

**NACBHDD**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITY DIRECTORS

The voice of local authorities in the nation's capital



Headline DC

October 15, 2013

Hill & Legal Happenings: Policy and Politics

- **Stalemate.** With skeleton staff at most agencies, government has ground to a near halt. Tea-party Republicans demanding delay, repeal, or wholesale revision of the ACA, are holding hostage both FY 2014 funding and a critical hike in debt limit. Without a solution, the fallout soon will affect further national safety net programs. Several “compromises” have been suggested, but all would continue the scorched-earth sequester FY 2013 budget numbers and badly damage the ACA. And another round of sequester cuts is due January 15, 2014! *It's time to tell your Representative and Senators to save the ACA, save the people we serve, and save the Nation.*

Around the Agencies: News and Opportunities

- **ACA Enrollment Ongoing.** While Congress stalls, ACA enrollment continues through state Marketplaces and the HHS (in 36 states not managing their own Marketplaces). Most state exchanges have been functioning relatively smoothly. But, the HHS site experienced delays with more than 7 million people visiting the site in the first 72 hours. With a capacity to manage 60,000 simultaneous users, the site was slammed with 250,000 users at once! So much for the idea that the ACA is both unneeded and unpopular! And, by the way, within days, waiting times were reduced markedly.
- **Key ACA Waiver Cleared.** With HHS approval, Arkansas will now expand Medicaid to cover those earning up to 138% of the federal poverty levels, but only when private health insurance is purchased through the state's Marketplace, not traditional Medicaid.

Organizationally Speaking

- **American Association on Health and Disability.** AAHD has established the *Affordable Care Act National Disability Navigator Resource Collaborative* to improve navigator and other outreach to persons with disabilities of all kinds. Go to: http://www.aahd.us/initiatives/initiativesrwj_ndnrc/
- **George Washington University/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.** *Program Integrity: Exchange, SHOP and Eligibility Appeals* summarizes final ACA-related HHS regulations on program integrity, privacy and security, insurance issuer direct enrollment, SHOP exchanges, the handling of consumer complaints and eligibility appeals. Go to: <http://healthreformgps.org/resources/program-integrity-exchange-shop-and-eligibility-appeals/>
- **Commonwealth Fund.** *What Americans Think of the New Insurance Marketplaces and Medicaid Expansion* reports that while

2 in 5 know about state health insurance Marketplaces exist, 3 in 5 who might be eligible will use them, and that Medicaid expansion has broad support. Go to:

http://www.commonwealthfund.org/~media/Files/Publications/Issue%20Brief/2013/Sep/1708_Collins_hlt_ins_marketplace_survey_2013_rb_FINAL.pdf

- **Alliance for Health Reform.** The *Employer Mandate Toolkit* provides facts and data on the ACA employer mandate requirements and penalties and the impact of its delay to 2015. Go to: http://www.allhealth.org/publications/Employer-Mandate-Toolkit_156.pdf

Etcetera

- NACBHDD. TA-1k webinar: *The Interface of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders and Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities*, October 17, 2013, 3:30-4:30 pm, EDT, To register go to: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/619360561>
- **NACo.** Webinar *Incorporating Health Outcomes when Making Planning Decisions in Your County*, October 24, 2013, 2:00-3:15 pm, EDT. To register, go to: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/984681242>
- **NACBHDD.** *Fall Board Meeting*, November 14-15, 2013, New Orleans, LA. Stay tuned.
- **AATOD.** *2013 National Conference*, November 9-13, Philadelphia, PA. Go to: <http://www.aatod.org/national-conference/2013-aatod-conference-philadelphia/conference-at-a-glance/>.
- **NACBHDD/WICHE.** *The Evolving World of Behavioral Health on the Eve of ACA Implementation* (54th annual National Dialogue) November 10-13, 2013, Renaissance Arts Hotel, New Orleans, LA. For more, go to: <http://nationaldialoguesbh.org/>.
- **NACBHDD.** *Spring Board Meeting*, March 2, 2014, Cosmos Club, Washington, DC; *Legislative/Policy Conference*, March 3-5, 2014, Cosmos Club Washington, DC. Stay tuned. ###
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