

**Subject:** REDC Policy Update 8.29.19

Good Afternoon REDC Board,

Below you will find your weekly REDC policy update. The Center Road team wishes each of you a nice holiday weekend!

## ACA—REGULATORY

### **Uninsured Rate Rises for the First Time Since Passage of ACA—11% Uninsured in 2018**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released in July show there were 2.1 million more uninsured people between 2016 and 2018. Additionally, a study from the Urban Institute this month found 700,000 more uninsured people between 2016 and 2017.

The uptick in the uninsured rate is not massive, and there are still significant gains in insurance coverage since the ACA went into effect in 2014.

The uninsured rate for people under 65 fell from 16.7% in 2013 to 10.3% in 2016, which translates to 16.7 million people gaining coverage.

Since then, the gains have started to reverse.

Liberals argue that this uptick in the uninsured rate can be correlated to the Trump Administration's policies of repealing the individual mandate, expanding association health plans and short-term plans. Conservatives argue that the ACA has become unaffordable and failing Americans that make too much money for subsidized health insurance and are going without care because of it.

## ACA—CONGRESSIONAL

### **Major battleground-state Democrats running to flip the Senate Stay Away from "Medicare-for-All"**

Arizona, Iowa and North Carolina, challengers Mark Kelly, Theresa Greenfield and Cal Cunningham are staying tightly focused on the health care message House Democrats used in 2018:

Expanding Medicaid

Protecting the ACA

Slamming Republican ACA repeal efforts

Incumbent Senators Shaheen (D-NH), Jones (D-AL) and Peters (D-MI) are aligned similarly, backing proposals like a public health insurance option but declining to embrace a single national insurance plan.

Democrats need to gain at least three seats to win back the Senate in 2020. Recent polling indicates the party has a strong advantage on the issue of health care, but the general public remains wary of Medicare for All, and support for eliminating private insurance is low.

## STATE ACTIONS

### **Nebraska: Consumer Group Sues State Officials over Medicaid**

Nebraska is one of the three GOP-led states where voters approved Medicaid expansion ballot measures last year. However, GOP officials have sought to modify the program in ways that would limit enrollment.

The lawsuit, which was filed by Nebraska Appleseed in Nebraska Supreme Court on behalf of two uninsured people who would qualify for expanded Medicaid, argues the state is violating the terms of last year's ballot measure by not promptly taking advantage of enhanced federal Medicaid funding.

The lawsuit aims to force Nebraska to begin enrollment in the coverage expansion by November 17. The state said earlier this year it wouldn't begin enrolling people until October 2020.

Nebraska expects 90,000 low-income adults will join the program. The state also plans to add a work requirement and create tiers of benefits for enrollees in which residents would automatically qualify for a "basic" benefit plan **but have to complete additional activities to qualify for more generous coverage.** Neither idea appeared in the ballot initiative.

#### **Georgia: State Insurance Commissioner Launches Investigation into Health Care Sharing Ministry**

Last week, Georgia's Insurance Commissioner warned consumers of the potential financial risks of joining a health care sharing ministry as an alternative to regular insurance.

The company in question is Alera, which has 100,000 members nationwide and reported revenue of \$180 million in 2018.

The Georgia Attorney General has received 10 complaints about Alera, and referred them to the FBI's office in Atlanta.

#### **SERVE Act**

As a friendly reminder from last week, the DOD believes that their enacted October 2016 final rules actually do permit freestanding RTCs from applying for TRICARE authorization and were interested in what other hurdles RTCs faced, however, their website still notes that they are not permitted to be contracted with TRICARE.

**Question for REDC Members: Have any centers attempted to contract with TRICARE following October 2016? If so, please reach out to Katrina- [Katrina.velasquez@centerroadsolutions.com](mailto:Katrina.velasquez@centerroadsolutions.com) so that we can discuss what hurdles your center faced.**

Lastly, we are still collecting stories of eating disorders in the military or with military families. Please share the following link with your Centers and network so that we can compile as many stories as possible to help with SERVE Advocacy: <https://forms.gle/WCwHqXnwwy49JnpR9>

We have learned from Senator Martha McSally's (R-AZ) office that Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) has sent over the House text of the SERVE Act to the Senate legislative counsel to draft up a Senate side companion bill. Although Senator Shaheen has yet to formally agree to lead the legislation, this is a very positive step forward in the process.

Best,  
Katrina, Allison & Alessandra