Brad Smith Appointed New CMS Innovation Center Leader

Brad Smith, who co-founded palliative care provider Aspire Health is the new director of the CMS' Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation.

The HHS announced Monday that Smith would be the new leader of the CMS' delivery model testing center, replacing Adam Boehler who left the role in the fall after roughly a year when he was nominated for another role in the Trump administration.

Rumors have swirled since September that Smith would be the new director of the center. Smith will also be a senior advisor to HHS Secretary Alex Azar, according to the agency.

"Brad has impressive experience with innovative care delivery and paying for value, and he will help expand (CMS) Administrator (Seema) Verma's and CMS' efforts to ensure Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries are getting better care, and better health, at a lower cost," Azar said in a statement.

The Top Home Health Trends of 2020

In all likelihood, 2019 will go down as one of the most important years in Medicare-certified home health care history.

While many industry-shaping changes didn't officially begin last year, 2019 did set the stage for several new regulatory and business trends in 2020. Almost all of those trends are somehow linked to the Patient-Driven Groupings Model (PDGM), the massive home health reimbursement overhaul that went live on Jan. 1.

Thriving under such a vastly different business environment will dictate how providers operate over the next 12 months, with small and large agencies each experiencing a unique set of challenges and opportunities. Consolidation will be a theme of 2020, as will adaptation.
As has become an annual tradition for Home Health Care News, we're turning to our crystal ball and sharing our top trends and predictions for the year ahead.

Last January, for example, HHCN predicted that home health providers across the country would scramble to diversify their revenue streams ahead of PDGM. We also forecasted that home health would wither in rural markets, that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) would expand its oversight initiatives and that hospital-at-home models would become more popular.

Most of our 2019 predictions came true, so let's see how we do for 2020. HHCN will release its predictions for home care later this week.

NAHC PDGM Physicians Toolkit

The National Association for Home Care & Hospice (NAHC) has developed a suite of resources for physicians interested in learning more about the Patient-Driven Groupings Model (PDGM). While our primary goal is to ensure agencies are fully prepared for PDGM, it's also extremely important for physicians to understand how PDGM will change their interactions with home health agencies.

The NAHC PDGM Physicians Toolkit offers physicians valuable links to best practices and professional resources.

Northeast Home Health Leadership Summit: Still Time to Register

The fast-approaching Northeast Home Health Leadership Summit in Boston (Jan. 28-30) offers many opportunities to make good on your New Year's resolutions.

While we often make pledges this time of year for personal betterment, leaders are also positioned to cultivate these virtues more broadly in the workplace, making for a healthier environment, improving productivity, and retaining a strong team rooted in mutual trust and buy-in.

Resolve today to rid your workplace of drama and other burdens on your organization's success with an expert who has examined and trained management teams nationally on "Creating a Drama-Free Team that Gets Results."
Dennis McIntee’s interactive keynote session will give you the practical skills necessary to eliminate the kinds of excuses that jeopardize the effective functioning of your organization.

And, in a separate lunchtime keynote, attendees will further engage with McIntee on overcoming some of the specific retention challenges in home care.

Continue Reading

Revere Hotel sold out on Jan. 29, alternative locations offered, make your plans now!

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Association Affinity Agreement with Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC)

Connecticut Association for Healthcare at Home is a proud member of the Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC), the nation’s leading resource dedicated to increasing the availability of quality health care for people living with a serious illness. CAPC is offering a 15% discounted membership rate to Connecticut Association for Healthcare at Home members, as well as the discounted member rate for the CAPC National Seminar and pre-conference sessions.

CAPC members receive exclusive access to technical assistance and clinical training through a robust online course curriculum with free continuing education credits; call-in consulting with national experts in the palliative care field; hundreds of ready-to-use tools and resources; webinars on common topics; and a vibrant, collaborative community of health care professionals working with people living with a serious illness. One CAPC membership provides an organization’s entire staff with unlimited access to CAPC training, tools, and expert resources. Learn more at capc.org or contact the CAPC membership team at membership@capc.org or 212-201-2674.

Hospice Advocates Push for CMS to Delay Medicare Advantage Carve-In
By Jim Parker | December 13, 2019

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Association (NHPCO) has called on the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to delay the start of the Medicare Advantage hospice carve-in demonstration beyond its current expected state date of January 2021.

CMS earlier this year announced that it would test coverage of hospice care through Medicare Advantage plans beginning in 2021. NHPCO has asked CMS to delay the carve-in in a letter.

The most significant concern from NHPCO about the carve-in is that hospices, health plans and other stakeholders have too little time to prepare for the carve-in due to a lack of details from CMS on the nuts and bolts of the demonstration’s workings.

"Given the timing - and given that we're at the tail end of 2019 - we are growing increasingly concerned that, any attempt to carve hospice into Medicare Advantage would be rushed, wouldn't be fully baked," Edo Banach, president and CEO of NHPCO.
Click here to view full event calendar

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