

# COVID-19 WEEKLY COMPENDIUM

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## CLINICAL UPDATE

[COVID-19 Associated With Increased Diabetes Risk in Youth](#) - *Medscape Pediatrics* (10/22)

[Study raises doubts about rapid Covid tests' reliability in early days after infection](#) - *STAT* (1/5)

[Frequently Asked Questions: How to get your At-Home Over-The-Counter COVID-19 Test for Free](#) - *CMS* (1/10)

## INTERESTING READS

[AUDIO - A Candid Conversation with CDC Director Rochelle Walensky on Masks, Politics, COVID Testing and Pandemic Frustration](#) - *USCDC* (1/18)

CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky addresses the confusion around shifting masking and testing requirements during the omicron surge, and speaks to the Biden Administration's plans to make free rapid at-home tests and high quality masks available through a federal website.

[Calling Omicron 'Mild' Is Wishful Thinking](#) - *The Atlantic* (1/12)

We are far past the point of hoping that this variant will spare us. These dismissals of the variant as trifling—desirable, even—represent “a very dangerous attitude.”

[COVID-19 Pill Rollout Stymied by Shortages as Omicron Rages](#) - *Medscape* (1/13)

Two brand-new COVID-19 pills that were supposed to be an important weapon against the pandemic in the U.S. are in short supply and have played little role in the fight against the omicron wave of infections.

[The C.D.C. conceded that cloth masks do not protect against the virus as effectively as other masks](#) - *The New York Times* (1/14)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Friday clarified its stance on various kinds of masks.

[You Know What Would Help Exhausted Doctors and Nurses? More Money \(opinion\)](#) - *The New York Times* (1/8)

Federal and state governments can and should do something to help. They should start by providing hazard pay to health care workers who continue to serve on the front lines of the pandemic.

[For Coronavirus Testing, the Nose May Not Always Be Best](#) - *The New York Times* (1/14)

The rapid spread of the Omicron variant, and questions about the sensitivity of at-home tests, have rekindled a debate over whether the best way to detect the virus is to sample a different site: the mouth.

[Halting Progress and Happy Accidents: How mRNA Vaccines Were Made](#) - *The New York Times* (1/15)

The stunning Covid vaccines manufactured by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna drew upon long-buried discoveries made in the hopes of ending past epidemics.

### **\*COVID-19 Funding Streams Infographic with Quick Links\***

NACHC has developed a [new Oversight of COVID-19 Funding Streams resource](#) designed to provide a quick overview of how to oversee multiple funding streams due to COVID-19. As you will see, it provides links to resources, quick tips, and a Provider Relief Deadlines.

## POLICY & COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

### **Renewal of Public Health Emergency**

On Friday, Jan. 14, 2022, HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra signed another 90-day extension of the Public Health Emergency, a copy of which you can find [here](#).

*Is Your Health Center Hiring?* Click [here](#) to utilize the MPCA Job Board and list your openings on our website!

## CMS Vaccine Mandate Update

On [January 13, 2022](#), in a 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court upheld the [CMS Omnibus COVID-19 Health Care Staff Vaccination Interim Final Rule](#) (CMS IFR) and struck down the [OSHA COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing ETS](#) (OSHA ETS). The Court has lifted the preliminary injunctions and all states and territories must comply with the CMS COVID-19 staff vaccination requirement. CMS [Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure stated](#) that the Supreme Court's decision does not impact the compliance timeline for January 27. For more information, click [here](#).

## Senate Democrat Leadership Reorders Policy Priorities

The Build Back Better (BBB) social spending/climate bill has been placed on the backburner as key Democratic Senators Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ) continue to withhold their support for the measure. As Senate Democrats decide when to bring BBB up again for consideration again this year, leadership has turned its attention to voting rights, the child tax credit and FY22 Appropriations.

## WORKFORCE UPDATE

### **\*Student Loan Forgiveness Deadlines Near - Act NOW!\***

With less than one week until the deadline for CHC providers to [apply to the Nurse Corps](#) and three weeks until the deadline to [apply to the National Health Service Corps](#) for up to \$100,000 in student loan forgiveness, the number of application submitted to HRSA is **FAR** short of the amount of funding available. ***Unless there is a dramatic increase in application in the next few days, HRSA could be forced to return a large amount of the funds to the US Treasury – even after funding every application.***

As a reminder, the following types of providers (and more) are eligible for Federal loan repayment if they work at a CHC and have outstanding student loans: doctors, nurse practitioners, physicians' assistants, Certified Nurse Midwives, psychologists, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists, Licensed Professional Counselors, dentists, dental hygienists, SUD counselors, pharmacists, registered nurses.

### **CHC Readiness to Train Assessment (RTAT) Reports**

As an initial step in HRSA's Health Professions Education and Training Initiative, the RTAT survey was distributed among community health centers across the country to assess health center readiness and capacity to implement health professions training programs. In early December, participating health centers should have received their individualized reports via an email from Community Health Center, Inc., the Workforce NTTAP tasked with collecting and analyzing the data. Health center leaders should have received this email. In the report, you will find a summarized view of information on your health center readiness to engage and implement health professions training programs. The RTAT results are intended to aid in identifying the focus of your strategic workforce plans and to encourage dialogue and action in your organization.

on the 1/27/22 MPCA Workforce Peer Call, we will be joined by Amanda Schiessl, Project Director at Community Health Center, Inc., who will provide overview and discussion on the RTAT reports for our network. If you are interested in attending this month's call, or have questions, please reach out to Emily Ferry, Workforce Program Manager, at [eferry@mepca.org](mailto:eferry@mepca.org), Emily will be reaching out to identified project leads to ensure delivery of reports and to address any needs.

For resources and information, please visit the [Workforce](#) section on the [MPCA website](#).

### **NACHC webinar: COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate Office Hours**

Friday, January 21 | 2:00 PM | [Register](#)

NACHC will review the [new CMS guidance on the implementation](#) of their IFR and [guidelines to assess and maintain compliance](#) with the COVID-19 vaccination requirements for FQHCs.

***What's happening?*** Click [here](#) for a full listing of upcoming MPCA trainings and events.

## HEALTH EQUITY/SOCIAL DETERMINANTS RESOURCES

[Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Receipt of Medications for Treatment of COVID-19 — United States, March 2020–August 2021 - USCDC \(1/14\)](#)

**New England Public Health Training Center presents  
Transgender Introductory Primer: How can you be an ally to the transgender community?**

Friday, January 21 | 12:00 - 2:30 PM | [Register](#)

During this recorded training, participants will learn basic terminology and theory, how to ask for pronouns, health disparities facing the transgender community, resiliency factors, gender transition paths and support needs, and targeted best practices.

For resources and information, please visit the [Health Equity/Social Determinants Resources](#) section on the [MPCA website](#).

## ORAL HEALTH UPDATE

For resources and information, please visit the [Oral Health Resources](#) section on the [MPCA website](#).

## BILLING, CODING & TELEHEALTH NEWS

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

## CHCNET NEWS

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).

## 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](#) section on the [MPCA website](#).

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