Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness

Monthly Policy Committee Meeting
January 2024

Agenda

- Welcome

- 2023 Policy and Advocacy Recap

- Policy and Legislative Updates

- CESIL Policy Committee Member 2024 Priorities

- SILC & Technology Discussion

- Closing & Next Steps

2023 Policy and Advocacy Recap

2023 Advocacy Recap

- **Engaged Congressional Offices and Committees**
  - Met with over 36 Congressional offices and various Committees

- **Released 2023-2024 Policy Priorities**
  - With updated sections on workforce, education, nutrition, built environment, caregiving, civic engagement, whole person care, benefit coverage, data collection, technology, and community spaces,

- **Hosted Global Loneliness Awareness Week Hill Meetings**
  - ~20 CESIL members flew in for over a dozen hill meetings
  - Organizational sign-on letter with 60+ signatures

- **Submitted Comment Letters on Various Issues Related to SILC**
  - Digital Equity Act of 2021 Request for Comments
  - Older Americans Act Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
  - U.S House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee RFI on Improving Access to Health Care in Rural and Underserved Areas

2023 Advocacy Recap

Endorsed Six Pieces of Legislation

- Addressing SILO Act of 2023 (Rep. Sanchez)

- National Strategy for Social Connection Act (Sens. Murphy and Smith)

- Improving Measurements for Loneliness and Isolation Act (Reps. Flood and Trone, Sen. Ricketts)

- The Higher Education Mental Health Act (Rep. Trone, Sen. Casey)

- Resolution: Older Americans Bill of Rights (Reps. Schakowsky and Matsui)

Advocated for Relevant Departments to Secure Funding for SILC Programs

- HRSA's Health Care Workforce Innovation Program

- CDC's Social Determinants of Health Program

Policy and Legislative Updates

CESIL Endorsed Telemental Health Care Access Act

- Would remove the requirements that doctors see Medicare beneficiaries in-person within six months of being treated virtually for mental and behavioral health concerns.

- The [House bill](#) was introduced in May 2023 by Reps. Matsui and Johnson; Sen. Cassidy's office is introducing the Senate companion

- Aligns with CESIL's policy priorities

AmeriCorps Partners with ACL to Increase Volunteer Opportunities

- AmeriCorps and the Administration for Community Living (ACL) have [formed](#) a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU) to enhance collaborative efforts in mobilizing volunteers, particularly focusing on older adults and people with disabilities.

- The goal is to significantly increase volunteer engagement to support individuals in living at home with necessary assistance and participating actively in society.

- The partnership aims to modernize volunteer deployment, acknowledging the valuable contributions of older adults and people with disabilities to communities across the United States.

- This action aligns with our [policy priorities](#) related to civic engagement

CMS Approves New York's Medicaid Section 1115 Demonstration Amendment Focused on Health Equity and Health Care Access

- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) [announced](#) the approval of an amendment to New York's Medicaid section 1115 demonstration which aims to improve access to primary and behavioral health care as well as foster health equity throughout the state.

- The approval authorizes New York to allocate significant resources to innovative and wide-ranging Medicaid projects, allowing the state to advance initiatives focused on integrating primary care providers, community-based organizations, and behavioral health specialists with a goal to address population health and social needs.

- This approval also allows the state to focus on social needs such as care for substance use disorders (SUDs), as well as nutritional and housing support. New York State and CMS will consider how these initiatives are advancing through independent evaluations.

House Bipartisan Paid Family Leave Working Group Releases 2024 Policy Framework

- Members of the bipartisan Paid Family Leave Working Group recently released their policy [framework](#) ([press release](#)) for the upcoming year. Following a year of information gathering, the group announced its framework, which consists of four pillars of legislative policy.

  - Pillar #1: Public-Private Partnership Paid Leave Pilot
  - Pillar #2: Coordination and Harmonization of Paid Leave Benefits Across States
  - Pillar #3: Small Employer Pooling for Paid Leave Insurance
  - Pillar #4: Improvements to 45S – Paid Leave Tax Credits for Small Businesses and Working Families

- This list is not comprehensive but rather reflects current consensus about possible legislative options with the intent that this would be passed in a package with offsets and pay-fors.

CMS Innovation in Behavioral Health Model

- Last week, CMS <u>announced</u> that states and behavioral health (BH) providers can apply to participate in a new CMMI demonstration model for Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries with moderate – severe mental health conditions and substance use disorders (<u>fact sheet</u>).

Enhanced quality and delivery of whole person care   **Increased access to BH, PH, and HRSN services**   **Improved health and equity outcomes**   **Fewer avoidable emergency department and inpatient visits**   **Strengthened health IT systems capacity**

Up to 8 participating states will:
- Develop & enhance infrastructure to support BH providers
- Convene stakeholders in model development and implementation
- Develop and implement a Medicaid alternative payment model that aligns with Medicare
- Collect, analyze and share model data

Participating BH practices will receive:
- Infrastructure funding to support health IT and practice transformation
- Medicare Integration Support Payment: PMPM payment for initial and ongoing BH, PH, and HRSN screening, assessments, and coordination
- Performance-based payments to incentive quality outcomes

CESIL Policy Committee Member 2024 Priorities

CESIL Member Priorities for 2024

- We're in the process of developing CESIL's legislative and regulatory advocacy strategy for the upcoming year
  - We will share a draft for your review & feedback for our February meeting
  - We will also update our policy priorities for 2025-26

- To help inform our plan:
  - What are your organizations' priorities for the year?
  - How would you like us to adjust from last year?
  - What materials/resources would be most helpful to you?

SILC and Technology Discussion

SILC and Technology Discussion

Based on our discussion last month, we are looking to schedule a learning session on AI and Technology for members.

- **Refresh:** Our current policy priorities:

    Evaluate the efficacy and safety of information and assistive technologies to have a better understanding of which technologies, digital tools or usages promote and facilitate social connection and which exacerbate social isolation and loneliness.

1. What specific information would you find most valuable in shaping a comprehensive position paper on AI and Technology?

    Examples: history of AI, research on loneliness and AI, current AI-based interventions

2. What questions or uncertainties would you like a position paper to provide guidance and solutions for?

    Examples: How does SILC connect to AI? what is the role of policymakers in   ensuring involving technology has safety measures in place?