

# COVID-19 WEEKLY COMPENDIUM

JULY 6, 2021 | YEAR 2, VOLUME 18

REMINDER - OFFICE HOURS IS CANCELLED THIS WEEK

## INTERESTING READS

[Our View: All Maine health care workers should be vaccinated against COVID](#) - *Portland Press Herald* (7/7)

No one walking into a hospital or nursing home should have to wonder whether the people who are supposed to be caring for them are actually putting them in danger.

[Third dose of AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine boosts immune response, Oxford study finds](#) - *MarketWatch.com* (6/28)

Delayed second and third doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine boost immunity against Covid-19, a study by Oxford University has found.

## POLICY & COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

### 340B: Bi-partisan Anti-Pickpocketing Bill introduced in U.S. House

On Friday July 1, U.S. Representatives Abigail Spanberger (D-VA) and David McKinley (R-WV) introduced the [PROTECT 340B Act](#), a detailed bill to prohibit PBMs and insurers from pick-pocketing 340B providers 340B savings on drugs reimbursed through private insurance and Medicare Parts C and D plans. The bill would also establish a national third-party clearinghouse to prevent duplicate discounts on drugs dispensed to Medicaid patients. The bill focuses exclusively on pick-pocketing by PBMs and insurers, and Medicaid data collection. It does not address other urgent 340B issues – e.g., contract pharmacy restrictions, data on drugs dispensed to privately-insured and Medicare patients, who gets the savings on drugs dispensed to Medicaid patient. This targeted focus is intentional; bill sponsors wanted to craft a bill that would get broad support -- and therefore stand a stronger chance of being enacted -- rather than a larger bill that would draw so much controversy and opposition that it would be unlikely to ever move

### Appropriations, Budget, and Debt Ceiling Votes Loom

The House Appropriations Committee released the top line Labor-HHS appropriations budget number to \$237.5 billion, an increase of \$61 billion compared to FY21. The Labor-HHS Subcommittee will review health center funding during their July 12, 2021 markup followed by a full committee markup on July 15, 2021. With the multiple funding bills, infrastructure discussions, and the late start to the appropriations process, we anticipate Congress may not pass a budget by the September 30, 2021 deadline and could have to pass a Continuing Resolution (CR) to keep the government functioning. Congress will also have to address the [debt ceiling](#) which will be reached at the end of July. Without a vote to raise the debt limit, the Treasury Department will begin taking measures to keep the limit from being reached, but it is unclear how long those additional measure would last.

### Infrastructure and Reconciliation Bill Updates

Members of both the House and Senate are preparing to consider both a traditional infrastructure bill (\$1.2 trillion bill to be passed with bi-partisan support) and another “human infrastructure bill (as high as \$4 trillion according to some estimates) that would be passed without any Republican support under the reconciliation process. It seems likely that House Budget Chairman John Yarmuth (D-KY) will wait to present his budget resolution until he sees the version presented by Senate Budget Chairman Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and the Senate Democratic leadership. House Democratic leaders are making a large infrastructure package a top priority, according to Yarmuth, and he confirms they House Democrats have pledged not to consider a

bi-partisan traditional infrastructure plan unless the Senate first passes a reconciliation bill that would allow for “human infrastructure” provisions such as expanded health care benefits, unemployment compensation, childcare, climate change, and more.

## **WORKFORCE UPDATE**

### **Resources Available to Support Workforce Resilience and Mental Health Needs**

More than half of public health workers reported adverse mental health conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a recent [CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#).

To help build workforce resilience, health centers may be interested in HHS ASPR TRACIE Information Exchange resources available on the [COVID-19 Workforce Resilience/Sustainability Resources topic page](#). Additionally, check out [this self-paced course](#) developed by HHS and the National Association of County and City Health Officials to introduce the concept of Psychological First Aid as a leadership tool to build resilience.

## **RACIAL JUSTICE/HEALTH DISPARITY RESOURCES & INFO**

### **Integrated Works Presents: Population-Based Health Equity (All Learning Teams Session)**

Thursday, July 22 | 1:00 - 2:00 PM | Join: <https://integratedwork.zoom.us/j/5514646855>

This “all teams” session will include a panel of speakers representing a variety of populations including people experiencing homelessness, people living with HIV/AIDS, those who identify as LGBTQIA+, mothers and children, and Black, indigenous, and people of color. The goal is for participants—primary care associations, health centers, and academic institutions—to walk away with several specific ideas on how to increase health equity for different patient populations. The session will also support academic institutions in thinking about how they train current and future health professionals. Panelists from the Office of Minority Health, Maternal & Child Health Bureau, National Healthcare for the Homeless Council, and NMAC (focused on HIV/AIDS and minority health) will join us!

For resources and other relevant information, please visit the [Racial Justice/Health Disparities Resources](#) page on the [MPCA website](#).

## **CHCNET UPDATE**

For the latest information concerning the MPCA’s HCCN, **Community Health Center Network of Maine (CHCNet)**, or for support with health information technology needs, please visit the [CHCNet Member Portal](#) or contact Michael Pancook: [mpancook@mepca.org](mailto:mpancook@mepca.org).

## **BILLING, CODING & TELEHEALTH NEWS**

For updates from insurers and other relevant information, please visit the [Telehealth Resources](#) page on the [MPCA website](#).



### **Is Your Health Center Hiring?**

Click on the Job Board icon to utilize the new MPCA Job Board and list your openings on our website!

Join Us for **National Health Center Week - August 8-14, 2021**  
**“Community Health Centers: The Chemistry for Strong Communities”**

This year’s theme is reflective of the significant impact Communities Health Centers have had during the pandemic and the role they play going forward. Specific focus days:

- Sunday, 8/8: Public Health in Housing Day
- Monday, 8/9: Healthcare for the Homeless Day
- Tuesday, 8/10: Agricultural Worker Health Center Day
- Wednesday, 8/11: Patient Appreciation Day
- Thursday, 8/12: Stakeholder Appreciation Day
- Friday, 8/13: HC Staff Appreciation Day
- Saturday, 8/14: Children’s Health Day

As you begin preparing for this weeklong celebration, please contact Andrea Watkins ([awatkins@mepca.org](mailto:awatkins@mepca.org)) and let us know of your plans



## RESOURCES ADDENDUM

[AFTER HOURS](#) - MPCA OFFICE HOURS RESOURCES

For the **Stay Informed**, **Sign Up**, **Maine Helps**, and **Coping and Stress Resources** information, please visit the [Compendium Resources Addendum](#) page on the [MPCA website](#).



Please click on the calendar for a full listing of upcoming MPCA trainings and events.

## MPCA CONTACT INFORMATION:

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**Join MPCA on Slack!** We are building our communication outreach capacity between meetings using the Slack communication platform. Many of you are already connected with us in several peer groups including our **Clinical Channel** and our **Billing and Coding Channel**. Please feel free to reach out to [it@mepca.org](mailto:it@mepca.org) for help with joining.