



AMCP Celebrates Grassroots Advocates at Nexus 2021

On Oct. 19, AMCP rolled out the red carpet to celebrate the State Advocacy Leaders program and offered an opportunity for members to connect with each other and AMCP Policy & Government Relations staff about promoting managed care pharmacy through grassroots advocacy. The Policy & Government Relations team also shared details of AMCP's State Policy Landscape Analysis and Model Legislation project.

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Eye On Washington

Congress Passes Continuing Resolution to Avoid Government Shutdown; Raises Debt Ceiling to Avert Default

On Sept. 30, the House (254-175) and Senate (65-35) passed a stopgap spending bill to avert a government shutdown through Dec. 3, 2021. President Biden signed the bill into law before the midnight Oct. 1 deadline. The continuing resolution included measures to extend the classification of fentanyl as "Schedule I" through Jan. 28, 2022, and to extend the current federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP) for U.S. territories through Dec. 3, 2021. On Oct. 7 and Oct. 12, respectively, the Senate (50-48) and the House (219-206), voted to temporarily raise the country's borrowing limit, pushing off the deadline for default until early December.

FDA and CDC Approve Pfizer Booster

The FDA [authorized](#) a Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine booster shot for individuals 65 years of age and older and for people whose jobs (e.g. health care workers) put them at high risk of becoming severely ill due to frequent exposure to the virus. The CDC [announced](#) additional booster eligibility for long-term care residents, adults aged 18 to 64 years old with underlying

Advocacy Tip

Stay up-to-date: Read AMCP's [Letters, Statements and Analysis](#) on all legislation and regulation impacting managed care pharmacy.

medical conditions, and adults aged 18 to 64 with no underlying medical conditions but whose work carries high risks of exposure to COVID. The FDA and CDC indicated that Americans in these categories can receive a booster shot six months after their second dose. Additionally, CMS [announced](#) that Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP will continue to provide access to COVID-19 vaccines, including booster shots, without cost sharing for beneficiaries.

CMS Releases 2022 Premiums and Cost-Sharing Information for Medicare Advantage & Part D Plans

Ahead of Medicare's open enrollment period, CMS [released](#) premiums, deductibles, and other information for Medicare Advantage (MA) and Part D prescription drug plans for 2022. The agency announced average premiums for MA plans will be \$19 per month, down from \$21.22 in 2021. The average premium for Part D coverage will be \$33 per month, compared to \$31.47 in 2021. Notably, MA enrollment in 2022 is projected to reach 29.5 million people, compared to 26.9 million in 2021. MA open enrollment began Oct. 15 and ends on Dec. 7, 2021.

CMS Releases MA, Part D Star Ratings for 2022

On Oct. 8, CMS released Star Ratings for Medicare Advantage and Medicare Part D prescription drug plans for 2022. Star Ratings, which track performance on a one-to-five scale, are released annually.

[Learn more](#) about the 2022 Star Ratings.

MACPAC Report on Medicaid Churn

The Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC) released a [report](#) on “churn” and continuous coverage in the Medicaid and CHIP programs. Churn refers to the event in which beneficiaries disenroll and re-enroll within a short period of time. The Commission found approximately 8% of full-benefit Medicaid and CHIP beneficiaries disenrolled and reenrolled within one year — a higher rate than previous estimates. MACPAC also found beneficiaries in states with 12-month continuous eligibility, as well as states that do not conduct midyear data checks, were less likely to experience churn.

MACPAC's report aligns with AMCP's [recommendations](#) to the Office of Management and Budget in response to a request for information on how the federal government can advance equity. AMCP advocated for implementing continuous 12-

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month enrollment in Medicaid to help address issues such as medication adherence and preventing skipped doses. Additionally, AMCP signed on to a letter of support with numerous other health care stakeholders supporting efforts to reduce coverage churn in Medicaid.

[Read the full letter.](#)

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