



# WASHINGTON UPDATE

JULY 2014

## AARP, The Commonwealth Fund, The SCAN Foundation Release Long-Term Scorecard

AARP, The Commonwealth Fund and The SCAN Foundation on June 19 released the Long-Term Scorecard, a state long-term services and supports (LTSS) scorecard that measures state performance of LTSS systems across five key dimensions: 1) affordability and access, 2) choice of setting and provider, 3) quality of life and quality of care, 4) support for family caregivers, and 5) effective transitions. AARP held a forum on June 19 titled "Improving Long-Term Services and Supports: How Are States Doing?" centered on the release of the scorecard, which can be viewed at AARP's YouTube channel.

Benjamin Rose President and CEO Richard Browdie discussed Ohio's performance in the report on Ideas. Video of the program can be viewed on Cleveland's WVIZ-TV at [www.ideastream.org](http://www.ideastream.org).

## Congressional Update

### *Appropriations Currently Stalled in Senate over Proposed ACA Amendments*

Appropriations bills are currently stalled in the Senate over proposed amendments to the bills that would revise the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The Commerce-Justice-Science-Agriculture "minibus" bill was pulled from floor consideration abruptly; the Labor-HHS-Education bill has not yet been considered in full committee. Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Sen. Barbara Mikulski said to Politico that in each case, the concern was "amendments that could be legislative in nature that could cause a veto" from the White House.

Some of the proposed amendments are controversial in nature, such as the amendments delaying the ACA's individual and employer mandates for one year offered by Sen. Jerry Moran (R-KS). Others are less controversial and even bipartisan, such as the amendment that would revise the definition of a full-time worker under the ACA to a 40-hour work week (as opposed to the currently defined 30-hour week) led by Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) and supported by Sens. Joe Donnelly (D-IN) and Joe Manchin (D-WV).

### Sen. Tom Harkin Introduces Legislation to Encourage Community-Based Living

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) introduced legislation on June 24 that encourages home- and community-based living options for people with disabilities. This bill was introduced the week of the 15-year anniversary of *Olmstead v. L.C.*, which held that segregation of people in institutions violated the Americans with Disabilities Act. The proposed bill, S. 2515, the Community Integration Act, would allow the provision of community-based services similar to those received in a nursing home to be covered by Medicare, prohibit states from making a particular disability category ineligible for community-based care, and set clear requirements for states regarding service provision in home- and community-based settings, among other provisions.

### Bipartisan Bill Introduced to Change Readmissions Penalties

On June 19, a bipartisan group of senators introduced a bill that would ensure that Medicare takes into account the socioeconomic status of hospital patients when calculating penalties for excess readmissions. The Hospital

## Public Meeting of Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care and Services

A public meeting of the Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care and Services will be held July 21 from 9am to 5pm in Washington, DC. The Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care and Services provides advice on how to prevent or reduce the burden of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias on people with the disease and their caregivers. During the meeting, the Advisory Council will review and discuss its recommendations on informal caregiving and hear presentations on statistics about caregivers and existing programs to provide them with help. They will also discuss the G7 Dementia Summit that was held on June 19 in the UK.

## Contact Us

We welcome your feedback!  
Please share questions,  
suggestions or concerns.

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Readmissions Program Accuracy and Accountability Act, S. 2501, would risk-adjust Medicare's Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program to account for patients' income, education, poverty rate or other factors deemed appropriate by the HHS Secretary. The intent is to reduce harm from the penalty for hospitals that serve low-income seniors and dual beneficiaries. The bill is supported by the Association of American Medical Colleges and the American Hospital Association.

## Bipartisan IMPACT Act Introduced to Standardize Post-Acute Care

On June 26, the Senate Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee chairs and ranking members introduced bipartisan legislation that would standardize the assessment of patients among the four post-acute care settings: Long-Term Care Hospitals, Inpatient Rehabilitation Facilities, Skilled Nursing Facilities and Home Health Agencies. S. 2553, the Improving Medicare Post-Acute Care Transformation Act of 2014 (IMPACT Act) requires data standardization to enable Medicare to: 1) compare quality across different post-acute care settings; 2) improve hospital and post-acute care discharge planning; and, 3) use this information to reform post-acute care payments while ensuring continued beneficiary access to the most appropriate setting of care. A summary of the legislation is available at [www.finance.senate.gov](http://www.finance.senate.gov).

## Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act Passes in Senate

Also on June 26, the Senate passed a reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act, or WIA. The reauthorization, known as the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA), passed 95-3. It would streamline federal workforce programs and overhaul job training for young workers with disabilities. (The Senior Community Service Employment Program, or SCSEP, from the Older Americans Act, remains untouched by this bill.) The House had passed a version of WIOA, the SKILLS Act, last year, which mainly focused on getting rid of workforce programs. The Senate version kept most of these programs and focused on priorities such as making the system more accessible for people with disabilities. The bill will now be voted on in the House, though likely not before the July 4 recess. Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC), the House author, said there were no changes in the Senate that would derail the Act in the House.

## Older Americans Act Update

The Older Americans Act remains held up in the Senate. The OAA Reauthorization was passed back in October by the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, but has not been sent to the full Senate floor yet due to differences over the nutrition funding formula. A working group was formed to work out these issues before a vote on the legislation in the full Senate. However, the group appears to be at an impasse and negotiations have stopped. According to staff from Sen. Richard Burr's office (Burr is the ranking member of the Primary Health and Aging Subcommittee of the HELP Committee and the Senator who raised the concerns), there will be no movement forward without "modest changes" to the formula.