



HEADLINE DC

DECEMBER 15, 2011

HILL HAPPENINGS: POLICY AND POLITICS

- **Merry FY 2012 Funding.** Temporary funding for the government expires (again) on December 16. House and Senate conferees are working on an omnibus compromise package, with a likely vote at the 11th hour (again).
- **Tax-cut Extension Plus.** The House will consider the Republican payroll tax-cut extension proposal. Both sides agree on extending it but disagree on the details, such as severe cuts to the ACA's Prevention and Public Health Fund to "offset" the tax extension cost.
- **What Happened to Separation of Powers?** With its 241-184 adoption of the Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act (REINS), the House hopes to be able to subject all regulations with \$100 million in potential impact to Congressional review.
- **Veterans and Mental Health.** At a recent hearing, the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee chastised the VA for its slow response to the needs of veterans with PTSD and other mental disorders. The Senators called for an inspector general inquiry into the care delays.

AROUND THE AGENCIES: NEWS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **New Name at CMS.** The White House has nominated Marilyn Tavenner to head the CMS. A nurse and former head of health and human services in Virginia, Tavenner has served as CMS principal deputy administrator in 2010. Confirmation is most likely.
- **And the Answer Is.** To answer many questions about the Health Care Innovation Challenge, CMS has posted a FAQs page on the Challenge home page. Go to: <http://innovations.cms.gov/initiatives/innovation-challenge/faq.html>; check back regularly.
- **Input Wanted.** SAMHSA wants your topic suggestions for the 2012 *SAMHSA Advisory* and *SAMHSA in Brief* publications. For more information, go to: <http://feedback.samhsa.gov/forums/141928-samhsa-seeks-public-input-on-publication-topics-fo>
- **Health Care Innovation Challenge Webinars:** In case you missed them and are planning to submit an application, the slides and recordings from the 4 CMS Health Care Innovation Challenge webinars are available online. Go to: <http://innovation.cms.gov/initiatives/innovation-challenge/index.html>
- **GAO Releases Parity Report.** On Nov. 30, the Government Accountability Office released the first of 2 congressionally mandated reports on the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA). Go to: <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-12-63/>

ORGANIZATIONALLY SPEAKING

- **Go to the Videos.** The Alliance for Health Reform has developed 2 videos that explain what long-term care is, who pays for it, and where people get that care. Go to: http://www.allhealth.org/pubs_videos.asp?vid=15
- **Urban Institute.** *What directions for public health under the ACA* outlines opportunities for public health efforts under the ACA, such as building prevention into insurance expansion and boosting health innovation. Go to: <http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/412441-Directions-for-Public-Health-Under-the-Affordable-Care-Act.pdf>
- **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.** *Accountable Care Organizations in Medicare and the private sector: A status update* discusses the state of ACO adoption as well as key considerations in creating them. Go to: <http://www.rwjf.org/files/research/73470.5470.aco.report.pdf>

ETCETERA

- **Next NACBHDD Legislative and Policy Conference.** March 5-7, 2012, Phoenix Park Hotel, Washington, DC.
- **National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD).** Next annual meeting, June 26-28, 2012, Hyatt Regency, Savannah, GA. Go to: <http://nasadad.org/annual-meeting>
- **ACMHA-College for Behavioral Health Leadership.** Annual summit, March 21-23, 2012, Charleston, SC, on promoting resiliency and recovery through community social supports/networks. Go to: <http://www.acmha.org>. ###