



Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness

Monthly Policy Committee Meeting
November 2023

Agenda

- Welcome
- Policy and Legislative Updates
- Improving Measurements for Loneliness and Isolation Act support letter
- 2024 Discussion
 - Discuss strategy for legislative and regulatory advocacy
 - Set goals for 2024
 - Decide on meeting cadence
- CESIL Policy Committee Member Updates
- Closing & Next Steps

Policy and Legislative Updates

WH and HHS Unveil Initiatives to Address SDOH and Advance Health Equity

- The White House is introducing the [U.S. Playbook to Address Social Determinants of Health](#), the nation's first-ever comprehensive guide in this domain.
- Simultaneously, HHS is releasing a [Call to Action to Address Health Related Social Needs](#) and a [Medicaid and CHIP Health-Related Social Needs Framework](#).
- The Playbook showcases ongoing and new efforts by various federal agencies, including HHS, USDA, HUD, VA, EPA, and others, to improve individuals' social circumstances and enhance health outcomes.
- The Medicaid and CHIP Health-Related Social Needs Framework aims to guide states in developing programs that address housing and nutritional insecurity for high-need populations
- The Call to Action encourages cross-sector collaborations to build a more integrated health and social care system

HHS Releases 2022 National Survey on Drug Use and Health Data

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) [released](#) the results of the [2022 National Survey on Drug Use and Health](#) (NSDUH).
- The survey itself provides nationally representative data on the self-reported use of tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs; substance use disorders; mental health conditions; suicidal thoughts and behaviors; and substance use and mental health treatment.
- Key Takeaways Include:
 - 1 in 4 adults aged 18 or older reported having a mental illness within the past year.
 - 1 in 8 adolescents had serious thoughts of suicide in the past year.

HHS Launches Plan to Address Language Barriers to Accessing Health Care and Human Services

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [released](#) the [HHS Language Access Plan](#) to enhance access to life-saving services for individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and disabilities.
- The plan extends beyond language access to include communication and accessibility requirements for individuals with disabilities under Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- It provides guidance for HHS divisions to develop specific language access plans, encouraging data collection for improved access.
- The plan is the product of the Department-wide Language Access Steering Committee which was relaunched last year to bolster language access across HHS.

Senate Finance Committee Holds Markup on Better Mental Health Care, Lower-Cost Drugs and Extenders Act

- Senate Committee on Finance [held a markup](#) on “Open Executive Session to consider an original bill entitled the Better Mental Health Care, Lower-Cost Drugs, and Extenders Act.”
- The committee also communicated the key considerations for improving mental health accessibility, specifically noting their interest in improving the number of mental health providers for the youth.
- Discussed their interest in bringing telehealth and mental health services to primary care facilities to improve Americans’ abilities to find the care they need
- Healthsperien covered the hearing, full notes can be found [here](#)

Senate Finance Committee Releases Discussion Draft on Mental Health and PBM Reform

- Senate Finance Committee Chair Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), and Ranking Member Mike Crapo (R-Idaho) [released](#) a discussion draft including policies aimed at expanding mental health care under Medicaid and Medicare and reducing prescription drug costs for seniors.
- The committee intends to advance these legislative proposals, in addition to pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) reforms previously [passed out of Committee in July](#), Key provisions include:
 - Expanding the number of mental health and substance use providers participating in Medicare
 - Expanding the use of licensed clinical social workers (LCSWs and occupational therapists under Medicare.
 - Improving access to Medicare mental health services delivered through telehealth.

**Improving Measurements
for Loneliness and Isolation
Act Support Letter**

Improving Measurements for Loneliness and Isolation Act

- U.S. Representatives Mike Flood (R-NE) and David Trone (D-MD) [introduced](#) the [Improving Measurements for Loneliness and Isolation Act of 2023](#) ([one-pager](#))
- The bill would establish a working group that would develop standardized measures for loneliness and isolation, which would include representatives from several federal agencies
- There is a Senate companion bill ([S. 3260](#)) that has been introduced and referred to the HELP Committee.
- The Coalition applauds these initiatives and will be circulating a letter of support for members to sign.

2024 Discussion

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- Legislative and Regulatory Strategy for the Upcoming Year
- Set Goals for 2024
- Establish Meeting Cadence