

# COVID-19 WEEKLY COMPENDIUM

AUGUST 3, 2021 | YEAR 2, VOLUME 22

## POLICY & COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

### **CHCs Who Contract with Walmart Pharmacies Must Take Immediate Action to Avoid Losing 340B Pricing on Drugs Manufactured by Boehringer Ingelheim**

All CHCs who have contract pharmacy arrangements with Walmart are advised to reach out to their 340B third party administrator (TPA) ASAP regarding drugs manufactured by Boehringer Ingelheim's (BI). BI has announced that effective this Sunday, Aug. 1, it will stop shipping 340B-priced drugs to contract pharmacies if those drugs are purchased by hospitals. Fortunately, BI is not applying these restrictions to drugs purchased by CHCs or other "grantees" (e.g., Ryan White providers.) Despite this exception, Walmart has instructed their 340B gateway processor, Macro Helix, to automatically stop purchasing 340B-priced drugs for all types of covered entities effective 8/1 – unless the covered entity explicitly opts out through their TPA. Therefore, ***to avoid losing 340B pricing on BI drugs dispensed by Walmart, CHCs must instruct their TPA to alert Macro Helix they want to opt out of Walmart's automatic block and are eligible to do so because they are a federal grantee.***

### **House passes HHS Appropriations for FY 2022**

House Democrats passed a seven-bill, \$600 billion "mini-bus" appropriations bill last week with billions in congressionally directed spending projects (or earmarks). The minibus, H.R. 4502, passed by a 219-208 vote, and included Labor, Education, Health and Human Services bill, along with six other appropriations bills. As a reminder, the House HHS appropriations bill includes \$7.5 billion for HRSA, an increase of \$1.6 billion above the 2021 enacted level and \$910 million above the President's budget request. This includes:

- \$1.8 billion for the Health Centers Program, an increase of \$148 million above the FY 2021 enacted level and directs much of this increased funding to school-based health centers, HIV work, and to establish the Alcee Hastings Cancer Screening Program.
- \$1.6 billion for HRSA's Bureau of Health Workforce, an increase of \$341 million above the FY 2021 enacted level. This includes a roughly 50% increase for the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Loan Repayment Program.

### **Congressional Calendar**

The U.S. House of Representatives is now in their August recess and will not return until September 20; in contrast, the Senate plans to work into August around the infrastructure bill and perhaps begin to mark up a few of its appropriations bills. Nonetheless, it is unlikely that many appropriations bills will be passed and signed into law by the beginning of fiscal year 2022 starting October 1. That means that Congress will likely have to pass a continuing resolution (CR) that is expected to last through sometime in December. That would give the House and Senate leeway to debate and pass the two infrastructure bills and the appropriations bills, as well as to address the debt ceiling.

### **Requirement for Federal Employees and Contractors to be Vaccinated or Tested for COVID will Not Extend to CHC, PCA, or HCCN staff**

On Thursday 7/29, President Biden announced that every federal employee and onsite contractor will be asked to attest to their vaccination status. Anyone who does not attest to being fully vaccinated will be required to wear a mask on the job, physically distance from all other employees and visitors, comply with a weekly or twice weekly testing requirement, and be subject to restrictions on official travel. Members of the military will also be required to be vaccinated. The President also instructed agency officials to apply similar standards to off-site contractors and will "encourage" private sector employers to adopt them. However, the

Federal government does not have the authority to impose these requirements on grantees – e.g., CHCs – or groups with whom they have cooperative agreements – e.g., PCAs, HCCNs, NTTAPs.

### **CLINICAL UPDATE**

[New AAP Policies On Preventing Childhood Toxic Stress and Promoting Trauma-Informed Care - AAP \(7/28\)](#)

### **DENTAL UPDATE**

[Self-collecting and mailing saliva could help pandemic - DrBicuspid \(7/26\)](#)

[Dental Settings Are Valuable Locations for Public Health Surveillance - PracticeUpdate \(7/27\)](#)

### **INTERESTING READS**

[Vaccinated People May Spread the Virus, Though Rarely, C.D.C. Reports - The New York Times \(7/30\)](#)

The agency cited an outbreak in Provincetown, Mass., in which most of the infected were immunized. An internal C.D.C. document paints an even more harrowing picture.

[The Biden Administration Continues to Exaggerate the Risk Posed by COVID-19 Breakthrough Infections While Slamming the Press for Doing the Same Thing - Reason \(8/1\)](#)

The Biden administration is concerned about the alarm it predictably generated by emphasizing the danger of COVID-19 cases in people vaccinated against the disease.

[U.S. Covid vaccination rates rise as Americans in hard-hit states rush to get shots amid delta fears - cbc.com \(7/30\)](#)

The pace of U.S. vaccinations is rising again as the delta variant drives a new surge in coronavirus cases across the U.S., especially in states with the lowest vaccination rates and the worst outbreaks.

#### **August 2021 NYSARH/NERHA Webinar: Strategies for COVID-19 Vaccine Messaging in a Polarized Country**

Thursday, August 12 | 1:00 PM | [Registration](#)

Join the New England Rural Health Association and the New York State Association of Rural Health as they host Sophia L. Pink, MS, Polarization and Social Change Lab at Stanford University to discuss strategies for COVID-19 messaging in a polarized country.

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

#### **Health Leads Presents: Beyond Do No Harm: Elevating BIPOC Voices in SDOH Interventions**

August 4, 2021 | 3:00-4:15pm ET | [Registration and Information](#)

During this 75-minute webinar, panelists will discuss steps and strategies to better integrate BIPOC voice, especially lived experience, into SDOH interventions.

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

## NATIONAL HEALTH CENTER WEEK

To find an event at your favorite health center or in your community, check out the listings on the [MPCA website](#). These events update regularly, so visit us often!

**NEXT WEEK!**

### 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.



## MPCA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**SAVE THE DATES!**

### 2021 Virtual MPCA Annual Conference *Embracing Change: Recovery, Resilience, and Reinvention*

**Session Dates:**

10/7, 10/14, 10/21 - 2:30 - 5:00 PM  
 10/28 - 3:00 - 4:30 PM

Please MARK YOUR CALENDARS and plan to join us virtually in October!  
*Registration and agenda coming soon.*



#### **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!

## 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](#).

## 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:**

Christopher Pezzullo, DO	Clinical Director	<a href="mailto:cpezzullo@mepca.org">cpezzullo@mepca.org</a>
Susan Whittaker, CPC, CPMA	Quality Improvement Program Manager	<a href="mailto:swhittaker@mepca.org">swhittaker@mepca.org</a>
Bryan Wyatt, MA	Director of Policy & Communications	<a href="mailto:bw Wyatt@mepca.org">bw Wyatt@mepca.org</a>
Hannah Hudson, MA	Policy & Communications Manager	<a href="mailto:hhudson@mepca.org">hhudson@mepca.org</a>
Michael Pancook, MPA	CHCNet Program Manager	<a href="mailto:mpancook@mepca.org">mpancook@mepca.org</a>
Sharon Stanley, MBA, CPC	Operations Improvement Program Manager	<a href="mailto:sstanley@mepca.org">sstanley@mepca.org</a>
Emily Ferry, MSW	Workforce Program Manager	<a href="mailto:eferry@mepca.org">eferry@mepca.org</a>
Hillary Colcord, MHRT/C	BPHC Program Manager	<a href="mailto:hcolcord@mepca.org">hcolcord@mepca.org</a>
Beth Pearce	Oral Health Coordinator	<a href="mailto:bpearce@mepca.org">bpearce@mepca.org</a>
Kristen Kilcollins, MPH	Program Coordinator	<a href="mailto:kkilcollins@mepca.org">kkilcollins@mepca.org</a>
Megan Cross	Program Coordinator	<a href="mailto:mcross@mepca.org">mcross@mepca.org</a>



**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.