

From: [APA Communications](#)
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Subject: APA Headlines: CMS Mulling New Rules To Prevent Healthcare Professionals From Steering Patients Into ACA Plans
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Good morning Ms Cathy Thompson

August 19, 2016

Leading The News

CMS Mulling New Rules To Prevent Healthcare Professionals From Steering Patients Into ACA Plans.

[Reuters](#) (8/18, Humer) reports that on Thursday, CMS said it is mulling "new rules to prevent healthcare" professionals "or related groups from steering patients into" Affordable Care Act "individual insurance plans instead of Medicare or Medicaid in order to receive higher payments for medical services." The agency is seeking public comment on the rules, which include ending or "limiting premium payments or cost-sharing for the individual marketplace plans, monetary penalties and limits on such payments."

On its website, [CNBC](#) (8/18, Mangan) reports CMS said it has "serious concerns" about the matter, and it is investigating the actions of some healthcare professionals.

[The Hill](#) (8/18, Sullivan) reports CMS explained that the rules are part of its ongoing effort to strengthen ACA marketplaces. The article says in spite of CMS' efforts, "insurers are pushing for more changes to stabilize the" ACA "market, such as putting in place stricter eligibility verification for the extra sign-up periods and reforming the formula used for a program called risk adjustment that makes payments to insurers who enroll sicker patients."

Psychiatric News Alert



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

[Report Finds YouTube Presents 'Distorted Picture' of Schizophrenia](#)

Mental Health Works: Suicide Prevention

The latest issue of [Mental Health Works](#), the monthly publication from the APA Foundation's Partnership for Workplace Mental Health, features "Union Pacific Railroad Addresses Suicide Prevention." Union Pacific (UP) Railroad sponsored a companywide suicide awareness campaign throughout the UP system on worldwide Suicide Prevention Day last fall. [Read More](#). [Subscribe to Mental Health Works](#).



Psychiatric Treatment/Disorders

US Army's Surgeon General Skeptical About Marijuana As PTSD Treatment For Veterans.

[TIME](#) (8/18, Thompson) reports that Lieut. General Nadja West, the US Army's surgeon general, "is skeptical that the first-ever federally-approved study will show that marijuana can help US veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder [PTSD]." Proponents of marijuana treatment for PTSD, she "adds, too often emphasize the benefits without acknowledging the downsides." General West said, "So to make [marijuana] sound as if it's perfectly safe, the impact that it has long-term on certain areas of the brain, especially young people developing, that's been proven: irreversible damage to the hippocampus and things like that that can really have impacts on individuals long-term."

Government and Psychiatry

ACA Enrollees In Arizona, Southeast Most Impacted By Large Insurers' Exits.

[Kaiser Health News](#) (8/18, Galewitz) reports there will be much less competition in some Affordable Care Act exchanges in 2017 because Aetna, UnitedHealth, Humana, and several Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans will participate in only a handful of markets. The problem is further exacerbated by the fact that 16 of the 23 ACA co-ops have failed since January 2015. The article says that for the most part, large metro areas in the Northwest, Midwest and New England will still have several options for consumers, but those most impacted by these exits "will be marketplace consumers in Arizona, North and South Carolina, Georgia and parts of Florida, where only one or two insurers will be left when open enrollment season begins Nov. 15." The [NPR](#) (8/18, Galewitz) "Shots" blog also carries the piece.

Psychiatry and Public Health

Advertisement



Connecticut's Mental Healthcare System Under Strain Due To Psychiatric Bed Shortage.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/18, De Avila, Subscription Publication) reports on the strain experienced by the mental healthcare system in Connecticut due to the shortage of state inpatient psychiatric beds.

People With Mental Illness Need More Resources To Quit Smoking, Expert Argues.

In [The Hill](#) (8/18, Debnam) "Congress Blog," Charles Debnam, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Community Wellness Alliance of Washington, DC, points out that 40 percent of people with some form of mental illness continue to smoke even as the rest of the country sees declines in smoking. Debnam argues the CDC should designate people with mental health issues as a tobacco disparity group in order to "help smokers with mental health issues access more quit resources and...help spur more targeted training for"

healthcare professionals "about the unique challenges of treating smokers from this particular community."

Other News

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Adult Brain Cells Key To Learning, Memory May Be Susceptible To Zika, Study Suggests.

The [Washington Post](#) (8/18, Dennis) reports that a [study](#) involving mice published in Cell Stem Cell suggests that "adult brain cells critical to learning and memory also might be susceptible to the Zika virus." Researchers believe that Zika can infect "pockets" of neural progenitor cells in adults, which "replenish the brain's neurons over the course of a lifetime." The study authors "admit that the findings represent only an initial step in discovering whether Zika can endanger adult human brain cells," but these findings "suggest that the Zika virus...may not be as innocuous as it seems for adults."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/18, McKay, Subscription Publication) reports that researchers believe the findings apply to children as well as adults. The researchers intend to analyze whether infected neural progenitor cells recover over time.

Majority Of Americans Support Precision Medicine Initiative Cohort Program And Would Be Willing To Participate, Survey Suggests.

[Modern Healthcare](#) (8/18, Castellucci, Subscription Publication) reports the majority of Americans support the Precision Medicine Initiative Cohort Program and would be willing to participate, according to a new [survey](#) conducted by market research firm GfK and published in Plos One. The article explains that the program aims to improve medicine by gathering genetic information, medical histories, and EHRs from over 1 million people and the National Institutes of Health has already awarded almost \$55 million in grants to begin recruiting people to participate.

Thursday's Lead Stories

- [Antipsychotic Use In Pregnancy Appears To Present No Meaningful Risk Of Birth Defects In Newborns.](#)
- [Childhood Abuse Associated With Higher Risk Of Death For Women, Study Finds.](#)
- [Thirteen Percent Of Americans Still Uninsured, Survey Says.](#)

- [First Weeks Of College Risky Time For Students, Experts Suggest.](#)
- [APA's Oquendo: "The Time To Act Is Now" To Pass Meaningful Mental Healthcare Reform.](#)

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