Dateline: October 12, 2012

DPW Issues MA Fee Schedule for Select Waiver and ID Base-Funded Services

In the October 13, 2012 edition of the Pennsylvania Bulletin the PA Department of Public Welfare (DPW) published its final notice of the fee schedule rates for select services funded through the Consolidated and Person/Family Directed Support waivers and Targeted Service Management to the Medical Assistance Program Fee Schedule effective July 1, 2012. These final fee schedule rates also serve as the DPW established fees for base-funded services managed through county programs for individuals with an intellectual disability. DPW published its proposed fee schedule rates on June 30, 2012. DPW says that it will implement the rates as proposed. FMI: See www.pabulletin.com.

DPW Publishes ODP Rate-Setting Methodology for Consolidated and PFDS Waivers

In the October 13, 2012 edition of the Pennsylvania Bulletin the PA Department of Public Welfare (DPW) published its final notice of the methodology used to develop rates for residential habilitation eligible and transportation trip services funded through the Consolidated and Person/Family Directed Support waivers. DPW published notice of its intent to revise the methodology in the June 30, 2012 Pennsylvania Bulletin. DPW says that it will implement the methodology described in that notice since there are no changes to the methodology. FMI: See www.pabulletin.com.

DPW Rate Methodology for Intellectual Disability Services to be Reviewed

In an October 2 letter to PA Senator Jane Earll (R-Erie) concerning the PA Department of Public Welfare (DPW) rate methodology for intellectual disability services – and prior to the formal publication in the October 13 Pennsylvania Bulletin of a final notice on rates (see above) – PA Governor Tom Corbett has asked Senator Earll to reconvene intellectual disability service providers in Erie County with DPW staff to initiate a new approach to designing a feasible and equitable reimbursement rate schedule for ID services. The Governor’s action is in response to a request by Senator Earll to Governor Corbett asking him to have DPW reconsider its method in setting rates for ID services and secure a true evaluation of the costs associated with providing disability services in Erie County. Senator Earle says that the current rate schedule as applied in Erie County is “simply unacceptable” and could jeopardize the direct services on which persons with intellectual disabilities depend every day. Senator Earll, local governmental officials and area providers have objected to the rate methodology that ties Erie County’s reimbursement rate to the per capita income to rural counties in the region. For Senator Jane Earll’s statement see http://www.goerie.com/article/20120101/OPINION08/310129994/Earll%3A- DPW-%26%238216%3Bdidn%26%238217%3Bt-do-it-just-for-the-heck-of-it%26%238217%3B. FMI: For the Erie-Times News report on the rates for Erie County intellectual disability services http://www.goerie.com/article/20121005/NEWS02/310049856/Gov-pledges-to-look-at-Erie's-rural-designation.
HB 2681 to Restore PA General Assistance Cash Assistance Program

On October 9 House Bill 2681 was introduced in the PA House of Representatives to refund $12.4 million to the General Assistance Cash Grant program for a three month period (90 days). The GA Cash Assistance program was eliminated by the Governor and Legislature earlier this year. The funds that would be reinstated under HB 2681 would be used for individuals with a disability and children younger than 13 living with an unrelated adult. Individuals covered by the bill would receive assistance for a three-month period or until they receive Social Security. Prime sponsor of HB 2681 Representative Curtis Thomas said that the General Assistance program supports the most vulnerable Pennsylvanians who have no other means for income and that with the state Budget Office projecting a $219.5 million surplus at the close of the current fiscal year it would be prudent and compassionate to reinstate funding that assists individuals with a disability and children younger than 13 living with an unrelated adult. FMI: See www.legis.state.pa.us and www.pahouse.com.

DPW Website on Licensing of Human Services

The PA Department of Public Welfare (DPW) Bureau of Human Services Licensing (BHSL) has redeveloped its web site to include information on all of the licensing programs for which the BHSL is responsible. The web site includes information on the following human services programs: Adult Training Facilities (55 Pa.Code Chapter 2380); Vocational Facilities (55 Pa.Code Chapter 2390); Personal Care Homes (55 Pa.Code Chapter 2600); Assisted Living Residences (55 Pa.Code Chapter 2800); Child Residential and Day Treatment Facilities (55 Pa.Code Chapter 3800); Community Homes for Individuals with Mental Retardation (55 Pa.Code Chapter 6400); and Family Living Homes (55 Pa.Code Chapter 6500). The BHSL website can be found at http://www.dpw.state.pa.us/provider/longtermcareservices/index.htm. BHLS says that website is a work in progress and over the next few weeks new information will be added as it becomes available. Changes to the website will be noted under the “What’s New?” section of the main page. Questions or concerns about the website should be directed to Ms. Tara Pride, Director of Regulatory Implementation, at (717) 783-3670. FMI: Contact Ronald Melusky, Director, Department of Public Welfare, Bureau of Human Services Licensing, 625 Health & Welfare Building, Room 631, Harrisburg, PA 17120, Phone: 717.705.1610, Fax: 717.783.5662. See www.dpw.state.pa.us.

ODP Web Based Training Sessions on Year 5 Cost Report Changes

On October 9 the PA DPW Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) released ODP Announcement 090-12 announcing that the audio replay and power-point presentation from the September 19th and 26, 2012 web-based training for waiver direct service providers on has been posted to the ODP Consulting website. The ODP announcement was sent to waiver direct service provider staff who have a role in completing cost reports for Year 5 (historical reporting period of Fiscal Year (FY) 2011/2012). It was also sent to administrative entity (AE) staff who will have a role in desk reviews of cost reports and ODP regional staff that will have a role in overseeing the desk review process. FMI: See www.odpconsulting.net.
ODP Provider Monitoring Tool and Resources Available

On October 9 the PA DPW Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) issued ODP Announcement 091-12 indicating the provider monitoring 2012-13 tool and resources are now available. The updated resources and materials are related to the 2012-2013 Provider Monitoring Process which includes the 2012-2013 Provider Monitoring Tool. ODP strongly recommends that administrators and staff with a role in Provider Monitoring review all the resource materials so they are aware of the changes and can properly implement and complete the process.

Governor Corbett Encouraged by Program Training & Employing People with Disabilities

On October 10 PA Governor Tom Corbett, PA Lieutenant Governor Jim Cawley, and PA Department of Public Welfare Secretary Gary D. Alexander toured Lowe's regional distribution center in Pittston, PA and lauded the Lowe's employment and training program for persons with disabilities. Lowe's operates 81 stores and two distribution centers in Pennsylvania, employing more than 12,900 people. The program at Lowe's regional distribution center in Pittston is one of the home improvement company’s locations in Pennsylvania with an outreach program that offers training and job coaching for people with physical and intellectual disabilities supported by the PA Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Governor Corbett said that he was encouraged by seeing the program at Lowe's. “We can develop the right models to help those with special needs find permanent, sustainable employment in Pennsylvania,” the Governor said. In commenting on the Lowe’s program DPW Secretary Alexander said that “The Lowe's model is a great example of what employers can do to diversify their workforce. The results prove that individuals with disabilities are productive, hard-working, and have great attendance records – something that every business strives to find in its workforce.” For more information, visit www.pa.gov. For more information see PR Newswire at http://s.tt/1pIV8.

PA Welfare Secretary Alexander Comments on Employment of People with Disabilities

On October 11 the Harrisburg Patriot-News published commentary by PA Department of Public Welfare Secretary Gary D. Alexander on employment of people with disabilities. Under the heading “Private sector can help disabled,” Secretary Alexander referenced and commented on the Americans for Disabilities Act, federal disability policy, Medicaid incentives, disincentives to work, Corbett administration initiatives, solutions offered by private sector employers, business-centered strategies developed by Lowe’s and Walgreens, Pennsylvania Disability Employment Awareness Month, the recent Pennsylvania Disability Employment Summit in Hershey, the Employment Advancement Retention Network, and reforms in DPW’s employment-and-training system. In his commentary Secretary Alexander said: “When disabled workers are connected with private companies, employers acquire the hard-working, skilled employees they need and the disabled achieve the financial independence they need to support their families. Additionally, these solutions reduce the demands placed upon the overburdened welfare system while increasing the number of disabled Americans earning a paycheck.” To read the commentary by Secretary Alexander in the Harrisburg Patriot-News see http://www.pennlive.com/editorials/index.ssf/2012/10/pa_welfare_secretary_private_s.html
Focus in Congress on Care Coordination for Older Americans

On October 5 Representative Allyson Schwartz (D-Pa.) and Senator John Kerry (D-Mass.) announced their joint effort in seeking passage of legislation that would promote better coordination between medical and social services for the elderly. The bill – *The Care Coordination for Older Americans Act* – builds on the Older Americans Act, which established a variety of services for seniors such as home-delivered meals, transportation and legal assistance. On September 21 Representative Schwartz introduced the *Care Coordination for Older Americans Act of 2012, H.R. 6543*. The act establishes a link between medical care and the long-term services and support that seniors depend on every day. The bill would instruct state and regional Agencies on Aging to promote care coordination plans aimed at seniors with chronic illnesses. It would also amend the Older Americans Act to define coordination as an objective. The bill has been referred to the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. The Senate bill – *Care Coordination for Older Americans Act of 2012, S. 3465* – was introduced in the U.S. Senate on August 1 by Senator Kerry. It would: (a) instruct both the State agency and area agencies on aging (AAAs) to promote the development and implementation of a care coordination plan to address the needs of older individuals with multiple chronic illnesses; (b) include care coordination in the declaration of objectives of the Older Americans Act; (c) provide a definition of care coordination that includes the coordination of medical and social services; and (d) add to the functions of the Assistant Secretary for Aging to encourage collaboration and sharing of information between the states, AAAs, Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), service providers, health care providers, and medical entities in order to improve care coordination. FMI: For a copy of the press releases see [http://schwartz.house.gov/press-release/rep-schwartz-and-senator-kerry-introduce-plan-address-pressing-challenges-facing](http://schwartz.house.gov/press-release/rep-schwartz-and-senator-kerry-introduce-plan-address-pressing-challenges-facing). See [http://www.kerry.senate.gov/press/release/?id=a70c60ea-585d-4995-bdd0-f1bf8ca3ee6](http://www.kerry.senate.gov/press/release/?id=a70c60ea-585d-4995-bdd0-f1bf8ca3ee6). To access legislation see [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) and search for legislation using bill numbers.

HUD Grants to Aid Older Adults and People with Disabilities to Live Independently

On October 9 the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced the award of $31.3 million in grants to help more than 14,000 senior citizens and persons with disabilities to receive health care, meals, and other critical supportive services. The grants are awarded through HUD's Multifamily Housing Service Coordinator Program (MHSC) which provides funding for service coordinators who assist elderly individuals and persons with disabilities, living in federally assisted multifamily housing and in the surrounding area, to obtain needed supportive services from community agencies. The grants are awarded to eligible owners of private housing developments that receive rental subsidies from HUD to house low-income individuals in 36 states and the District of Columbia. The grants are for an initial three-year period to allow eligible owners of multifamily housing for the elderly or disabled, to hire and support a service coordinator. FMI: See HUD press release and list of grantees at [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/press/press_releases_media_advisories/2012/HUDNo.12-161](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/press/press_releases_media_advisories/2012/HUDNo.12-161)
ON OCTOBER 18 FROM 1:00PM TO 2:30 PM ET THE CENTERS FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICES (CMS) WILL HOST THE FOURTH OUT OF A 4 PART SERIES OF INPATIENT REHABILITATION FACILITY (IRF) QUALITY REPORTING PROGRAM SPECIAL OPEN DOOR FORUMS. THE PURPOSE OF THESE OPEN DOOR FORUMS IS TO ADDRESS ISSUES RELATED TO THE UPCOMING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IRF QUALITY REPORTING PROGRAM.

IRF SPECIAL OPEN DOOR FORUM TOPICS: TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED AT THIS IRF SPECIAL OPEN DOOR FORUM WILL INCLUDE (BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO): (1) IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF THE DIFFERENT HELPDESKS THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO IRFs, INCLUDING: (A) NAMES AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR EACH HELPDESK ASSOCIATED WITH THE IRF QUALITY, (B) REPORTING PROGRAM; (C) DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPES OF ISSUES EACH HELPDESK CAN HANDLE; AND (D) EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS THAT ARE APPROPRIATE FOR EACH HELPDESK; (2) AN OVERVIEW OF THE APPEAL PROCESS THAT WILL BE AVAILABLE TO IRFs, IF THEY RECEIVE NOTICE THAT THEY HAVE BEEN FOUND TO BE NON-COMPLIANT WITH REQUIREMENTS OF THE ACA SECTION 3004 IRF QUALITY REPORTING PROGRAM; (3) HOW TO PROPERLY REPORT PRESSURE ULCER DATA TO CMS, INCLUDING: (A) HOW TO ASSESS IRF PATIENTS FOR PRESSURE ULCERS; (B) AN OVERVIEW OF THE QUALITY INDICATOR SECTION OF THE IRF-PAI; AND (C) HOW TO PROPERLY DOCUMENT PRESSURE ULCER DATA IN THE QUALITY INDICATOR SECTION OF THE IRF-PAI; (4) HOW TO REPORT CAUTI DATA TO NHSN; (5) DISCUSSION OF THE “IRF FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS”; AND (5) QUESTION & ANSWER (Q&A) SESSIONS TO FOLLOW THE PRESENTATION. TO ACCESS THE SPECIAL OPEN DOOR USE PHONE NUMBER 800-603-1774 AND ENTER CONFERENCE ID: 25077187. TTY COMMUNICATIONS RELAY SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED. FOR TTY SERVICES DIAL 7-1-1 OR 800-855-2880. A RELAY COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT WILL HELP. A TRANSCRIPT AND AUDIO RECORDING OF THIS SPECIAL ODF WILL BE POSTED TO THE SPECIAL OPEN DOOR FORUM WEBSITE AND WILL BE ACCESSIBLE FOR DOWNLOADING.


RWJF CARE TRANSITIONS VIDEO CONTEST

THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION (RWJF) TRANSITIONS TO BETTER CARE VIDEO CONTEST IS SEEKING SHORT VIDEOS THAT HIGHLIGHT WHAT SPECIFIC HOSPITALS, PRIMARY CARE PRACTICES AND POST-ACUTE CARE FACILITIES ARE DOING TO IMPROVE CARE TRANSITIONS AND REDUCE AVOIDABLE HOSPITAL READMISSIONS. THE CONTEST IS SPONSORED BY THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION (RWJF) AS A PART OF RWJF'S CARE ABOUT YOUR CARE CAMPAIGN. NURSES, CARE COORDINATORS, OTHER FRONT-LINE HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS, PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO SHARE EXAMPLES OF WHAT PEOPLE ARE DOING TO EFFECTIVELY COORDINATE CARE PLANS. THE GOALS OF THE CONTEST ARE TO: A) CELEBRATE INNOVATORS WHO ARE WORKING TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF HEALTH CARE BY ENGAGING PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES; AND B) SHARE PROMISING PRACTICES TO REDUCE READMISSION WITH OTHER PATIENTS AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS. WINNERS WILL RECEIVE SPECIAL RECOGNITION FROM RWJF, A PROFESSIONALLY PRODUCED VIDEO DESCRIBING THEIR INNOVATION, AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THEIR METHODS WITH PATIENTS AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS NATIONWIDE. CONTEST WINNERS WILL ALSO RECEIVE A TRIP TO EITHER WASHINGTON, DC OR NEW YORK CITY TO PARTICIPATE IN TAPING OF A SPECIAL WEB EPISODE ON EFFECTIVE CARE TRANSITIONS. FMI: TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS OPPORTUNITY AND TO APPLY SEE HTTP://WWW.RWJF.ORG/EN/ABOUT-RWJF/PROGRAM-AREAS/QUALITY-EQUALITY/NEWS/CARE-ABOUT-YOUR-CARE-VIDEO-CONTEST.HTML.
HHS OIG Updates List of Excluded Individuals & Entities (LEIE) Database

On October 9 the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General (HHS OIG) released its updated List of Excluded Individuals & Entities (LEIE). The "Updated LEIE" database file reflects all OIG exclusion and reinstatement actions up to, and including, those taken in September 2012. This new, "Updated LEIE" is a complete database file containing all exclusions currently in effect. Individuals and entities that have been reinstated to the Federal health care programs are not included in this file. The HHS OIG says that the new file is meant to replace the Updated LEIE file made available for download last month. The new file is complete and need not be used in conjunction with the monthly exclusion and reinstatement supplements. Alternatively, HHS OIG advises, users may wish to download either the September Exclusions or Reinstatements databases only which are posted as the "Current Monthly Supplements" All the updated files are posted at [http://www.oig.hhs.gov/exclusions/exclusions_list.asp](http://www.oig.hhs.gov/exclusions/exclusions_list.asp). All of these downloadable files are zipped, self-extracting .dbf files, meaning that they will not open automatically when a user clicks on the links. After the files have been downloaded to a computer and inflated, the files must be opened into either a spreadsheet program such as Excel, or a database program such as Access. Basic download instructions are provided at the bottom of the page where the updated files are posted. The full LEIE database -- complete with all the monthly updates -- is included in the OIG "Online Searchable Database" which is very user-friendly and may be accessed at [http://exclusions.oig.hhs.gov](http://exclusions.oig.hhs.gov).

HHS OIG Reports on Criminal Convictions of Nurse Aides in Long-Term-Care Facilities

On October 9 the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General (HHS OIG) posted its mandated report on Criminal Convictions for Nurse Aides with Substantiated Findings of Abuse, Neglect, and Misappropriation (OEI 07 10 00422) [http://go.usa.gov/YZ3V](http://go.usa.gov/YZ3V). HHS OIG was mandated under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to submit a report to Congress evaluating the Nationwide Program for National and State Background Checks on Direct Patient Access Employees of Long Term-Care Facilities and Providers not later than 180 days after the program’s completion. The HHS OIG memorandum report provides baseline information for the mandated report on the extent to which nurse aides with substantiated findings of abuse, neglect, and/or misappropriation had previous criminal convictions that could have been detected through background checks and the nature of those convictions. In September 2011, HHS OIG requested from each State’s nurse aide registry a roster of all nurse aides who received a substantiated finding of abuse, neglect, and/or misappropriation of property during 2010. HHS OIG found that nineteen percent of nurse aides with substantiated findings at least one conviction in their criminal history records prior to their substantiated finding. Among these nurse aides, the most common conviction (53 percent) was for crimes against property (e.g., burglary, shoplifting, and writing bad checks). HHS OIG also found that nurse aides with substantiated findings of either abuse or neglect were 3.2 times more likely to have a conviction of crime against persons than nurse aides with substantiated findings of misappropriation, and nurse aides with substantiated findings of misappropriation were 1.6 times more likely to have a conviction of crime against property than nurse aides with substantiated findings of abuse or neglect. HHS OIG concluded that CMS may wish to provide the information in this memorandum report to States that participate in the background check program as well as to the Long Term Care Criminal Convictions Workgroup.
DOL Releases Virtual Workplace Flexibility Toolkit during NDEAM

On October 11 the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) launched its online Workplace Flexibility Toolkit to provide employees, job seekers, employers, policymakers and researchers with information, resources and a unique approach to workplace flexibility. Funded by the Department of Labor (DOL) Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) in partnership with the DOL Women's Bureau, the toolkit makes more than 170 resources easily accessible, particularly for workers and job seekers with complex employment situations, such as parents of young children, single parents, family caregivers, mature workers, at-risk youth, ex-offenders, and individuals with disabilities, including veterans with disabilities and people with HIV/AIDS. The toolkit, which can be accessed at http://www.dol.gov/odep/workplaceflexibility/, points visitors to case studies, fact and tip sheets, issue briefs, reports, articles, websites with additional information, other related toolkits and a list of frequently asked questions. It is searchable by type of resource, target audience and types of workplace flexibility, including place, time and task. New information will be added to the Workplace Flexibility Toolkit as it is identified. The launch of the toolkit coincides with National Disability Employment Awareness Month, an annual observance to raise awareness about disability employment issues as well as to celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. This year's theme is "A Strong Workforce is an Inclusive Workforce: What Can YOU Do?" Visit http://www.dol.gov/odep/ to keep track of NDEAM activities.

2012 Disability Mentoring Day on October 17

Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) will be held on October 17, 2012. The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) is sponsoring numerous 2012 Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) events at work sites, workshops and job fairs. The DMD program nationwide connects nearly 16,500 students and job seekers with disabilities to thousands of employers each year. In 2011 events took place in over 200 locations across the country. DMD, held the third Wednesday in October, promotes career development through hands-on programs, job shadowing, and ongoing mentoring. This experience has helped thousands of past participants develop lasting relationships and secure internships or jobs. DMD began as an event at the White House for a few dozen students in 1999. The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) is sponsoring numerous 2012 Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) events at work sites, workshops and job fairs. For more information, contact AAPD at 800-840-8844 (V/TTY), by email at dmd@aapd.com or visit the AAPD website at www.aapd.com. See http://www.aapd.com/what-we-do/employment/disability-mentoring-day/. For more information on related NDEAM activities see http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/ndeam/2012Activities.htm.