



CMS Snapshot

October 17-24, 2024

Delivered to you by the Partner Relations Group in the Office of Communications

All releases below are from 2pm Thursday, October 17 through 2pm Thursday, October 24, 2024.

News Releases

*October 17- [CMS Update on Actions to Prevent Unauthorized Agent and Broker Marketplace Activity](#). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) continues to exercise its full statutory and regulatory authority to protect the integrity of the Federally-facilitated Marketplaces (FFMs), which includes the FFM platform and State-based Exchanges that operate on the Federal Platform (SBE-FPs), and to protect consumers from unauthorized changes to their FFM enrollments.

*October 18- [CMS Roundup \(October 18, 2024\)](#). Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) provides an at-a-glance summary of news from around the agency.

*October 21- [Biden-Harris Administration Proposes Expanding Coverage of Birth Control and Other Preventive Services](#). Today, the Biden-Harris Administration, through the Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, and of the Treasury (together, the Departments), proposed new rules that would continue building upon the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by expanding coverage of recommended preventive health services. As part of this proposal by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), for the first time, most group health plans and health insurance issuers would be required to cover over-the-counter (OTC) contraceptives without cost sharing or requiring a prescription, a key action taken by the Administration to expand access to and awareness of coverage for birth control and other critical health services.

*October 22- [Biden-Harris Administration's Inflation Reduction Act Saves Medicare Enrollees Nearly \\$1 Billion in Just the First Half of 2024](#). *New findings show that in just the first half of 2024, nearly 1.5 million people hit the new cap on out-of-pocket costs created by the Inflation Reduction Act, saving nearly \$1 billion.* Today, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Office of Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), released new data showing that nearly 1.5 million people with Medicare Part D saved nearly \$1 billion in out-of-pocket prescription drugs costs in the first half of 2024 because of the Biden-Harris Administration's Inflation Reduction Act. Thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act, some people with high drug costs have their out-of-pocket drug costs capped at around \$3,500 in 2024. Next

year that cap lowers to \$2,000 for everyone with Medicare Part D. The report shows that if the \$2,000 cap had been in effect this year, 4.6 million enrollees would have hit the cap by June 30 and would not have to pay any more out-of-pocket costs for the rest of the year.

*October 22- [HHS, CSU Encourage Students to Join the Health Workforce](#). *Memo of Understanding confirms collaboration focused on opportunities to encourage students to seek federal careers in health.* WASHINGTON – Today, Health and Human Services Secretary (HHS) Xavier Becerra, California State University (CSU) Chancellor Mildred García and HHS Assistant Secretary for Administration Cheryl R. Campbell signed a memorandum of understanding with CSU, the nation’s largest four-year public university system. The memorandum seeks ways to collaborate on channeling students to work in federal health roles and forms a national model for how universities and federal agencies can work together to meet critical workforce needs.

*October 23- [The United States, Canada, and Mexico Unveil Efforts to Strengthen Regional Health Security](#). Today, following through on the commitments made at the 2021 and 2023 North American Leaders’ Summits (NALS), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), in collaboration with the U.S. Departments of State (State), Agriculture (USDA), and Homeland Security (DHS), and their respective counterparts in Mexico and Canada, released the [North American Preparedness for Animal and Human Pandemics Initiative \(NAPAHPI\)](#) to continue strengthening regional health security and pandemic preparedness through a One Health approach.

*October 24- [HHS Awards Phase 2 Winners of Competition to Reduce Black Women’s Risk of Exposure to Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals](#). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH) Office on Women’s Health (OWH), is awarding six winners for Phase 2 of the [HHS Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals \(EDC\) Innovator Award Competition](#). This competition was developed to identify gaps in knowledge and innovative solutions to improving Black women’s health by reducing endocrine-disrupting chemical exposure risk. This challenge supports the goals of the Biden-Harris Administration’s 2023 Executive Order, *Revitalizing Our Nation’s Commitment to Environmental Justice for All*.

*October 24- [USDA/HHS Fact Sheet: Biden-Harris Administration Takes New Action to Halt the Spread of Bird Flu, including in California and Washington](#). Since the first case of H5N1 was confirmed in cattle, USDA and HHS have led a whole-of-government approach to rapidly respond to the outbreak. In response to the recent spread of H5N1 in lactating dairy cows to California and the resulting human cases and the human cases in Washington resulting from an outbreak among poultry, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) are working closely with the state and local counterparts to respond to the outbreak and protect public health. While CDC’s assessment of the risk of avian influenza to the general public remains low, USDA and HHS continue to take this outbreak seriously to protect human health, animal health, and food safety.

Fact Sheets

*October 18- [Fact Sheet: HHS Continues Taking Action to Increase Access and Supply of IV Fluids Following Hurricane Helene](#). *Continuing efforts to ensure product is available in the domestic market and current inventories are appropriately conserved.* Following storm damage from Hurricane Helene at Baxter International Inc.'s facility in North Carolina, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and its subagencies continue taking action to support access to intravenous (IV) fluids, including ensuring restoration of key production sites, protecting products, and opening imports, in partnership with manufacturers, distributors, hospitals, and other stakeholders. As a result of these steps, **hospitals have 50% more product available to them now compared to right after the hurricane.**

*October 21- [Enhancing Coverage of Preventive Services Under the Affordable Care Act Proposed Rules](#). *Introduction* On October 21, 2024, the Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, and of the Treasury (collectively, the Departments) released proposed rules with comment period entitled "Enhancing Coverage of Preventive Services Under the Affordable Care Act." These proposed rules would expand access to coverage of recommended preventive services without cost sharing in the commercial market, with a particular focus on reducing barriers to coverage of contraceptive services, including over-the-counter (OTC) contraceptives.

Blogs

*October 21- [OCR Marks Cybersecurity Awareness Month](#). *By: [Melanie Fontes Rainer](#), Director for Office for Civil Rights (OCR).* *Summary: OCR marks October as Cybersecurity Awareness Month and highlights major trends and available resources for the health care sector.* In October 2004, Cybersecurity Awareness Month was first established as a collaboration between industry and government to bring attention to the growing cybersecurity threats and challenges that all individuals and organizations face. These threats to electronic protected health information have only grown in the succeeding years.

*October 23- [Change Story: Samantha Illangasekare](#). *By: [Samantha Illangasekare](#), Deputy Director of the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) at the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).* *Summary: Samantha Illangasekare, the daughter of Sri Lankan immigrants, leads transformative research at ACF, focusing on equity and evidence-based policymaking. A message from the Deputy Director of the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) at the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).* I am the daughter of immigrants from Sri Lanka who came to the United States in their twenties to pursue their doctorate degrees in biophysics and engineering. They instilled in me a love of learning and influenced my path toward a career in the service of others. For my parents, this meant careers in academia, where they could work to build scientific knowledge, answer questions to solve

critical problems, and contribute to the education of young people. In many ways, I followed in their footsteps, first by studying chemical engineering, then by pivoting to a field that aligned more with my interests and values of learning and service: public health.