

From: [APA Communications](#)
To: lpmastaff@apma.net
Subject: APA Headlines: Study Indicates Consumers Have Fewer Insurer Options For 2017
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Good morning Ms Cathy Thompson

August 22, 2016

Leading The News

Study Indicates Consumers Have Fewer Insurer Options For 2017.

[Bloomberg News](#) (8/19, Tracer) reported that according to a [study](#) conducted by Avalere Health, consumers are getting fewer options under Affordable Care Act plans. Data show about “36 percent of the approximately 500 rating regions in the US may have just one health insurer when the 2017 signup season starts on Nov. 1,” while an additional “19 percent could have just two carriers.” The article said by comparison, in 2016, some two-thirds of areas had three or more insurers competing for consumers’ business.

On its website, [CNBC](#) (8/19, Mangan) reported that the analysis indicates seven states, including Alaska, Alabama, Kansas, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Wyoming, will have only one insurer offering ACA plans in 2017.

Psychiatric News Alert



[Probiotics Alone May Be Unlikely to Reduce Risk of Depression, Report Finds](#)

[Antipsychotic Use Early in Pregnancy Does Not Appear to Increase Risk of Birth Defects](#)

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Psychiatric Treatment/Disorders

UK Trial Aims To Identify Patients With Early Alzheimer’s.

The [Press Association \(UK\)](#) (8/21) reports that a new £6.9 million trial has been launched in the UK to identify biomarkers that allow Alzheimer’s to be diagnosed at an early stage. Success of the Deep and Frequent Phenotyping Study, supported by the Medical Research Council, could “herald a revolution in the treatment of Alzheimer’s, with” medications “being used to halt progress of the disease before irreparable damage to the brain has occurred.” Lead scientist Professor Simon Lovestone, from Oxford University, explained, “If we can identify the biomarkers present in this very early stage, we have the chance of treating the disease earlier, which is vital if we are to

prevent damage to people's memory and thinking."

Government and Psychiatry

New York Governor Urged To Sign Bill Mandating Mental Health Instruction In Public Schools.

In an editorial, [Newsday \(NY\)](#) (8/19) urged New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) to sign "a bill that mandates that public schools incorporate mental health instruction into their health class curricula." Newsday asserted, "Making sure young people learn about mental health will make them more likely to recognize the signs in themselves and others, and they will know better how to get the right help."

HHS Takes Action To End Duplicate ACA And Medicaid Or CHIP Coverage.

The [New York Times](#) (8/19, A9, Pear, Subscription Publication) reported that HHS Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell is overseeing her department's efforts "to end duplicate coverage for tens of thousands of people who are enrolled in Medicaid and simultaneously receiving federal subsidies to help pay for private health insurance under the Affordable Care Act." HHS sent letters to consumers nationwide this week warning that "they 'should immediately end marketplace coverage with premium tax credits for each person' in the household who is also enrolled in Medicaid or in the Children's Health Insurance Program." The Government Accountability Office "discovered the potential for duplicate coverage, with double payment," which according to the Times, "is significant because low-income people can switch back and forth between Medicaid and subsidized private coverage as their circumstances change."

Psychiatry and Public Health

Suicidologist Urges Faster Action On George Washington Bridge Safety Barriers.

On the front of its New York section, the [New York Times](#) (8/21, MB1, Glaser, Subscription Publication) reported in a nearly 2,700-word story that suicidologist Madelyn Gould, PhD, MPH, a professor of epidemiology in Columbia University's psychiatry department, is urging New York "authorities to put barriers on bridges and other buildings, something that copious amounts of research show is effective" in preventing suicides. Even though "the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which operates the George Washington Bridge, has put dozens of signs and several telephones on it to link desperate callers to trained crisis counselors," some "93 people have died at the bridge" over the past seven years. Now, the Port Authority plans "to erect a safety barrier on the bridge, a project that will not be completed before 2024." Dr. Gould would like that barrier completed much sooner, commenting, "From the perspective of saving people's lives, why not move up that time frame?"

Other News

Some Small Companies Restoring Group Health Insurance Coverage.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/21, Simon, Subscription Publication) reported some small companies are reversing their decision to drop group health insurance for their workers, fueled by a tightening in the labor market, increasing costs, and fewer coverage choices for individuals. The change is being spurred the expiration of transitional rules allowing some companies to continue offering existing plans that did not meet requirements of ACA. According to a 2015 Kaiser Family Foundation survey, roughly 54 percent of companies with three to 49 workers offered health benefits in 2015, roughly the same as 2014 but down 66 percent from 2000.

Growing Research On Medical Applications Of "Psychedelic Drugs" Subject Of Controversy.

In an over 1,400 word article, the [Baltimore Sun](#) (8/19, McDaniels) reported on the growing controversy surrounding the medical applications of "psychedelic drugs," such as psilocybin and LSD, which have recently been the subject of more research after decades of being largely ignored by researchers. The article highlights recent research that suggests such drugs may be helpful in treating emotional disorders, drug addiction, and other medical conditions, but also points out that the drugs in question remain strictly regulated by federal law and some of them can also be addictive and abused. The article also mentions that "regular use of certain psychedelic drugs was associated with a 19 percent reduced likelihood of psychological distress within the past month and a 14 percent reduced likelihood of suicidal thinking within the past year," according to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

Friday's Lead Stories

- [CMS Mulling New Rules To Prevent Healthcare Professionals From Steering Patients Into ACA Plans.](#)
- [US Army's Surgeon General Skeptical About Marijuana As PTSD Treatment For Veterans.](#)
- [ACA Enrollees In Arizona, Southeast Most Impacted By Large Insurers' Exits.](#)
- [Connecticut's Mental Healthcare System Under Strain Due To Psychiatric Bed Shortage.](#)
- [Adult Brain Cells Key To Learning, Memory May Be Susceptible To Zika, Study Suggests.](#)

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