

LCAO Health Committee Minutes

Meeting on October 24, 2017

- **Alexander-Murray ACA legislation:** Committee discussed the bipartisan Marketplace stabilization bill that would fund cost-sharing reductions for 2 years, provide outreach and enrollment funding, and provide states additional flexibility and a faster approval process for 1332 waivers. The committee agreed to draft a letter to Congressional leadership encouraging them to support the bill and expressing opposition to requested changes that would undermine Marketplace stability.
- **Budget Resolution & Tax Debate:** The Committee shared latest intel on the budget resolution and tax reform process and discussed messaging and whether LCAO would take positions on particular tax provisions such as the Medical Expense Deduction and so-called Cadillac tax. Members expressed general agreement on and interest in messaging that the proposed tax cuts are revenue reductions that subject Medicaid, Medicare, and other programs older adults rely on to future spending cuts. Process issues, including the absence of hearing and JTC/CBO estimates are also a concern. It was suggested that the Committee could address specific tax provisions separately. The messaging/activities discussion will continue at the full LCAO meeting.
- **Seniors Tax Hike Prevention Act:** A bipartisan Senate bill (S. 1977) has been reintroduced by Sens. Brown and Portman to roll back the Medical Expense Deduction threshold from 10% to 7.5% for 2 years for those age 64 and older. Sens. Capito and Nelson are original cosponsors. LCAO should consider a support letter.
- **Medicaid HCBS Money Follows the Person**—Sens. Portman and Cantwell are expected to introduce legislation soon extending MFP, which expired Sept. 30, 2016. Finance Committee Chairman Hatch and Ranking member Wyden are expected to support the bill. Rep. Dingell, an Energy and Commerce Committee member, is interested in sponsoring a House companion. Help is needed to get the bill introduced, and in getting it included in an end-year package.
- **Spousal Impoverishment legislation**—Rep. Dingell’s staff has reached out to Rep. Susan Brooks to support legislation making to make the ACA’s Medicaid HCBS spousal impoverishment protections permanent. They are scheduled to expire 12/31/18.
- **Proposals to delay/rollback nursing home regulatory standards:** The Committee had a robust discussion on what is happening with respect to nursing home regulations that were finalized in October 2016. Members of the House and Senate have written to CMS urging delay/rollback. Many providers are concerned that some of the provisions are unduly burdensome. Consumer Voice is drafting a non-LCAO sign-on letter opposing delays or reopening of the rule.
- **Medicaid Puerto Rico LCAO letter** (<http://www.lcao.org/files/2017/10/LCAO-Puerto-Rico-Relief-Senate-Letter.pdf>): Committee discussed on going major issues in Puerto Rico and agreed to look into what else we can do.
- **Advanced Illness Patient Choice and Quality Care Act Sign-on Letter:** Committee members are urged to sign-on to an LCAO letter supporting S.1334 & H.R.2797—a bill to promote coordinated care at the end of life and promote the use of advanced directives. To sign, contact brian@consumers.org

- **Other issues, updates**

- Extenders bill—may know more after Wednesday House Dem meeting on CHIP.
- Senate Chronic Care legislation is expected to be rolled into a year-end package.
- Rep. Neal introduced bill to expand opioid treatment under Medicare to allow outpatient coverage of Methadone
- Upcoming comment opportunities: HHS strategic plan comments due this week (noted HHS posted conflicting deadlines of October 26th or 27th). Request for Information on CMMI--comments due Nov 20th; Justice in Aging preparing a template; sign on letter also expected
- CMA is drafting a letter to CMS expressing concerns about open enrollment materials being biased towards Medicare Advantage with almost no mention of FFS

Next Meeting: Tuesday November 28th at 3:30 ET, 1444 Eye Street NW Suite 1100 (Justice in Aging)