

### FROM THE HILL

## Senate Continues Consideration of Health Care Reform

As many of you know, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid released the Senate's combined health reform proposal, called the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* (H.R. 3590) on November 19, 2009. NASUA will continue to urge Senator Reid to include *Project 2020* during the Senate amendment process and encourage advocates to contact Senator Reid at (202) 224-3542, as well as their own Senators in support of *Project 2020*'s inclusion in health reform. Contact information for all Senators can be accessed on the **Senate's webpage**.

Among the provisions in the over 2,000-page bill are an expansion of Medicaid to 133% of the federal poverty level with subsidies to states for the expansion on the front end; a public option that states can opt out of; and the CLASS Act sponsored by the late-Senator Edward Kennedy, which is a voluntary long-term care insurance program for employees. Reid's bill also includes provisions to encourage states to offer Medicaid home and community based services (HCBS). However, the enhanced FMAP provisions to encourage states to rebalance, which were included in Senator Cantwell's original legislation (S. 1256) and in the Senate Finance Committee bill, were stripped from the Majority Leader's bill.

Many of the provisions NASUA supports have been included, such as:

- \$50 million for ADRCs over five years;
- HCBS spousal impoverishment protections;
- A sense of the Senate regarding the need for a national long-term care strategy;
- Nursing home ownership transparency;

- Background checks for long-term care facilities and providers; and
- The Elder Justice Act, which includes dedicated federal funding for States and territories for Adult Protective Services.

NASUA is working to encourage changes to the evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention funding in H.R. 3590, all of which goes to the CDC, departments of health and programs authorized by the Public Health Service Act. NASUA would like to see that funding opened up to the Administration on Aging as well as Older Americans Act programs.

While Senate Majority Leader Reid was successful in getting enough support to proceed with debate on amendments to the bill before adjourning for Thanksgiving, it will be more challenging to achieve cloture on the bill itself after the amendment process is over. •

## Project 2020

As the Senate continues to debate amendments to health care reform legislation, H.R. 3590, NASUA urges you and your network to contact the two Senators from your state as well as Senate Majority Leader Reid. Urge them to cosponsor Senator Cantwell's bill, *Project 2020: Building on the Promise of Home and Community Based Services* (S. 1257), and support its inclusion in Reid's manager's amendment.

Advocates can focus on the enhancements this would provide for seniors in health care reform while saving money in Medicaid and Medicare. The amendment adds no cost to health reform because it authorizes funding without appropriating it. Senator Reid can be contacted at (202) 224-3542. Contact information for all Senators can be accessed on the **Senate's webpage**. •

## IN WASHINGTON

## Community Partnerships for Older Adults: Annual Meeting and National Summit

This event was held on Oct 29, 2009 in Washington, DC and was hosted by the Community Partnerships for Older Adults (CPFOA) National Program Office and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The meeting highlighted the work of several community partnerships across the country and introduced CPFOA's newest publication *Community Partnerships for Older Adults: Local Solutions for Long Term Care Challenges*.

To access the publication:  
<http://www.partnershipsforolderadults.org/content/public/news/CPFOAPublication091021.pdf> •

## A Message from Dr. Blumenthal on Information Exchange

On November 12th, 2009, Dr. David Blumenthal, the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, released a message regarding the Health Information Technology (HITECH) Act and its Foundation for Information Exchange. In his message, he addresses the need for improved systems for the exchange of information and highlights the 'inappropriate' barriers that will potentially be eliminated with the HITECH Act. Information should follow the patient, and societal barriers should not interfere. The Act will help to eliminate commercial, economic and technical

barriers while also providing building blocks for information exchange across jurisdictions. The elimination of these barriers, he states, will lead to improved, 'patient-centered' care.

To read his full message, visit  
[http://healthit.hhs.gov/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=1406&parent-name=CommunityPage&parentid=23&mode=2&in\\_bi\\_userid=11113&cached=true](http://healthit.hhs.gov/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=1406&parent-name=CommunityPage&parentid=23&mode=2&in_bi_userid=11113&cached=true) •

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Important Deadline for SUA ARRA Coordinators

The next deadline for the 1512 data reported to [www.federalreporting.gov](http://www.federalreporting.gov) and the ARRA performance data reported to AoA is 1/10/10. There are only a handful of 1512 data fields that will need to be updated. These include:

- Quarterly Activities/Project Description (if applicable)
- Project Status
- Number of Jobs
- Description of Jobs Created (if applicable)
- Total Federal Amount of ARRA Funds Received/Invoiced
- Total Federal Amount of ARRA Expenditure
- Total Sub Award Funds Disbursed
- Final Report (if applicable)

SUAs that funded vendors may need to update these fields (including total amount of payments to vendors less than \$25,000/award), and SUAs that began drawing down funds after 9/30 will also need to populate the sub-recipient data fields and the vendor data fields, if applicable.

All 1512 data is reported cumulatively. For example, if on 10/10/09 for C2 you reported \$100,000 in ARRA expenditures and 3 jobs created and this quarter you spent the same amount and supported the same positions, on 1/10/10 you will report \$200,000 in expenditures and 3 jobs created (see p. 35 in the OMB ARRA guidance for information on reporting jobs cumulatively—[http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/memoranda\\_fy2009/m09-21.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/memoranda_fy2009/m09-21.pdf)).

The ARRA performance report is also due on 1/10/10 and can be submitted through the on-line SRT process. Make sure to select the correct reporting period for this report, which is Q1 FY2010. An Excel template for the current reporting period is available at [www.aodatacommunity.us](http://www.aodatacommunity.us).

## NASUA News

The Newsletter of the National Association of State Units on Aging

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SUAs that have spent 100% of their ARRA funds, checked “Y” in the “Final Report” 1512 data field, and reported all their meals and people served are not required to submit additional AoA ARRA performance reports (or 1512 reports).

All performance reports are cumulative since the beginning of the receipt of funds.

Questions? Contact Brian Lutz at [brian.lutz@aoa.hhs.gov](mailto:brian.lutz@aoa.hhs.gov) •

## Nominations for Family Caregiver of the Year Award

Caregiving.com is accepting nominations for their annual Family Caregiver of the Year Award, now through December 20, 2009. Any outstanding caregiver helping an aging relative, friend or neighbor is eligible for this award. Winners are picked based on the caregiver's: ability to complement their caregiving responsibilities with their own needs and interests, problem-solving techniques, use of community services, and community involvement.

For more information:

<http://www.caregiving.com/caregiver-of-the-year-award/> •

## 2009 Hartford Partnership Program for Aging Education Leadership Awards

On November 7, 2009 at the Council on Social Work Education's annual conference in San Antonio, TX, the Social Work Leadership Institute of the New York Academy of Medicine gave their Leadership Award to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in aging education. This year's winners were:

- Outstanding Dean: Katharine Briar-Lawson, Dean, School of Social Welfare, University at Albany
- Outstanding Principal Investigator: Jean Schulberg, Associate Professor, MSW Program Director, HPPAE Coordinator, California State University Chico
- Outstanding Community Partner: Ellen Harrington, Clinical Social Worker at Boston Medical Center and Field Supervisor for Boston University's Lowy-GEM (Geriatric Empowerment Model) Program in Aging
- Outstanding Student: Lori Paris, 2007 graduate, Kent School of Social Work, University of Louisville •

## New HHS Regional Directors Announced

On November 17, 2009 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced the appointment of new Regional Directors of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The HHS regional directors will serve as key representatives of Secretary Sebelius in working with federal, state, local and tribal officials on a wide range of health and social service issues. The new Regional Directors are:

- Cristal Thomas, Regional Director  
Region V (IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI)
- Marjorie McColl Petty, Regional Director  
Region VI, (AR, LA, NM, OK, TX)
- Judy Baker, Regional Director  
Region VII (IA, KS, MO, NE)
- Susan M.R. Johnson, Regional Director  
Region X (AK, ID, OR, WA)

"Their individual experience and knowledge of our department's most important issues, as well as local understanding of the people and institutions in their respective Regions make them a welcome addition to HHS," said Secretary Sebelius.

## New Administrator for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Announced

On November 20, 2009, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced Pamela Hyde as the new Administrator for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Hyde has served as secretary of the New Mexico Human Services Department since 2003. She has over 30 years of experience in both the private and public sectors working with management and consulting for health care and human services. •

## New CMSO Director of the Disabled and Elderly Health Programs Group

Barbara Coulter Edwards was appointed by Center for Medicaid and State Operations Director, Cindy Mann, to serve as the Director of the Disabled and Elderly Health Programs Group. Edwards has almost 30 years of public and private sector experience in health care financing. She is a nationally recognized expert in

Medicaid policy, including managed care, cost containment, long-term care, and State and federal health care reform. She served for eight years as the Ohio State Medicaid Director and has been a Principal with Health Management Associates, Inc. (HMA) since December 2005. Edwards' work at HMA has focused on Medicaid, national health reform, and service delivery for persons with chronic and disabling conditions. Barbara also spent six months as the Interim Director of the National Association of State Medicaid Directors. •

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## Iowa First to Receive Federal Matching Funds for Electronic Health Record Incentives Program

On November 23, 2009 the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announced that Iowa's Medicaid program is the first to receive federal matching funds for planning activities necessary to implement the electronic health record incentive program established by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Iowa will receive approximately \$1.16 million in federal matching funds.

Additional information on implementation of the Medicaid-related provisions of the Recovery Act's EHR incentive payment program may be found at: [http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Recovery/11\\_HealthIT.asp#TopOfPage](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Recovery/11_HealthIT.asp#TopOfPage) •

## New NSCLC Campaign to Improve Older American's Access to Affordable Health Care

On November 30, 2009 the National Senior Citizens Law Center announced the launch of a new campaign, supported by The Atlantic Philanthropies, to use strategic litigation and administrative policy advocacy to protect low income older Americans' access to affordable health care. NSCLC plans to work with local and national advocates to identify legal issues restricting older Americans' access to health care; develop legal strategies for addressing these issues including impact litigation when necessary; provide regular alerts to local advocates about common, systemic violation of the law for which they should be on the lookout; and create trainings and educational materials that flag legal issues for non-legal advocates.

More information available at: <http://www.nsclc.org/> •



## NEW RESOURCES AVAILABLE

### HHS Announces Plans to Make \$80 Million Available to Support Health IT Workforce

On November 24, 2009 Health and Human Services' National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, Dr. David Blumenthal, announced plans to make available \$80 million in grants to help develop and strengthen the health information technology (IT) workforce. The grants allot \$70 million to support Community College Training Programs and \$10 million for Curriculum Development. Both programs will support the immediate need for skilled health information technology professionals who will enable the broad use and implementation of health IT throughout the United States. The grants are the first in a series, with additional program to be announced in the coming weeks.

Information about grant applications is available at: <http://healthIT.HHS.gov/HITECHgrants> •

### New Study on ER Pharmacy Programs Available

A recent Health Policy Alert from the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists highlights a 24-hour Emergency Department Pharmacy Program that could potentially save a San Diego Veterans Affairs Healthcare System close to \$1.7 million annually. According to a study, published by the American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy on November 1, 2009, this program was created to address deficiencies identified by the pharmacy service within the emergency department. In addition to the cost savings, there were other benefits realized, including but not limited to, improved quality of patient care, decreased medication errors and increased overall patient safety. Emergency department staff were included in the study, with 90% reporting that they were "strongly satisfied" with the program.

The study is available at: <http://www.ashp.org/DocLibrary/Advocacy/PolicyAlert/AJHP-24-hour-ER-Pharmacy11-01-09.aspx> •

### Social Security's Online Retirement Estimator Available Now

This tool provides immediate and personalized benefit estimates to Medicare-only beneficiaries. People who have enrolled in Medicare, but have not yet filed for Social Security benefits, will no longer need to contact their local Social Security office to obtain an estimate of

their retirement benefits. Michael J. Astrue, Social Security's Commissioner, announced that next year this tool will also be available in Spanish.

To access the Estimator: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/estimator/> •

### Limited English Proficient Medicare Beneficiaries Rights Guide Available

During Medicare's Annual Enrollment Period, it is important to be familiar with the rights of all Medicare beneficiaries. Limited English proficient (LEP) Medicare beneficiaries have the right to information about the Medicare Prescription Drug Program (also known as Part D). The National Senior Citizens Law Center has developed a short guide to the standards the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services imposes on private Part D plans.

For more information: <http://www.nslc.org/areas/medicare-part-d> •

### New "Innovations Clearinghouse on Family Caregiving"

This clearing house was launched in November by The National Center on Caregiving at Family Caregiver Alliance (FCA). This resource is an online community promoting professional knowledge around families in their caregiving role to policymakers, professionals and family caregivers. Kathleen Kelly, FCA Executive Director stated "The Innovations Clearinghouse on Family Caregiving captures the complete picture of the caregiving field and offers one-stop shopping for practical tools and resources as well as real time interaction with professionals, online networking and learning opportunities and so much more."

To access the Clearinghouse: [http://www.caregiver.org/caregiver/jsp/content\\_node.jsp?nodeid=2319](http://www.caregiver.org/caregiver/jsp/content_node.jsp?nodeid=2319) •

### National Center for Benefits Outreach and Enrollment Issue Brief

A fourth Issue Brief entitled *Using Data-Driven Strategies to Enhance Benefits Outreach, Enrollment, and Retention Activities*, was released in November. This brief discusses the advantages of using data-driven activities and offers examples of current strategies to improve outreach, enrollments, and retention in benefits programs for people with limited incomes.

To access the Issue Brief:  
[http://www.centerforbenefits.org/Data-Driven\\_Strategies\\_Brief\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.centerforbenefits.org/Data-Driven_Strategies_Brief_FINAL.pdf) •

## New Report on Seniors at Risk of Hunger

The Meals on Wheels Association of America recently released *Senior Hunger in the United States: Differences across States and Rural and Urban Areas*, a follow-up to the 2008 report *The Causes, Consequences and Future of Senior Hunger in America*. This report documents the geographic distribution of senior hunger across states and by rural/urban status. The report found there is a discernable upward trend in the number of seniors facing the risk of hunger. About 700,000 more seniors faced that risk in 2007 than did in 2001.

To access the report:  
<http://www.mowaa.org/hungerbystate> •

## Medicare Open Enrollment: Materials for Seniors

Medicare's annual Open Enrollment occurs every year from November 15th-December 31st. During Open Enrollment, people with Medicare and those who provide special care for them have the opportunity to review current Medicare health plans and compare them with other options available the following year. This is also the time for those with Medicare to join a Medicare drug plan for next year if they need prescription drug coverage in the following year. The Department of Health and Human Services has released some helpful resources entitled *My Health. My Medicare*.

To access the materials go to NASUA's homepage:  
<http://nasua.org> •

## OMBUDSMAN CORNER

### Coming Soon

The NASUA staff have been working in collaboration with the National Ombudsman Resource Center (NORC), several State Long-Term Care Ombudsman (SLTCO) and State Unit on Aging (SUA) Directors to produce an updated "Ombudsman Program Primer for State Aging Directors and Executive Staffs". The goal of the revised Primer is to provide State Unit on Aging Directors with a resource for information on the roles and responsibilities of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program as defined in the Older Americans Act (OAA).

Originally printed in 1996, the Primer has helped SUA Directors and others understand the unique role of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman. The OAA specifically addresses how the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman is to function. As advocates for residents in long-term care facilities, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman has many OAA defined responsibilities including resolving resident complaints, resident rights education and system's advocacy.

Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs are located within a variety of agencies throughout the states. The majority have some direct or indirect connection with the SUA. The revised Primer will be a tool to promote better communication and collaboration between the SLTCO and the SUA Director. •

## TASC CORNER

### New GIS Mapping Tool

In collaboration with the Administration on Aging and The Florida Department of Elderly Affairs, NASUA is pleased to introduce a recently completed interactive GIS mapping tool, designed to assist states with their planning efforts. The GIS maps are based on two distinct, yet complementary sets of data.

The first data set, the Needs Index, was developed from special tabulation data gathered in 2000 by the U.S. Census Bureau. Significantly, these maps allow planners to access visual representations of key public program targeting variables, such as geographic location; age; social, economic and special service needs.

The second map series was generated using 2008 Low Income Subsidy (LIS) data obtained from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. LIS mapping proves especially useful by allowing users to simultaneously view several planning variables, such as how many Medicare beneficiaries are eligible for Part D coverage, how many people might fall into the low-income subsidy target audience, as well as the geographic location of hospitals.

At the state level, the GIS mapping tool will enhance the ability of planners to identify specific needs of specific areas, helping providers to more effectively target seniors in need of support and care giving. Specifically, this technology will allow states and AAAs to focus their service and outreach efforts on areas most in need. Additionally, the data contained in the maps will help states formulate more narrowly tailored state plans, and the GIS maps will further assist planners by providing them with visual data which they can use to enhance grant applications or contract proposals.

To access the GIS Maps: [http://nasua.org/gis\\_maps/](http://nasua.org/gis_maps/) •



## IN THE STATES

### Georgia SUA Receives 2009 Georgia Oglethorpe Progress Award

The Division of Aging Services (DAS) in Georgia's Department of Human Services received the Georgia Progress Award on October 29, 2009 at the Georgia Oglethorpe Annual Conference

and Awards Banquet. DAS has been working diligently for over six years to improve its operations and keep them current with changing business needs.

Governor Sonny Perdue says, "The Division of Aging Services has worked diligently to improve customer service and serve as good stewards of our taxpayers' dollars. It is a challenge to improve service to our citizens while at the same time finding operational efficiencies. These are exactly the kinds of efforts that should be recognized, and I am proud of DAS for earning the Georgia Progress Award." •

## Upcoming Events

### WEBINAR

#### Adding and Sustaining Consumer Direction in Aging Network Programs: Challenges, Insights, and Successes

Tuesday, December 15, 2009  
3:00–4:30 PM (EST)

This webinar is available to all Aging Network administrators and staff. It provides a brief overview of consumer direction: comparisons to traditional services, and research results; but, the majority of the content focuses on the use of consumer direction in current aging network programs. A panel of aging network staff and a consumer will discuss their experiences with consumer direction, common challenges and solutions, and the current status of their programs. The webinar will also tour helpful websites and electronic resources. A comprehensive Resource Guide filled with additional tools and detailed information is available to accompany the webinar.

To sign up for the webinar go to:  
[www.bc.edu/schools/gssw/nrcpds/aoawebinar.html](http://www.bc.edu/schools/gssw/nrcpds/aoawebinar.html)

#### Ageing in America: 2010 NCOA-ASA Conference

March 15–19, 2010

Chicago, IL

Hyatt Regency Chicago

For more information:

<http://www.ageingconference.org/AiA10/index.cfm>

#### n4a's 35th Annual Conference and Tradeshow

July 17–21, 2010

St. Louis, MO

Hyatt Regency St. Louis Riverfront

For more information: <http://www.n4a.org/training-events/annual-conference/>

#### 46th Annual NASUA Membership Meeting

June 27–29, 2010

The Westin Hotel

Washington, DC

For more information: [www.nasua.org](http://www.nasua.org)

#### 26th Annual Home and Community Based Services Conference

September 26–29, 2010

The Hilton Hotel

Atlanta, GA

For more information: [www.nasua.org](http://www.nasua.org)

## The National Association of State Units on Aging

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