blood supply remains classified as RED (less than 1-day supply) for the seventh week in a row. This status indicates that the majority of blood center inventories are critically low on blood and need donations as soon as possible. The OASH is working on the National Blood and Plasma Donation Campaign, mandated in the CARES Act to understand donor motives, create materials and advertisements for use to encourage blood and plasma donors, particularly among underrepresented donors.
- **Interoperability and the Connected Health Care System Blog:** On/about November 5th, CMS will publish a blog about its commitment to advancing interoperability in health care. The blog will highlight how the agency believes increasing access to health data is a critical step on the path to better informed decision making, improved patient outcomes, and reduced administrative burden.

- **Data Visualization on Recent Trends in Hospitalization Use:** On November 4th, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) updated the data for public data visualization tools and tables that provide details on US hospital use through 2021. The updated data allows users to see the impact of the pandemic on hospital utilization for a wide variety of hospital services and conditions, including COVID-19. For instance, the data shows a large reduction in the number of surgeries in all states, which coincides with the emergence of COVID-19-related hospitalizations in April 2020. In some states, the number of surgeries has not returned to pre-pandemic levels.
- **Report of Technical Expert Panel on the Feasibility of a Quality Measure for Malnutrition:** In response to a request from the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Labor-HHS, AHRQ convened a Technical Expert Panel (TEP) to examine the feasibility of a quality measure related to malnutrition. The TEP concluded that a hospital-level accountability metric related to readmission outcomes for malnutrition is premature at this point in time. The TEP also highlighted a new hospital-level process measure that has recently been endorsed by the National Quality Forum. The TEP's findings have been incorporated into a report, "AHRQ Technical Expert Panel: Quality Measurement of Malnutrition in Hospitalized Patients." That report will be submitted to Rep. Roybal-Allard (D-CA) who serves on the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor-HHS.
- **"Users of Retail Medications for Opioid Use Disorders Faced High Out-of-Pocket Prescription Spending in 2011-2017":** On October 26th, a paper published in the *Journal of Substance Abuse and Treatment* and authored, in part, by staff from AHRQ, provides national estimates of financial costs faced by the population receiving retail medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD). Patients with retail MOUD prescriptions spent 3.4 times more out-of-pocket for prescriptions on average than the rest of the U.S. population, with 18.8% of this population paying entirely out-of-pocket for their MOUD prescriptions. Insurance coverage is associated with reduced annual out-of-pocket MOUD expenditures between \$316 and \$328 per year.

- **Behavioral Health Support for Operation Allies Welcome:**
At the request of the Unified Coordination Group, ASPR is designing and implementing a system for operational coordination, command and control of behavioral health and protection services across all the Afghan safe harbor sites. This week, the team implemented the first consistent behavioral health coordination and reporting system for safe harbor sites.
- **Ebola Testing Reagent Availability for ASPR Partners:**
ASPR continues to support its partners with reagent availability for the Ebola diagnostic test. The Department of Defense owns the relevant reagents and access is currently limited to procurement by federal government entities. While ASPR supports the analyses of clinical samples from partners (Merck and Janssen), reagent access has become an issue for partners that are not funded by the United States Government.
- **Summary of ASPR Funded Countermeasures Used in Ebola Virus Outbreak:** Ebanga, Inmazeb and ERVEBO are products in the ASPR countermeasure portfolio that have been used to treat people infected with Ebola in the current outbreak.
 - As of October 26th, there are 6 confirmed cases and 3 probable cases (all probable cases are deceased).
 - Four of the six confirmed cases died and two are in recovery, with one likely to be released from the Ebola treatment unit.
 - Two recovering patients received monoclonal antibody therapeutics. One received Ridgeback's Ebanga while the other received Regeneron's Inmazeb. An additional two patients received therapeutics but did not survive.
 - As of October 26th, 249 people, including contacts and frontline workers, have been vaccinated with ERVEBO.
- **2021 Small Group Market Premium Benchmarks for the IRS:** The Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA) established the Small Employer Health Insurance Tax Credit (henceforth, credit) to help small employers provide health insurance to employees. Moreover, Section 1421 of ACA required the Secretary of HHS (HHS) to compute every year, for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the average small group market premiums that form the basis of the credit. ASPE submitted projected 2021 average health insurance premium provided by small employers for each state-rating-area in the country to the

IRS on November 1st. The IRS publishes in the fall of each year the benchmarks in the Instructions for Form 8941, Credit for Small Employer Health Insurance Premiums.

- **Paperwork Reduction Act Waiver:** On behalf of the HHS Secretary, ASPE reviews requests to waive the Paperwork Reduction Act during public health emergencies. During the COVID-19 public health emergency, the Secretary has approved 33 Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) waivers. To date, 22 remain in effect. On November 1st, the Secretary approved the 33rd PRA waiver to allow the HHS Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs to collect information to inform the COVID-19 Public Education Campaign. This is ASPA's 5th PRA waiver pertaining to the Campaign.
- **2021 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal for Science and Environment:** On October 28th, Dr. Reem Ghandour from HRSA's Maternal and Child Health Bureau received this award for her work on the National Survey for Children's Health, the largest national- and state-level survey on the health and health care needs of children ages 0-17, their families, and their communities.
- **Requests for White House Collaboration:**
 - N/A
- **Next Week – Upcoming Events / Tasks / Developments:**
 - **Marketplace Open Enrollment Weekly Snapshot [TENTATIVE]:** On November 12th, CMS will share its first snapshot of updates from Marketplace open enrollment. CMS will issue the snapshot on a regular schedule as part of open enrollment.
 - **Prescription Drug and Health Care Spending Interim Final Rule with Comment Period (No Surprises Act Requirements, Part III):** On November 10th, CMS will issue a third interim final rule with comment period related to Title II (Transparency) of Division BB of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, which established new protections for consumers related to surprise billing in health care. The rule will require health plans and issuers to submit key data, which the Departments of Health & Human Services, Labor, and the Treasury will use to report and better understand prescription

drug pricing trends and their impact on consumers' premiums and out-of-pocket costs. In addition to reporting information on average monthly premiums and drug spending for enrollees versus their employers and/or health insurance issuers, plans and issuers will be required to report total health care spending by the type of care patients receive. The reporting requirements apply beginning with the data for the 2020 calendar year. The Departments anticipate releasing their first public report in 2023, and biennially thereafter.

- **Iowa Medicaid State Plan Amendment Disapproval [CLOSE HOLD]:** On/about November 9th, CMS will issue a disapproval to Iowa for its Medicaid state plan amendment.
- **Primary Care First Model Seriously Ill Population Component Cancellation:** On November 9th, CMS will announce that it will not be moving forward with the Seriously Ill Population component of the Primary Care First Model. CMS has determined that the proposed outreach method is unlikely to result in sufficient beneficiary uptake, which is necessary for model evaluation. Primary Care First is a set of voluntary alternative five-year payment options that reward value and quality by offering an innovative payment structure to support the delivery of advanced primary care.
- **All of Us Research Program Leadership Updates:** On November 3rd, NIH's *All of Us* Research Program announced the selection of Dr. Geoffrey Ginsburg as the Chief Medical and Scientific Officer. Dr. Ginsburg is currently at Duke University School of Medicine Center for Applied Genomics & Precision Medicine. In mid-December, founding Director Eric Dishman will step down from his role as Chief Innovation Officer.

APPENDIX

- **Week ahead messaging:**

HHS Priorities Included/Excluded from Build Back Better

(b)(5)

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Afghan Minors at Licensed Shelter Program in the Chicago Area

Background: Senator Durbin called for HHS OIG to investigate ORR actions concerning a recent story about allegations of Afghan kids not receiving needed services at one of ORR's licensed shelter programs in the Chicago area.

- The care and well-being of children in our custody continues to be a top priority for HHS.
- ORR takes any allegations regarding the safety and wellbeing of kids in our care very seriously, and we have had a team of staff at ORR headquarters working closely with all providers who are caring for unaccompanied Afghan minors.
- We appreciate the support and engagement of our congressional partners on our shared commitment to ensuring the wellbeing of children in our care.
- For each of these providers, ORR has been very clear about the requirement related to interpreters and translators available to support services and case management at these sites.
- ORR staff regularly visit all shelters to ensure that providers are meeting the required standards of service, and staff has been onsite at the Heartland programs recently.
- In accordance with grant requirements, Heartland is in the process of adding in-person translators to the staff, with 10 on site today, and 36 to be on site by this Friday.
- ORR requires facilities to have translators on site, provide weekly individual counseling sessions and twice weekly group counseling sessions for the children, as well as individual sessions whenever requested - and we take appropriate corrective action for any facilities not meeting required services.
- We will continue to work closely with all providers serving unaccompanied Afghan minors to ensure that their needs are being met, including mental and behavioral health services, in partnership with community organizations and Congress.

- To date, we have reunited more than 1000 UAMs with an appropriate sponsor. There are 269 UAMs in ORR care right now, which is roughly one third of one percent of the share of Afghan arrivals.

COVID-19 Vaccine for Kids 5-11 Vaccination

All kids 5 and older are now eligible to get vaccinated.

- This is a safe and effective vaccine. It has undergone rigorous review, and now has been authorized by FDA and recommended by CDC for kids ages 5-11, after thorough testing for safety in thousands of children.

The COVID-19 vaccine is the best way to keep your child safe.

- The best way to protect your child against COVID-19, including the Delta variant, is to get them vaccinated.
- Kids are being infected with COVID-19, and some are getting seriously ill or sadly even dying. Even if your child doesn't get severely ill, they could face long-term health consequences or pass the virus to others.
- If your child gets COVID-19, the negative health effects can be serious and last months; but the most common side effect of the vaccine is a sore arm.
- We know that many parents are trying to decide what is right for their child and their family. If you have questions about your child and the COVID-19 vaccine, talk to a pediatrician, school nurse, or another trusted health care provider.

Vaccines help protect your child, your family, and your community.

- 15 million adolescents have already been vaccinated.
- The vaccines offer lasting protection to prevent your child from getting infected or, worse, having severe outcomes. The vaccine is more than 90% effective.
- Getting vaccinated will help keep schools open, sports going, and help our kids maintain a more normal lifestyle, thanks to the comfort and protection provided by the vaccines.

HHS Takes Further Action to Reduce Prescription Drug and Medical Costs (No Surprises Third Interim Final Rule)

- The Biden-Harris Administration continues its charge to reduce high, unexpected health care costs.
- The Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, Treasury (collectively, the Departments) and the Office of Personnel Management—will implement a reporting requirement for prescription drug costs and a list of medical expenses that are commonly culprits of surprise bills.
- These reporting requirements will ultimately help gather information to publish and better understand prescription drug pricing trends and their impact on premiums and consumers' out-of-pocket costs.
- The “Prescription Drug and Health Care Spending” interim final rule is the latest in a series of actions that make good on President Biden’s commitment to protect millions of consumers long plagued by surprise medical bills.
- HHS will continue to take aggressive steps to better identify and combat barriers to the affordable, comprehensive and person-centered care that all Americans deserve.
- **Travel:**
 - October 22, 2021 Secretary Becerra traveled to New York, New York
 - October 27, 2021 Secretary Becerra traveled to Baltimore, Maryland
 - October 29, 2021 Secretary Becerra traveled to San Francisco, California
 - November 1, 2021 Secretary Becerra traveled to Sacramento, California
 - November 8-9, 2021 Secretary Becerra will travel to Chicago, Illinois
 - November 10, 2021 Secretary Becerra will travel to Rochester, Minneapolis, and St. Paul, Minnesota
 - November 18, 2021 Secretary Becerra will likely travel to either MD or VA
 - November 19, 2021 Secretary Becerra will likely travel to Wilmington, Delaware
 - Week of November 22, 2021 no tentative travel planned
 - Week of November 29, 2021 no tentative travel planned

- Anticipated November 8, 2021: The Assistant Secretary for Health will travel to Glasgow, Scotland to participate in the Conference of Parties (COP26) Event.
- IHS: (Tentative) On November 18th, Acting IHS Director Ms. Elizabeth Fowler will participate in COVID-19 vaccine promotion events in Oakland, California, focused on vaccines for ages 5-11 years old.
- **Speeches:**
 - ACL: On November 10, Acting ACL Administrator Alison Barkoff will join CMS Deputy Administrator Daniel Tsai in delivering keynote remarks at the 2021 Annual Conference hosted by the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS). She will highlight Administration priorities and ACL activities related to people with developmental disabilities.
 - ACL: On November 17, Acting ACL Administrator Alison Barkoff will deliver prerecorded remarks at the Community Care Corps Symposium hosted by USAging. Her remarks will focus on the critical services and supports for older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers available through innovative volunteer caregiver models.
 - ACL: On November 17, Acting ACL Administrator Alison Barkoff will deliver prerecorded remarks at the Annual Gala hosted by the Autistic Self Advocacy Network. She will thank disability stakeholders for their efforts throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and highlight Administration and ACL priorities related to people with disabilities, including COVID-19 response efforts.
 - ACL: On November 17, Acting ACL Administrator Alison Barkoff will deliver remarks at the American Academy of Nursing Policy Conference hosted by American Academy of Nursing. She will highlight Administration priorities related to caregiving and discuss ACL's policy and program activities to support family caregivers.
 - CDC: Dr. Rochelle Walensky, CDC Director, spoke at the following events:
 - October 27th: Council on Foreign Relations fireside chat (COVID-19)

- November 1st: Keynote speech at the Annual Medical Education Innovations and Scholarship Conference at New York University's Grossman School of Medicine (COVID-19 and the future of health care and medical education at large)
- CDC: Dr. Rochelle Walensky, CDC Director, will speak at the following events:
 - November 4th: Keynote speech at the 2021 National Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) Scientific Symposium (CDC's role in Ending the HIV Epidemic)
 - November 9th: Panel discussion at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Grand Challenges Annual Meeting (pandemic preparedness and response)
- CMS: On November 2nd, CMS Principal Deputy Administrator/Chief Operating Officer Jon Blum addressed attendees at the American Diabetes Association's Cost of Care Summit.
- CMS: On November 2nd, Robert Wood participated in a technology transformation roundtable.
- CMS: On November 3rd, CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure will address attendees at the National Conference of State Legislatures.
- CMS: On November 3rd, CMS Principal Deputy Administrator/Chief Operating Officer Jon Blum will address attendees at the Senior Care Pharmacy Coalition Annual Membership Meeting.
- CMS: On November 3rd, Dr. LaShawn McIver will address attendees at the Digital Health Equity Summit.
- CMS: On November 4th, CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure will address attendees at the 45th Annual Moving Forward Together Conference.
- CMS: On November 4th, CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure will participate in a fireside chat hosted by *The Hill*, entitled "Diabetes Technology: Disparities, Access, & Equity."
- CMS: On November 4th, Liz Fowler will address attendees at the Harvard Business School Health Care Alumni Association 22nd Annual Conference.
- CMS: On November 5th, Dr. LaShawn McIver will address attendees at the United States Professional Association for Transgender Health 2021 Scientific Symposium.

- CMS: On November 9th, Dr. Natalia Chalmers will participate as a panelist for an oral health webinar hosted by the National Institute for Health Care Management.
- CMS: On November 9th, Sharon Graham will participate in a virtual event on Medicare open enrollment hosted by Representative Dwight Evans (PA).
- CMS: On November 9th, Liz Fowler will participate in a keynote, point-counterpoint address hosted by Moss Adams Healthcare. The event is intended for health policy experts and will focus on value-based care and national trends.
- CMS: On November 9th, Robert Wood will participate in the Converge@Xcelerate Symposium hosted by the Institute for Critical Infrastructure Technology.
- CMS: On November 10th, Dr. LaShawn McIver will address attendees at the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services Annual Conference.
- CMS: On November 12th, Dr. Meena Seshamani will participate as a panelist for the University of Pennsylvania Leonard David Institute Seminar.
- FDA: On November 2, 2021, Acting Commissioner Woodcock provided remarks and participated in Q&A at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Fellows Meeting.
- FDA: On November 8, Acting Commissioner Woodcock will provide a keynote at the GRx+Biosims event.
- FDA: On November 9, Acting Commissioner Woodcock will participate in a discussion with Scott Gottlieb, MD at the Friends of Cancer Research Virtual Annual Meeting.
- FDA: On November 15, Acting Commissioner Woodcock will provide a keynote and participate in Q&A at the Harvard University MEDLIFE event.
- FDA: On November 15, Acting Commissioner Woodcock will participate on a panel at The Children's Inn at NIH. The panel topic is "Collaboration Insights: What We've Learned and How It Will Change The Way We Work."
- FDA: On November 17, Acting Commissioner Woodcock will provide remarks at the Lausanne VIII: Building Global Momentum for Interventions in Alzheimer's Disease event.
- FDA: On November 18, Acting Commissioner Woodcock will provide introductory remarks at the Closer to Zero Action Plan:

- Impacts of Toxic Element Exposure and Nutrition at Different Crucial Development Stages for Babies and Young Children.
- FDA: On November 19, Acting Commissioner Woodcock will participate in a fireside chat with Dean Lloyd Minor as part of Stanford University's series of events on lessons learned from the pandemic.
 - HRSA: On November 2nd, Jim Macrae, Associate Administrator of HRSA's Bureau of Primary Health Care, spoke at the Association of Clinicians for the Underserved Annual Conference on Health Center Program priorities and updates.
 - HRSA: On November 3rd, Jim Macrae, Associate Administrator of HRSA's Bureau of Primary Health Care, spoke at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/HRSA Advisory Committee on HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexually Transmitted Disease Prevention & Treatment on the Health Center Program and Ending the HIV Epidemic in the United States.
 - On November 4th, Dr. Michael Warren, Associate Administrator for the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) spoke at the 2021 Healthy Start Virtual Grantees' Meeting. He provided an update on MCHB's strategic direction and information regarding MCHB's Infant Health Equity 2030 initiative. Healthy Start provides grants to support community-based strategies to reduce disparities in infant mortality and improve perinatal outcomes for women and children in high-risk communities throughout the nation.
 - On November 8th, Dr. Michael Warren, Associate Administrator for the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, spoke at the Region 5 Infant Mortality Initiative on Accelerating Upstream Together to Eliminate Racial Disparities in Infant Health by 2030. Region 5 (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin) accounts for 21 percent of all U.S. Black infant deaths and four of the top 10 counties with the Black infant deaths are in Region V. Region 5 also accounts for 12 percent of all U.S. American Indian/Alaskan Native infant deaths.
 - IEA: On November 2nd, IEA Director Marvin Figueroa spoke to the National Hispanic Medical Association on HHS priorities at their COVID-19 #Vaccinate4All Campaign training meeting for Latino health care leadership.

- IEA: On November 2nd, IEA Director Marvin Figueroa spoke to the National Organization of Black Elected Legislative Women on HHS priorities.
- IHS: On October 28th, Acting IHS Director Ms. Elizabeth Fowler participated in a Tribal Leader discussion on Tribal economies during the White House Council on Native American Affairs and HHS Nation to Nation Dialogue on the Ongoing COVID-19 Response.
- IHS: On October 29th, Acting IHS Director Ms. Elizabeth Fowler provided remarks during the National Council of Urban Indian Health Board Meeting.
- IHS: On November 2nd, Acting IHS Director Ms. Elizabeth Fowler provided remarks during the National Indian Health Board 3rd Quarter Board Meeting.
- IHS: On November 3rd, Acting IHS Director Ms. Elizabeth Fowler will provide remarks during the IHS Contract Support Cost Workgroup meeting.
- IHS: On November 8th, Acting IHS Director Ms. Elizabeth Fowler will participate in COVID-19 vaccine promotion events focused on vaccines for ages 5-11 years old. Events will include Tribes in the Anadarko, Oklahoma, area and a Bureau of Indian Education site.
- IHS: On November 9th, Acting IHS Director Ms. Elizabeth Fowler will provide remarks during the virtual FY 2022 Oklahoma City Area Tribal Consultation and FY 2024 Budget Formulation Session.
- IHS: On November 9th, Acting IHS Director Ms. Elizabeth Fowler will provide remarks and participate in open discussion on mandatory funding for the IHS with OMB and Tribal Leaders during the IHS Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee meeting.
- IHS: On November 18th, Acting IHS Director Ms. Elizabeth Fowler will provide remarks during the IHS monthly call with Tribal leaders and Urban Indian Organization leaders.
- IHS: On November 19th, Acting IHS Director Ms. Elizabeth Fowler will provide remarks during the virtual IHS National Director's Awards Ceremony.
- IHS: On November 30th, Acting IHS Director Ms. Elizabeth Fowler will provide remarks during virtual Tribal Consultation on

designating the State of Arizona as a Purchased/Referred Care Delivery Area.

- IHS: On December 8th, Acting IHS Director Ms. Elizabeth Fowler will provide remarks during virtual Tribal Consultation on designating the State of Arizona as a Purchased/Referred Care Delivery Area.
- OASH: November 1st, the Assistant Secretary for Health will speak at the Callen-Lorde Community Health Awards Gala via a pre-recorded video.
- OASH: On November 4th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will speak at Pharmacy Executive Leadership Alliance via a pre-recorded video.
- OASH: On November 4th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will participate in the Brazda Breakfast Reporter Series.
- OASH: On November 5th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will provide Keynote remarks via a pre-recorded video in the Western States Opioid Stimulant Summit.
- OASH: Anticipated on November 12th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will provide pre-recorded remarks for the Representation Matters Event.
- OASH: Anticipated on November 16th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will provide a pre-record video for Transgender Awareness Week.
- OASH: Anticipated on November 15th & 17th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will provide remarks on Day 1 and/or Day 2 of the 72nd Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (PACHA) Meeting.
- OASH: Anticipated on November 17th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will provide remarks at the National Council November Wellbeing Wednesday Webinar.
- OASH: Anticipated on December 2nd, the Assistant Secretary for Health will provide keynote remarks for the United States Conference on HIV/AIDS (USCHA) Annual Meeting.
- OASH: Anticipated on December 2nd, the Assistant Secretary for Health will participate in Reuters NEXT Fireside Chat.
- OASH: Anticipated on December 2nd, the Assistant Secretary for Health will provide opening remarks at the International LGBTQ Leaders Conference.
- OCR: On November 8th, Timothy Noonan, the Office for Civil Rights' Deputy Director for Health Information Privacy, will be

- presenting to the Health Care Compliance Association, on Cybersecurity in Health Care.
- OCR: On October 28th, Carla Carter, the Office for Civil Rights' Associate Deputy Director for Civil Rights, presented to the 2021 National Environmental Justice and Training Program, 13th Annual National Conference on Health Disparities.
 - OCR: On November 2, 2021, WHIAANHPI's Executive Director Krystal Ka'ai joined the Deputy Assistant to the President and Senior AA and NHPI Liaison in speaking to the National Asian Pacific American Caucus of State Legislators (NAPACSL) during the annual National Conference of State Legislatures Summit.
 - ONC: Dr. Micky Tripathi, National Coordinator for Health IT, delivered remarks at the following event:
 - November 4th: California Exposure Notification Virtual Symposium to discuss technology related to future pandemics. The event was open to the public.
 - ONC: Dr. Micky Tripathi, National Coordinator for Health IT, will speak at the following events:
 - November 9th: Healthcare Revolution and Transformation Summit to discuss public health after COVID-19. The event is open to the public.
 - November 9th: CommonWell Fall Summit to discuss healthy equity. The event is open to the public.
 - November 16th: Scottsdale Institute 2021 Fall Symposium to discuss federal agency coordination. The event is closed to the public.
 - November 16th: Veeva Clinical Research Sites Forum to discuss ONC's priorities and public health data modernization. The event is open to the public.
 - November 17th: South Florida HIMSS Annual Conference to discuss health equity and health data portability. The event is open to the public.
 - November 18th: Government CIO Media & Research EHR Summit to discuss EHR modernization and patient empowerment of data. The event is open to the public.
 - November 18th: Federal Electronic Health Record Modernization (FEHRM) Program Office Industry Interoperability Roundtable to discuss EHR modernization efforts. The event is closed to the public.

- NIH
 - NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins' recent and upcoming speeches:
 - November 3rd: Livestreamed conversation with Pfizer Scientific Director Dr. Mikael Dolsten at the American Federation for Aging Research's 40th Anniversary Scientific Symposium and Award Ceremony. The discussion will center on how the Accelerating Medicines Partnership between Pfizer and NIH helped provide a roadmap for the Accelerating COVID-19 Therapeutic Interventions and Vaccines (ACTIV) public-private partnership.
 - November 4th: Pre-recorded presentation on SARS-CoV-2 lessons for science and health policy at the Pontifical Academy of Sciences meeting on COVID-19: New insights into the causes, actions and consequences of the pandemic, and implications for science and health policy.
 - November 8th, 9th: Opening keynote and participant on a panel titled "A New Model for Global Health & Development Innovation" at the Grand Challenges Annual Meeting, which fosters international innovation partnerships to address the greatest challenges in health and development.
 - On November 9th, National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) Director Dr. Eliseo Pérez-Stable, NIH Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity (COSWD) Dr. Marie Bernard, and National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) Medical Officer Dr. Patrice Desvigne-Nickens will participate in the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc. Anne Arundel County Chapter's webinar titled "Combating Vaccine Hesitancy in the African-American and Hispanic Communities: What We Know About the COVID-19 Vaccines, Vaccinating Children, Community Acceptance, Booster Shots, and Safe Practices for Holiday Gatherings."
- SAMHSA: On November 9th, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary Tom Coderre will present on the new HHS Overdose Prevention Strategy during his keynote at the 2021 Symposium on Substance Use Research hosted by the RDAR Center, the

COBRE on Opioids and Overdose, WVCTSI, the WV-INBRE, and the CADRE.

- SAMHSA: On December 2nd, Assistant Secretary Delphin-Rittmon will be interviewed by Dr. Karen Kangas from the Hartford HealthCare for their Recovery Leadership Academy. The topics for the interview include the opioid crisis and mental health.

- **Media:**

- October 25, 2021 Secretary Becerra participated in interviews with MSNBC and CNN on COVID-19 testing
- October 26, 2021 Secretary Becerra participated in interviews ahead of the Overdose Prevention Strategy rollout
- October 27, 2021 Secretary Becerra participated in a press conference on the Administration's Overdose Prevention Strategy
- October 28, 2021 Secretary Becerra participated in a press call on postpartum care in New Jersey
- October 29, 2021 Secretary Becerra participated in interviews on open enrollment
- November 1, 2021 Secretary Becerra participated in a press conference on open enrollment in California
- November 1, 2021 Secretary Becerra participated in interviews at events in Sacramento
- November 3, 2021 Secretary Becerra participated in interviews on open enrollment
- November 4, 2021 Secretary Becerra will participate in an interview with the New York Times on HHS priorities and accomplishments
- November 8-9, 2021 Secretary Becerra will likely participate in interviews in IL and MN
- FDA: On November 3, Acting Commissioner Woodcock participated in an on-camera Zoom interview with TIME magazine for kids, with one of their "kid reporters" to discuss the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine authorization.
- NIH
 - NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins' recent media engagements:

- October 26th: ABC News' *Good Morning America*
- October 27th: Fox News' Neil Cavuto
- November 1st: Walter Isaacson for *Amanpour & Company*, a late-night public affairs series on PBS
- November 2nd: NPR's *Planet Money* podcast
- On November 1st, the *All of Us* Research Program launched the Social Determinants of Health survey, which is designed to collect information from participants on various factors that may affect health and wellbeing. An announcement with detailed information about the survey was released on November 4th.
- On November 3rd, leaders from multiple NIH Institutes and Centers participated in a press briefing at the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience. The discussion centered around research addressing the effect of COVID-19 on the opioid epidemic, individuals with substance use disorders, and the pediatric population.
- OASH: ADM Levine was interviewed by the New York Times, Washington Post, Bloomberg, Forbes, USA Today, NPR, The Blade, and LGBTQ Nation about her appointment as the first openly transgender four-star officer and first female four-star admiral of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps.
- OASH: On October 28th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will be featured on the Johns Hopkins University Podcast with Joshua M. Sharfstein, MD, Vice Dean for Public Health Practice and Community Engagement, JHU Bloomberg School of Public Health.
- **Principal level meetings or calls with Governors, Mayors, or other elected officials of note:**
 - October 27, 2021 Secretary Becerra met with Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas
 - October 29, 2021 Secretary Becerra participated in an event with San Francisco Mayor London Breed
 - October 29, 2021 Secretary Becerra participated in the G20 Health and Finance Ministers Meeting
 - November 3, 2021 Secretary Becerra will meet with CFPB Director Rohit Chopra

- November 4, 2021 Secretary Becerra will meet with Ambassador Kathryn Tai
- November 12, 2021 Secretary Becerra will meet with the UK Health Minister
- Week of November 15, 2021 Secretary Becerra will likely have dinner with the Latino cabinet members
- ACF OCS Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) Presentation: Leveraging Multiple Federal Funding Sources for COVID-19 Response and Recovery: On November 1st, ACF OCS presented at the Bloomberg Philanthropies/ United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) e311 Workshop. They presented on what funds to use and when to use them, and on resources for water affordability and infrastructure projects. The panel included Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Treasury.
- November 3rd: Dr. Rochelle Walensky, CDC Director, will participate in the White House governor's call.
- CMS: On October 31st, Administrator Brooks-LaSure, Principal Deputy Administrator Blum, and Deputy Administrator and Director Seshamani participated in a meeting with Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) regarding drug pricing.
- CMS: On November 5th, Administrator will participate in a call with Sen. Cassidy (R-LA) regarding surprise medical billing.
- IEA: On Thursday, October 28th and Friday, October 29th IEA Tribal Affairs and the White House Council on Native American Affairs held a two-day virtual Nation-to-Nation dialogue to hear input, recommendations, and perspectives on how federal resources and assistance can best support Tribes' response to Public Health Emergencies and improve health systems across Indian Country.
- OASH: The week of November 1, 2021, the Assistant Secretary for Legislation (ASL) will call designated Congressional leaders to inform them that the National Fitness Foundation Board member appointments process is under way, pending Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, outreach to potential nominees.
- OASH: The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP) within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health

(OASH) is working with the Assistant Secretary for Legislation (ASL) to schedule a briefing to the Appropriations Committees. GAO Report released on September 16th and a response and briefing are supposed to be within 60 days of release.

- **Noteworthy public engagement:**

- October 26, 2021 Secretary Becerra met with the Alliance of Community Health Plans Board of Directors
- October 27, 2021 Secretary Becerra hosted a roundtable with stakeholder groups to discuss their priorities and HHS efforts
- October 27, 2021 Secretary Becerra participated in the Nation-Nation Conversation on COVID-19
- October 28, 2021 Secretary Becerra participated in the AARP Global Conference
- November 2, 2021 Secretary Becerra met with the American Health Care Association and the California Association of Health Facilities
- November 3, 2021 Secretary Becerra hosted a roundtable with stakeholder groups to discuss their priorities and HHS efforts
- November 3, 2021 Secretary Becerra participated in First Focus' Children's Budget Summit
- Week of November 15, 2021 Secretary Becerra will host two roundtables with stakeholder groups to discuss their priorities and HHS efforts
- November 15, 2021 Secretary Becerra will participate in the White House's Tribal Nations Summit
- November 18, 2021 Secretary Becerra will participate in a Children's Education Week COVID-19 event
- OASH: The Office of Climate Change and Health Equity (OCCHE) team joined a meeting of the collaborative's working group on policy, financing and measurement on October 26th, and Assistant Secretary for Health, Admiral Levine, provided updates to the collaborative's steering committee on our plans for the COP26 meeting on November 1st.
- OCR: On October 27th, the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (WHIAANHPI) and the White House Office of Public

Engagement held a national AA and NHPI Stakeholder Briefing featuring updates from the WH Presidential Personnel Office, HHS, and the Department of Education, in addition to updates on the Child Tax Credit.

- OCR: On October 28th, WHIAANHPI and the White House Office of Public Engagement hosted a virtual Filipino American History Month event to recognize the contributions of Filipino Americans. The event featured a conversation between Air Force Under Secretary Gina Ortiz Jones and Deputy Assistant to the Secretary Erika Moritsugu, speeches from California Attorney General Rob Bonta, San Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg, as well as a panel with Filipino American Biden-Harris appointees and a panel with representatives from various Filipino American community organizations.
- OCR: On October 29th, WHIAANHPI and the White House marked National Women's Small Business Month by convening a closed-door, virtual listening session for AA and NHPI small business advocates and women small business owners to hear about their concerns and recommendations to ensure that AA and NHPI small businesses are included in the federal government's ongoing economic recovery efforts.
- OCR: On November 3rd, WHIAANHPI will partner with the COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force and the WH Office of Public Engagement to host an AA and NHPI stakeholder briefing as part of the Task Force's release of its Final Report and proposed implementation plan.
- ACF: On November 8th, as part of developing action plans in alignment with the President's EO on Equity, ACF ANA will hold a listening session with American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Indigenous grant recipients to get input on improving training and technical Assistance for Indigenous communities, access to ACF grants and services for Indigenous populations, and ACF's cultural competency in working with and providing resources to Indigenous communities.
- ACF: On November 10th, Family Equality and HRC will host a discussion on how to center the experiences of LGBTQ+ youth and families in ACF's programs and services.
- ACF Children's Bureau (CB) Participates in Child Welfare Discussion: On November 1st, Associate Commissioner of CB, Aysha Schomburg, participated in Day 3 of *Accountability*

Dialogues, three 90-minute conversations designed to set the stage for transformative policy development on behalf of families who experience domestic violence and who have been involved in the child welfare system. These conversations were hosted by Futures Without Violence, Latinos United for Peace and Equity, Ujima: National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community, and Women Transforming Families.

- ACF Office of Trafficking in Persons (OTIP) Participates in Multi-Session Anti-Racism and Racial Equity Training: On November 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, Ra'Shya Ghee, a subject matter expert within the anti-trafficking field, and OTIP delivered a 10-week anti-racism and racial equity training for grantees and OTIP staff. The training equipped participants with the shared framework, language, historical context, and strategies necessary to embed a racial equity lens at the core of their organizational operations and culture.
- ACF Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) Participates on Panel: On November 3rd, ACF ORR Director Cindy Huang participated in a panel discussion on Operational and Legal Challenges at the U.S. Southern Border with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.
- ACF Office of Head Start (OHS) Virtual Listening Session with Michigan Head Start Associations: On November 3rd, Dr. Bernadine Futrell, Director, ACF OHS, hosted a virtual listening session with Michigan Head Start Associations. ACF OHS gathered input and feedback from associations on challenges within their programs.
- ACF OHS Virtual Listening Session - Fall Series: On November 3rd, Dr. Bernadine Futrell, Director, OHS, hosted the second listening session in the virtual fall series with state associations in regions I, III, IV, VI, VII, IX, and XI. These sessions are being hosted to discuss best practices and challenges with full enrollment, workforce wages and benefits, recruiting and retaining staff, and Universal PreK.
- ACF Panel on Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA): On November 3rd, a national discussion on adapting to changes from the pandemic into a new era of FFPSA was conducted with Region 7 Regional Administrator (RA) Christie

- Appelhanz, Embrace Families (Florida), Children's Alliance (Kentucky), and Heartland for Children (Florida).
- ACF OHS Health Webinar: On November 4th, OHS hosted the webinar "Strategies to Promote Staff Physical Health and Infection Control: As Early Care and Education Programs," with a focus on protecting staff from COVID-19, and more common staff health concerns that may be overlooked, such as injuries, stress, and infections. This webinar covered the recommended components of an initial staff health examination and a periodic re-examination, and screening or tests for communicable diseases. The webinar explored strategies to reduce stress and prevent injuries among ECE staff.
 - ACF OHS Chatathon Series: On November 4th, ACF OHS hosted the Chatathon Live Series: "Emergency Rental Assistance and Housing Vouchers" (SPANISH). A panel of experts came together for the fourth live chat to learn more about how ARP makes rental assistance and housing vouchers available for people with overdue rent or who are at risk of homelessness. ACF OHS staff was on hand to respond to as many questions as possible.
 - ACF Federal Policy Opportunities to Advance Equity and Well-Being for Youth and Young Adults: On November 4th, Acting Assistant Secretary JooYeun Chang, Acting Assistant Attorney General of the Office of Justice Programs Amy Solomon, and Senior Advisor of the Department of Labor Brent Parton spoke on Policy Opportunities for Supporting the Well-Being of Youth and Young Adults at an event hosted by Youth Transition Funders Group.
 - OHS Head Start Virtual Site Visit: On November 5th, Dr. Bernadine Futrell, Director, ACF OHS, virtually visited a Head Start center in Region VIII. She greeted the teaching staff, read to students, and hosted a listening session with program staff.
 - ACF ECD Participates in Event Promoting Equity and Celebrating Resilience in Tribal Early Childhood Programs: On November 8th, the first of a two-part webinar series will be conducted on promoting equity in tribal early childhood programs and celebrating the resilience and creativity of tribal communities as they serve young American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) children and families. The second part of the series will be held on November 16th.

- ACF ANA to Participate in Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program (IPVAP) External Stakeholder Meeting for a Special Fall Summit: On November 9th, ANA Acting Commissioner Michelle Sauve will discuss Missing or Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) Vulnerable populations. The meeting will include the IPVAP Internal Stakeholder Council, IPVAP External Stakeholder Council, and Leadership Council Executive members and specials guests.
- ACF OTIP to Participate in Pennsylvania (PA) Rural Human Trafficking Summit: On November 9th, OTIP will moderate a panel discussion titled, "Trafficking Prevention and Risk Factors: Approaches to Prevention and How Systems Can Respond" at the upcoming PA Rural Human Trafficking Summit. The panel will consist of three survivor leaders.
- On November 8th and 16th, the ACF Office of Early Childhood Development (ECD) will present a two-part webinar series focused on promoting equity in tribal early childhood programs and celebrating the resilience and creativity of tribal communities as they serve young American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) children and families. These webinars are part of a larger series of webinars on topics related to implementation and coordination of early childhood programs in AI/AN communities.
- ACF OHS Head Start Virtual Site Visit: On November 12th, Dr. Bernadine Futrell, Director, ACF OHS, will virtually visit a center in Region XI. She will greet the teaching staff, read to the students, and host a brief listening session with program staff.
- ACF OHS Virtual Listening Session - Fall Series: On November 12th, Dr. Bernadine Futrell, Director, ACF OHS, will host the third listening session in the virtual fall series with grantees from all twelve regions. These listening sessions are being hosted to discuss best practices and challenges with full enrollment, workforce wages and benefits, recruiting and retaining staff, and Universal PreK.
- ASPR: November 4 is BARDA Industry Day 2021
- FDA: On November 1, Acting Commissioner Woodcock and Center for Biologics Evaluation & Research (CBER) director Peter Marks M.D., Ph.D., participated in a stakeholder call with multisector COVID partners/health care professionals, patient advocacy groups, trade associations, consumer organizations,

national immunization organizations, and state and local public health organizations, to discuss a request to amend Pfizer-BioNTech's EUA for administration of their COVID-19 mRNA vaccine to children 5 through 11 years of age.

- FDA: On November 2, Dr. Peter Marks, Director of the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, participated in a call with leadership and members of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) to discuss COVID-19 vaccine issues, including those related to boosters and the authorization of the emergency use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine for the prevention of COVID-19 to include children 5 through 11 years of age.
- On November 2nd and November 3rd, the Bureau of Health Workforce convened its Advisory Committee on Training in Primary Care Medicine and Dentistry. Discussion and presentations included Title VII support for Indian Health Service and other tribal entity training sites, feedback on the HRSA Data Warehouse, HRSA efforts focused on children with special health care needs, and dental therapy. The Committee also discussed their upcoming Report which includes topics on workforce diversity, implicit bias, and intellectual and development disabilities
- IEA: On Wednesday, November 3rd, IEA facilitated a roundtable on sickle cell disease with Secretary Becerra. The stakeholder invites included MTS Sickle Cell Foundation, Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Sickle Cell Consortium, Children's Hospital of Chicago, VCU Health, Bost Medical Center, and one sickle cell patient.
- IEA: On Wednesday, November 3rd, IEA facilitated 11 stakeholder briefings with the COVID-19 health Equity Task Force as part of the release of the final report and proposed implementation of the plan. Members of the task force and experts from across HHS and the White House presented.
- IEA: On Monday, 11/1, through Friday, 11/12, IEA will facilitate approximately 11 stakeholder listening sessions with OCR regarding the implementation of regulations for Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act (Section 1557).
- IEA: On Monday, 11/8, IEA will host a stakeholder briefing on Title X.

- IEA: On 11/10, 11/17, 12/1, and 12/15, the IEA Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships will host a webinar series in partnership with the DHS Center, “Welcome to the Neighborhood! Faith and Community Partnerships Serving our new Afghan Neighbors.” This series of webinars will be providing information, education, and training to help faith and community partners support new Afghan neighbors settling into communities. (Dates are tentative.)
- NIH: On October 27th, the NIH Tribal Advisory Committee met with NIH officials to exchange views, share information, and seek advice concerning intergovernmental responsibilities related to the implementation and administration of NIH research programs affecting American Indian and Alaska Native communities.
- OASH: On October 29th, the Assistant Secretary for Health met with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), CDC, ASPR, and the Department of Ed. to continue the discussion and provide a weekly update on the severity of the delta in the pediatric population.
- OASH: On November 1st, the Assistant Secretary for Health participated in the National Academy of Medicine’s Action Collaborative Steering Committee November Call. The Steering Committee represents a public-private partnership of leaders from across the health system committed to addressing the sector’s environmental impact while strengthening its sustainability and resilience.
- OASH: On November 1st, the Assistant Secretary for Health met with the National Alliance for State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD) regarding eliminating viral hepatitis and improving the lives of people living with the virus.
- OASH: On November 3rd, the Assistant Secretary for Health will have an introductory meeting with the Testing and Diagnostics Working Group (TDWG) Leadership.
- OASH: On November 3rd, the Assistant Secretary for Health will have an introductory meeting with Public Responsibility in Medicine and Research (PRIM&R).
- OASH: On November 4th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will meet with the Federal AIDS Policy Partnership (FAPP) Convening Group.

- OASH: On November 5th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will meet with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), CDC, ASPR, and the Department of Ed. to continue the discussion and provide a weekly update on the severity of the delta in the pediatric population.
- OASH: On November 5th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will meet with World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) in follow up to a previous discussion with Dr. Walter Bouman.
- OASH: On November 12th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will meet with Big Cities Health Coalition.
- OASH: On November 12th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will meet with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), CDC, ASPR, and the Department of Ed. to continue the discussion and provide a weekly update on the severity of the delta in the pediatric population.
- OASH: On November 15th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will meet with Dr. Katharine Dalke, Penn State, Dr. Louise Pyle, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and Dr. Frances Grimstad, Children's Harvard, to discuss the clinical care for intersex individuals.
- OASH: On November 17th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will meet with the Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI).
- OASH: On November 19th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will meet with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), CDC, ASPR, and the Department of Ed. to continue the discussion and provide a weekly update on the severity of the delta in the pediatric population.
- OASH: On November 22nd, the Assistant Secretary for Health will meet with Big Cities Health Coalition as part of their quarterly meeting series.
- OASH: On November 26th, the Assistant Secretary for Health will meet with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), CDC, ASPR, and the Department of Ed. to continue the discussion and provide a weekly update on the severity of the delta in the pediatric population.
- October 2, Loyce Pace, Director, OGA and Mara Burr, Director, Multilateral Team, OGA spoke with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Global Initiative on Health and the Economy, to discuss partnership opportunities with the board, including USG

commitments as part of the COVID Summit, ACT-A, and COVAX.

- **ONC:** On November 10th, ONC will convene its Federal Advisory Committee, the Health IT Advisory Committee (HITAC), for its monthly meeting. The agenda will include topics ranging from an update on Department of Defense and Veterans Affairs Interoperability Modernization Strategy, ONC benchmarks and measurement, and the HITAC's CY2022 work plan.

- **Principal level meetings or calls with Members of Congress:**

- October 28, 2021 Secretary Becerra met with Representative Barbara Lee
- October 28, 2021 Secretary Becerra met with Representative Tony Cardenas
- October 28, 2021 Secretary Becerra participated in an event on preventative care with Senator Amy Klobuchar
- October 29, 2021 Secretary Becerra participated in an event in Sacramento, California with Representative Barbara Lee
- November 1, 2021 Secretary Becerra met with Senator Jack Reed
- November 2, 2021 Secretary Becerra met with the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus
- November 8, 2021 Secretary Becerra will participate in events with Representative Laura Underwood in Chicago, Illinois
- November 9, 2021 Secretary Becerra will participate in events with Representative Brad Schneider in Chicago, Illinois
- November 10, 2021 Secretary Becerra will participate in events with Senator Amy Klobuchar and Representative Angie Craig in Minnesota
- November 17, 2021 Secretary Becerra will meet with the House Rules Committee
- November 19, 2021 Secretary Becerra will likely participate in events with Representative Lisa Blunt Rochester in Wilmington, Delaware
- Week of November 15, 2021 Secretary Becerra will make calls to members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus

- November 16, 2021 Secretary Becerra will likely meet with Representative Ted Deutch
- Week of November 22, 2021 Secretary Becerra will make calls to members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus
- Week of November 29, 2021 Secretary Becerra will make calls to members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus
- ASL: October 29th: Secretary had a call with Congresswoman Jackie Walorski (R-IN) about Foster Care Issues.
- ASL: November 1st: Secretary Becerra had a call with Senator Reed about LIHEAP in Rhode Island.
- ASL: November 2nd: Secretary Becerra will attend the Congressional Asian and Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) Weekly Member Meeting to discuss the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (WHIAANHPI); COVID-19 Health data sets and disparities between communities; language access in health care settings; immigrant access to health care; and AANHPI focused health care research.
- ASL: November 8th and 9th: Secretary Becerra will travel to Illinois to discuss Build Back Better, Maternal Health, ACA Open Enrollment & Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccines with the following Representatives Schneider (IL-10), Underwood (IL-13)
- ASL: November 10th: Secretary Becerra will travel to Rochester & Twin Cities, MN to discuss Build Back Better, Drug Pricing, ACA Open Enrollment & Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccines with Representatives Angie Craig (MN-02) and Sen. Amy Klobuchar(D-MN).
- ASPR: On October 28, ASPR provided a briefing to Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) and House Energy and Commerce staff on the transfer of HHS Protect and Tiberius to CDC. Representatives from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Office of the Chief Information Officer participated in this briefing.
- ASPR: On October 29, ASPR provided a briefing to Senate HELP oversight staff on the Industrial Base Expansion (IBx) program; highlighting program establishment, current status, and future of the program (goals and objectives).

- ASPR: On October 29, Assistant Secretary, Dawn O’Connell, met with the Government Accountability Office (GAO) health care team following their request to update Assistant Secretary O’Connell on the status of reviews in process and provide a general overview of their approach.
- ASPR: On November 1, ASPR provided a briefing to Senate HELP on the transfer of the Testing and Diagnostic Working Group to ASPR and CDC. Representatives from CDC also participated.
- ASPR: On November 4, Senate HELP Committee Hearing – COVID-19 Task Force Update; the ASPR will serve as a witness.
- ASPR: On November 5, ASPR will brief the Appropriations Committee staff (House/Senate Majority/Minority) on obligations and planned spending related to the COVID-19 supplementals.
- November 3rd: Dr. Rochelle Walensky, CDC Director, will participate in a call with Sen. Richard Burr (R-NC) on COVID-19.
- November 4th: Dr. Rochelle Walensky, CDC Director, will participate in an in-person hearing for the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions on the COVID-19 response.
- FDA: On November 4, Acting Commissioner Woodcock testified in a hearing before Senate HELP on *Next Steps: The Road Ahead for the COVID-19 Response*.
- NIH
 - On October 27th, NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Director Dr. Diana Bianchi, National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) Director Dr. Shannon Zenk, and National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) Director Dr. Eliseo Pérez-Stable briefed the Congressional Nursing Caucus on the impact of nursing research.
 - On October 29th, NHLBI Clinical Research and Strategic Initiatives Deputy Director Dr. Amy Patterson briefed Senator Tim Kaine’s (D-VA) staff on the Researching COVID to Enhance Recovery (RECOVER) initiative to study Long COVID.

- On October 29th, NIBIB Director Dr. Bruce Tromberg briefed the House Energy and Commerce Committee majority staff on the COVID-19 Independent Test Assessment Program, an accelerated pathway to help bring to market over-the-counter diagnostic tests for COVID-19 that are not yet authorized by the FDA.
 - On October 29th, NCATS Office of Policy, Communications, and Education Director Dr. Penny Burgoon briefed Rep. Anna Eshoo's (D-CA) staff on the contract award to Palantir Technologies, Inc. to support the National COVID Cohort Collaborative (N3C) and the N3C Data Enclave.
 - On November 4th, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) Director Dr. Anthony Fauci testified at a hearing of the Senate HELP Committee titled "Next Steps: The Road Ahead for the COVID-19 Response."
- **Noteworthy inquiries from Congressional committees or Members of Congress; scheduled testimony by Secretary or Deputy Secretary:**
 - CDC: Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) wrote to the CDC director regarding her scheduled appearance to testify before the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions on Thursday, November 4th, asking if she would agree to testify under oath or affirmation.
 - ASL: On November 4th (10am), Senate HELP Committee Hearing on the COVID Task Force. HHS witnesses include Dr. Fauci, CDC Director Walensky, ASPR Dawn O'Connell, and Acting FDA Director Dr. Janet Woodcock)
 - ASL: On November 1st, ACF briefing with Rep. Soto's Staff on Health Professions Opportunity Grants (HPOG)
 - ASL: On November 1st, ASPR/CDC briefing with Senate HELP and E&C on COVID-19 Testing Diagnostic Working Group (TDWG)
 - ASL: On November 2nd, CMS briefing call for staff of the Authorizing Committees and House and Senate leadership to provide a high-level overview of provisions in the CY 2022 Home Health PPS final rule.

- ASL: On November 2nd CMS briefing Call for staff of the Authorizing Committees and House and Senate leadership to provide a high-level overview of provisions in the CY 2022 Physician Fee Schedule final rule.
- ASL: On November 2nd, CMS briefing with HELP Minority Staff on No Surprises IFR #2
- ASL: On November 2nd, FDA briefing for Energy and Commerce Bipartisan Health LAs re: OTC hearing aid proposed rule and PSAP guidance.
- ASL: On November 2nd, FDA briefing with Rep. Boyle Briefing on Animal Alternatives (CDER, OCS)
- ASL: On November 2nd, ASPR briefing with HELP Minority on IBx Program
- ASL: On November 2nd, FDA briefing with Senator Cornyn's staff on the Affordable Prescriptions for Patients Act (S. 1435) and impact on Rx-to-OTC switches
- CMS: On October 29th, CMS Office of Legislation provided follow-up information requested by House Energy and Commerce Committee Minority Staff regarding the status of states receiving enhanced matching funds made available under Section 9817 of ARP for home and community-based services (HCBS). The staff had additional questions about the process for awarding states federal Medicaid funds and the role of supplemental grant awards.
- FDA: On October 25, FDA received a letter from Rep. Scott Peters urging FDA's Office of Women's Health (OWH) to quickly update the Birth Control Guide.
- FDA: On November 2, Center for Tobacco Products (CTP) Director Zeller briefed E&C Majority on Synthetic Nicotine
- FDA: On November 3, Center for Biologics Evaluation and Response (CBER) Director Marks joined CDC to brief staff of committees of jurisdiction and Congressional leadership on Pfizer COVID Vaccine for Ages 5 – 11.
- On October 25th, the staff of Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR), Chair, Senate Finance Committee, Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ), Chair, House Committee on Energy & Commerce (E&C) requested technical assistance on a bill regarding a Children's Health Insurance Program rebate program. HRSA responded to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Legislation.

- On October 26th, HRSA and ASL briefed the staff of Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV), Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), and Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT) regarding the Provider Relief Fund American Rescue Plan rural distribution.
- On October 27th, Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz's (D-FL) office requested technical assistance for a cancer survivorship bill. HRSA is working to respond to this request.
- On October 28th, Rep. Susie Lee's (D-NV) office requested technical assistance regarding H.R. 5141, the "Maximizing Outcomes through Better Investments in Lifesaving Equipment for (MOBILE) Health Care Act." HRSA is working to respond to this request.
- **Noteworthy rulemaking in the Federal Register:**
 - Week of November 1st: CDC will publish a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing an Amended Order (including accompanying attestation form and technical instructions) signed by the CDC director on October 30th to implement the new Biden administration travel policy to safely resume global travel to the United States. On November 8th, non-U.S. citizens who are not immigrants to the United States will be required to be fully vaccinated and provide proof of their vaccination status to fly to the United States, with only limited exceptions.
 - Week of November 1st: CDC will publish a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing an Order (including accompanying technical instructions) signed by the CDC director on October 25th to require all airlines and operators of flights arriving into the United States from a foreign point of last departure to collect passenger and maintain crewmember contact information.
 - Week of November 1st: CDC will publish a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing an Amended Order (including accompanying attestation form) signed by the CDC director on October 25th requiring negative pre-departure COVID-19 test results or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 for all airline or other aircraft passengers arriving into the United States from any foreign country. This Amended Order supersedes the previous Order signed on January 25, 2021.

- CMS: Displayed October 29, 2021: CY 2022 Changes to the End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Prospective Payment System and Quality Incentive Program Final
- CMS: November 2, 2021 *[Target pending OFR confirmation]*: CY 2022 Home Health Prospective Payment System Rate Update Quality Reporting Requirements Final Rule
- CMS: Week of November 1, 2021 *[Target pending timely resolution of HHS & OMB comments]*: Interoperability and Patient Access; Enforcement Discretion Notice
- CMS: November 2, 2021 *[Target pending OFR confirmation]*: Revisions to Payment Policies under the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule, Quality Payment Program and Other Revisions to Part B for CY 2022 Final Rule
- CMS: November 2, 2021 *[Target pending OFR confirmation]*: Opioid Treatment Programs: CY 2022 Methadone Payment Exception Interim Final Rule
- CMS: November 2, 2021 *[Target pending OFR confirmation]*: CY 2022 Hospital Outpatient PPS Policy Changes and Payment Rates and Ambulatory Surgical Center Payment System Policy Changes and Payment Rates Final Rule
- CMS: November 4, 2021 *[Confirmed]*: Omnibus COVID-19 Health Care Staff Vaccination Interim Final Rule
- CMS: November 10, 2021 *[Target pending timely resolution of HHS & OMB comments]*: Prescription Drug and Health Care Spending Interim Final Rule
- CMS: November 12, 2021 *[Target pending timely resolution of HHS & OMB comments]*: MCIT Repeal Final Rule
- CMS: November TBD *[Target pending timely resolution of HHS & OMB comments]*: Establishing Minimum Standards in Medicaid State DUR and Supporting VBP for Drugs Covered in Medicaid, Revising Medicaid Drug Rebate and TPL Requirements; Delay of Effective Date for Specific Provisions Final Rule
- FDA: On November 3, FDA issued a draft guidance, Content of Premarket Submissions for Device Software Functions, that describes the information that the Agency considers important during its evaluation of the safety and effectiveness for device software with one or more device functions, including both software in a medical device and software as a medical device. It is anticipated this draft guidance, which fulfills FDA's

commitment in MDUFA IV, once finalized, will provide clarity, simplicity and harmonization with current best practices, and recognized voluntary consensus standards once finalized.

- OASH: In November/December, the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP) will conduct a 4-6 week public comment period to seek public input on the three proposed new Healthy People 2030 objectives and will accept proposals on additional new objectives. Departmental clearance of any new objectives is expected to occur in January/February 2022.

- **Funding Announcements:**

- **Community Services Block Grant (CSBG):** On October 29th ACF OCS announced the release of approximately \$181,508,890 of Federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 regular block grant funding to CSBG grantees. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, 3 territories, and over 65 tribal grantees received funding. This funding was provided under the CR, which the President signed into law on September 30, 2021 (Public Law 117-43). This release reflects one quarter of the annualized amount of funds available under the CR to grantees at the beginning of the program year.
- **Title X Family Planning Services NOFO:** On October 27, HHS will announce the availability of up to \$256 million in grant funding to support high-quality family planning services delivered through the Title X family planning program. The national services competition, which will provide up to five-year awards, supplements the recent effort by HHS to restore and strengthen the Title X program through updated rulemaking, effective November 8, and is a critical opportunity to restore highly qualified providers not only in the service areas without Title X care but also in other states and communities across the country that saw losses in access.
- Press releases announcing FY2021 awards in OASH clearance. Anticipated dissemination the week of 11/1/2021.
 - MP-CPI-21-005: National Lupus Outreach and Clinical Trial Education Program: Five awards issued.
 - MP-CPI-21-008: Minority Leaders Development Program: Three awards issued.

- **Grant Notices (NOFA/NOFOs):**

- On October 29th, HRSA released the Rural Health Network Development Planning Program funding opportunity. This includes a total of \$2 million to support 20 award recipients. Funding will support the development of an integrated health networks to deliver services in HRSA-designated rural area, particularly for populations that have historically been underserved and have poorer health outcomes.
- PA-FPH-22-001: Family Planning Services Grants
 - Anticipated Application deadline: January 5, 2022
 - Estimated Total: \$258,000,000
 - Anticipated Number of Awards: 90
 - Period of Performance: up to 5 years
 - Anticipated Start Date: April 1, 2022
 - Program: Existing
 - <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=334698>
- PA-FPH-22-002: Family Planning Telehealth Infrastructure Enhancement and Expansion Grants
 - Anticipated Application deadline: January 15, 2022
 - Estimated Total: \$35,000,000
 - Anticipated Number of Awards: 60
 - Period of Performance: 1 year
 - Anticipated Start Date: April 15, 2022
 - Program: Existing
 - <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=334704>
- PA-FPH-22-003: Funding to Address Dire Need for Family Planning Purposes
 - Anticipated Application deadline: TBD no less than 31 days after posting the NOFO
 - Estimated Total: \$9,250,000
 - Anticipated Number of Awards: 10
 - Period of Performance: up to 15 months
 - Anticipated Start Date: January 1, 2022
 - Program: Existing
 - <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=335742>
- IHS: Substance Abuse and Suicide Prevention (SASP): On October 29th, the IHS requested Federal Register (FR)

- publication of the Suicide Prevention, Intervention, and Postvention NOFO for approximately \$14 million. The focus of this program is to reduce the prevalence of suicide among American Indian and Alaska Native populations. The NOFO is expected to be public on the FR website on November 4th.
- IHS: SASP: On October 29th, the IHS requested FR publication of the Substance Abuse Prevention, Treatment, and Postvention NOFO for approximately \$14 million. The focus of this program is to reduce the prevalence of substance abuse and decrease the overall use of addicting and illicit substances among American Indian and Alaska Native populations. The NOFO is expected to be public on the FR website on November 4th.
 - IHS: Domestic Violence Prevention (DVP): On October 29th, the IHS requested FR publication of the DVP NOFO for approximately \$7.89 million. The purpose of this program is to support the development and/or expansion of DVP programs by incorporating prevention efforts addressing social, spiritual, physical, and emotional well-being of victims through the integration of culturally appropriate practices and trauma-informed services for Tribes, Tribal organizations, and Urban Indian organizations serving American Indian and Alaska Native populations. The NOFO is expected to be public on the FR website on November 4th.
 - IHS: DVP: On October 29th, the IHS requested FR publication of the Forensic Healthcare NOFO for approximately \$2.5 million. The purpose of this program is to provide access to treatment for American Indian and Alaska Native victims of domestic and sexual violence by supporting the development and/or expansion of forensic health care services that are culturally appropriate and trauma-informed. The NOFO is expected to be public on the FR website on November 4th.
 - IHS: Behavioral Health Integration Initiative (BH2I): On October 29th, the IHS requested FR publication of the BH2I NOFO for approximately \$6 million. The purpose of this program is to improve the physical and mental health status of people with behavioral health issues by developing an integrated and coordinated system of care, by increasing capacity among Tribal and urban Indian organization health facilities to implement an integrative approach in the delivery of behavioral

health services. The NOFO is expected to be public on the FR website on November 4th.

- IHS: Zero Suicide Initiative (ZSI): On October 29th, the IHS requested FR publication of the ZSI NOFO for approximately \$2 million. This purpose of this program is to improve the system of care for those at risk for suicide by implementing a comprehensive, culturally informed, multi-setting approach to suicide prevention in Indian health systems. The NOFO is expected to be public on the FR website on November 4th.
- IHS: Tribal Self-Governance Planning Cooperative Agreement (TSGP): By November 15th, the IHS anticipates publishing the TSGP NOFO for approximately \$600,000. The purpose of this program is to provide resources to Tribes interested in entering the Tribal Self-Governance program and to existing Self-Governance Tribes interested in assuming new or expanded Programs, Services, Functions, and Activities. Title V of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act requires a Tribe or Tribal organization to complete a planning phase to the satisfaction of the Tribe.
- IHS: Tribal Self-Governance Negotiation Cooperative Agreement (TSGN): By November 15th, the IHS anticipates publishing the TSGN NOFO for approximately \$240,000. The purpose of this program is to provide Tribes with resources to help defray the costs associated with preparing for and engaging in Tribal Self-Governance program negotiations. Because each Tribal situation is unique, a Tribe's successful transition into the Tribal Self-Governance Program, or expansion of their current program, requires focused discussions between the Federal and Tribal negotiation teams about the Tribe's specific health care concerns and plans.
- IHS: Urban Indian Health Programs 4-in-1 grant program (UIHP2): By November 30th, the IHS anticipates publishing the UIHP2 NOFO for approximately \$8.5 million. The purpose is to ensure the highest possible health status for Urban Indians. Funding will be used to support the following four health program objectives: health promotion and disease prevention services; immunization services; alcohol and substance abuse related services; and mental health services.

- **CDC released a series of COVID-19 related *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports*:**
 - October 29th Early Releases
 - Laboratory-Confirmed COVID-19 Among Adults Hospitalized with COVID-19–Like Illness with Infection-Induced or mRNA Vaccine-Induced SARS-CoV-2 Immunity — Nine States, January–September 2021
 - The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' Interim Recommendations for Additional Primary and Booster Doses of COVID-19 Vaccines — United States, 2021
 - October 29th
 - Routine Vaccination Coverage — Worldwide, 2020
 - November 2nd Early Release
 - Effectiveness of 2-Dose Vaccination with mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines Against COVID-19–Associated Hospitalizations Among Immunocompromised Adults — Nine States, January–September 2021
- **CDC will release a series of COVID-19 related *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports* (Please note that the titles, content, and timing might change):**
 - November 5th: No COVID-19 related *MMWR*'s are currently scheduled
 - November 12th (summaries currently not available and will be provided at a later date):
 - Administration of Influenza Vaccination During the COVID-19 Pandemic — 11 U.S. Jurisdictions, September–December 2020
 - Community Based Testing Sites for COVID-19 — United States, March 2020–September 2021
- **CDC will release a series of National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) Reports:**
 - COVID-19 provisional death data from the National Vital Statistics System is released on a daily and weekly (usually on Wednesday) basis on CDC's website.
 - **COVID-19-related data is available on CDC's website.**
 - November 3rd: Provisional Numbers and Rates of Suicide by Month and Demographic Characteristics: United States: 2020

- This report presents provisional numbers of deaths due to suicide by demographic characteristics (sex and race and Hispanic origin) and by month for 2020 and compares them with final numbers for 2019. Both age-adjusted and age-specific suicide rates are presented by sex and race and Hispanic origin and compared with final 2019 rates.
- November 9th (summary currently not available and will be provided at a later date):
 - Mortality Profile of the Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native Population, 2019
- November 10th (summary currently not available and will be provided at a later date):
 - Sepsis-Related Mortality Among Adults Aged 65 and Over: United States, 2019