POLICY BEAT

Weekly Digest

February 20th – February 24th, 2012

This Week in Health Policy...

- Health Insurance Exchanges
- Stage 2 Meaningful Use
- Prevention and Public Health Fund
- Health Enterprise Zones in Maryland

Office of Health Policy and Government Relations
This week, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) awarded grants to ten states to help them set up health insurance exchanges. More details are available [here](#).

**Highlights:**

The 10 states are as follows:

- Arkansas: $7.67 million
- Colorado: $17.95 million
- Kentucky: $57.89 million
- Massachusetts: $11.64 million
- Minnesota: $26.15 million
- New Jersey: $7.67 million
- Nevada: $15.29 million
- New York: $48.47 million
- Pennsylvania: $33.83 million
- Tennessee: $2.25 million

*Policy Beat archive:*

[Click here](#)

Photo credit: HealthCare.Gov
This week, the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) issued a notice proposing rules for achieving **Stage 2 Meaningful Use** (MU) of certified electronic health records (EHR) technology. The proposed requirements include – changes to Stage 1 criteria, greater applicability to specialists than Stage 1, and various payment adjustments. Providers who have begun using Stage 1 criteria have until 2014 to begin using Stage 2 criteria. Public comments to the rule will be due **May 7, 2012**. For more details, click [here](#).

**Key date – March 7, 2012**: proposed rule published in [Federal Register](#).

Photo credit: Institute of Medicine
This week, the $15 billion Prevention and Public Health Fund authorized by the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was reduced by $5 billion over ten years as part of a legislative package intended to assure tax cuts for America’s middle class and jobless benefits for the nation’s unemployed. The National Medical Association believes that this fund is a vital tool for reducing the burden of chronic disease by keeping people healthier longer. More details available here.

In 2011, the Fund spent $16 million on obesity prevention and fitness, $45 million on the public health workforce, and $60 million on tobacco prevention.
Led by Lieutenant Governor Anthony G. Brown, the State of Maryland is exploring Health Enterprise Zones, a variant of economic empowerment zones. The goal is to target those areas hardest hit by racial and ethnic health disparities. By implementing reduced taxes, regulatory relief, and other incentives, the Free State hopes to increase investments that could lead to better health in these communities. The workgroup that developed the plan was chaired by University of Maryland Medical School Dean Dr. E. Albert Reece. More details are available here.

What You Can Do

• Please call your Members of Congress, and urge them to preserve optimal funding for Medicare and Medicaid services. Contact info here.

• Is Policy Beat helpful? Please send us feedback at healthpolicy@nmanet.org

• New email address? Let us know at healthpolicy@nmanet.org

For the latest health policy updates, visit our RSS News Feed.
Resources


