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| Logo of Dignity Alliance Massachusetts with tag line "respect. self-determination. choices."  Description generated with high confidence | The Tuesday Digest  Issue # 53 August 31, 2021  *The Tuesday Digest* is information complied by Dignity Alliance Massachusetts concerning long-term services, support, living options, and care issued each Tuesday. | | |
|  | \*May require registration before accessing article. | | |
| Quotes of the Week | *“We’re going backwards. . . First of all, transparency in government is our due, but in this case, we’re talking about seniors in facilities where in many cases they really have no choice. . . People have a right to know what the situation is with respect to COVID in each of these facilities. . . When we were told [by DPH officials] that a lot of changes were coming to their reporting, this wasn’t what we had in mind.”*  Barbara Anthony, senior fellow in health care policy at the Pioneer Institute, *State backsliding on COVID-19 data transparency,* **\*Boston Globe,** August 21, 2021,  Link: [state-backsliding-covid-19-data-transparency](https://www.bostonglobe.com/2021/08/21/opinion/state-backsliding-covid-19-data-transparency/)  *Under President Biden’s infrastructure plan, the federal government will be spending an additional* [*$400 billion for home care*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/us-policy/2021/04/02/caregiving-elderly-white-house-infrastructure/) *for seniors and people with disabilities. To accompany that, federal lawmakers should pass legislation or issue regulations ensuring that vulnerable individuals like my aunt, for whom this money is intended to provide a real opportunity to get the care they need, can ask a neutral decision-maker to review initial home care determinations made by managed care organizations. We owe them at least that much.*  Aytan Y. Bellin, elder law and managing attorney of Bellin & Associates LLC *My aunt’s ‘Kafkaesque journey’ to get the home care she needs*, **STAT News,**  August 26, 2021, [Kafkaesque-journey](https://www.statnews.com/2021/08/26/my-aunts-kafkaesque-journey-to-get-the-home-care-she-needs/?utm_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm_campaign=4aadb229e0-Daily_Recap&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8cab1d7961-4aadb229e0-152759366)  *“I’m bored to tears. I do virtually nothing. Today, nothing awful happened, nothing half-awful happened, nothing brilliant happened, nothing half-brilliant happened. . . I’m in my room all day.”*  Ted Freeman-Attwood, 90, a resident in a Toronto, CA, nursing home, said in January, two weeks after he’d received his first dose of the Moderna vaccine  *“This is my first time outside in a year. This is more fun than I’ve had in a year.”*  Mr. Freeman-Attwood, in June, during an outing to a dollar store one block away from his nursing home,  *A Return to Freedom, After Nearly a Year Trapped Indoors Under Lockdown,*  **\*New York Times,** August 12, 2021, Link: [Canada-Toronto-nursing-home](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/12/world/canada-toronto-care-home.html)  *“I am exhausted. The vaccine is like a mini fortress around the most vulnerable, where even though there is a fire raging outside, those inside stay safe.”*  Dr. Joshua Uy, a geriatrician and medical director of a nursing home in Philadelphia, who said he was “ecstatic about the [Covid-19 vaccination] mandate.” *Nursing Homes Face Quandary: Vaccinate Staff or Don’t Get Paid, \****New York Times,** August 19, 2021  Link: [coronavirus-nursing-homes-vaccination](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/19/health/coronavirus-nursing-homes-vaccination.html)  *“All people with disabilities should receive services in the most integrated setting appropriate.”*  Ron Hager, managing attorney for education and employment at the National Disability Rights Network, *A Boy with an Autoimmune Disease Was Ready to Learn in Person. Then His State Banned Mask Mandates,* **Pro Publica,** August 25, 2021, Link: [autoimmune-disease-was-ready-to-learn-in-person](https://www.propublica.org/article/a-boy-with-an-autoimmune-disease-was-ready-to-learn-in-person-then-his-state-banned-mask-mandates?utm_source=sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter&utm_content=river-links)  *“We are not going to sit by as governors try to block and intimidate educators protecting our children.”*  President Joe Biden, *A Boy with an Autoimmune Disease Was Ready to Learn in Person. Then His State Banned Mask Mandates,* **Pro Publica,** August 25, 2021,  Link: [autoimmune-disease-was-ready-to-learn-in-person](https://www.propublica.org/article/a-boy-with-an-autoimmune-disease-was-ready-to-learn-in-person-then-his-state-banned-mask-mandates?utm_source=sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter&utm_content=river-links)  *“It makes sense to take advantage of every tool possible to decrease transmission to make sure kids can go to school safely and to prevent children from being required to do distance learning.”*  Dr. Dean Blumberg, chief of pediatric infectious diseases at UC Davis Children’s Hospital, *A Boy with an Autoimmune Disease Was Ready to Learn in Person. Then His State Banned Mask Mandates,* **Pro Publica,** August 25, 2021,  Link: [autoimmune-disease-was-ready-to-learn-in-person](https://www.propublica.org/article/a-boy-with-an-autoimmune-disease-was-ready-to-learn-in-person-then-his-state-banned-mask-mandates?utm_source=sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter&utm_content=river-links)  *My 103-year-old Italian grandmother enjoyed exercise, making the best lasagna you’ve ever tasted, and being with family. I started filming her cooking about five years ago when she was 99 years old. I filmed her at the gym because I thought, no one will believe that my grandmother is still working out. I asked her if she could give me a few words of wisdom, and that was the beginning of this adventure.*  Filmmaker Sky Bergman relating that her grandmother, Evelyn Ricciuti, was the inspiration behind the documentary film, *Lives Well Lived*. Celebrating the Secrets, Wit, & Wisdom of Age, **PBS,** Link: [www.pbs.org/show/lives-well-lived/](https://skybergmanphotography.cmail20.com/t/j-l-fkrttkl-tkltxudq-t/)  *J. T. Hill doesn’t want your help. He’d rather walk to town, risking his life at every intersection, instead of asking for a ride. He’d rather make his students call out their questions in class than tell them the truth: He can’t see them raise their hands. This is the stubborn, hurt young man we meet in “Blind Man’s Bluff,” Hill’s memoir.*  *A Memoir of Pretending to See*, **\*New York Times,** August 23, 2021 (updated), Link: [blind-mans-bluff](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/05/books/review/bllind-mans-bluff-james-tate-hill.html)  *“That’s the goal. I’m going after it.”*  Morgan Stickney, Paralympic swimmer in pursuit of the world record in the 400-meter freestyle, *Morgan Stickney’s Race Against the Clock,* **\*New York Times,** August 29, 2021, Link: <https://nyti.ms/3sXutBK>  *Accumulating money for retirement is hard, but decumulating it is tricky, too. Even the experts have trouble saying how to pace your spending so you can enjoy retirement without exhausting your savings before you die. You can’t know for sure how long you’ll live, whether you’ll suffer a costly illness or how markets will perform.*  *How to Enjoy Retirement Without Going Broke,* **\*New York Times,** August 27, 2021, Link: [how-to-enjoy-retirement-without-going-broke](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/27/opinion/how-to-enjoy-retirement-without-going-broke.html)  *[T]here’s a general consensus that for any type of cancer screening, if you have a 10-year life expectancy, then there’s a high chance that you will benefit from cancer screening.*  *Does breast density matter for older women’s risk of cancer?,*  **STAT News,**  August 27, 2021, Link: [breast-density-cancer-risk-older-women](https://www.statnews.com/2021/08/27/breast-density-cancer-risk-older-women/?utm_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm_campaign=42c7de2464-Daily_Recap&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8cab1d7961-42c7de2464-152759366)  *Funding from the American Rescue Plan Act is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to address the economic and public health crises affecting Massachusetts residents, through investing in affordable housing. By investing significantly in affordable housing, along with other critical sectors such as small business, childcare, infrastructure, digital access, and public health, the Commonwealth and its municipalities can move toward a more equitable future in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, we must not miss this opportunity to begin to close the racial wealth gap and to address racial disparities in health outcomes.*  Katherine Martinez, director of economic development, and Elana Brochin, program director for health equity, the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations, *ARPA funds open the door for major investment in housing,* **CommonWealth Magazine,** August 25, 2021,  Link: [ARPA-funds-open-the-door-for-major-investment-in-housing](https://commonwealthmagazine.org/economy/arpa-funds-open-the-door-for-major-investment-in-housing/)  *“This legislation ]Choose Home Care Act] would essentially allow home health agencies to compete with skilled nursing facilities.”*  Anne Tumlinson, ATI Advisory Founder and CEO, *Choose Home Care Act Presents Senior Living Opportunities, Draws Skilled Nursing Backlash,* **Senior Housing News,** August 29, 2021, Link: [choose-home-care-act](https://seniorhousingnews.com/2021/08/29/choose-home-care-act-presents-senior-living-opportunities-draws-skilled-nursing-backlash/?utm_hsid=262050710&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=153979377&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--GuR35QXqzl5ZPHBlOARrpZI15QqW6vQUMtyvsWVf46QiYY36xIM6sOh_0uFdbthwtgdi2-C6Vx6Awq5XBXqa5oeQsmQ&utm_source=shn-newsletter) | | |
| Featured | 1. **PBS** *Lives Well Lived*   Celebrating the Secrets, Wit, & Wisdom of Age  *Lives Well Lived,* a heartwarming PBS documentary, celebrates the wit & wisdom of adults 75 years old+ who are living their lives to the fullest. Viewers will enjoy the insights of dozens of fascinating individuals – 3,000 years of life experience – distilled into a delightful mosaic of essential life lessons.  *Lives Well Lived* streams on the [PBS website](https://skybergmanphotography.cmail20.com/t/j-l-fkrttkl-tkltxudq-j/) from September 1-28:  [www.pbs.org/show/lives-well-lived/](https://skybergmanphotography.cmail20.com/t/j-l-fkrttkl-tkltxudq-t/)  For more information: <https://www.lives-well-lived.com/> | | |
| Biden / federal proposals / policies | 1. **CNBC**   August 25, 2021  *Medicare would be expanded under $3.5 trillion budget resolution approved by House*  *Key points:*   * Coverage for dental, vision and hearing would be provided through original Medicare, if Democrats’ full $3.5 trillion budget plan comes to fruition. * Reducing the age of eligibility for Medicare is also included in the approved framework. * There is no guarantee that the proposals will make it through the full legislative process.   Link: [/Medicare-would-be-expanded](https://www.cnbc.com/2021/08/25/medicare-would-be-expanded-under-3point5-trillion-house-approved-plan.html)   1. **Health Affairs Blog**   August 24, 2021  *Filling In the Medicaid Gap Without Paying for It Twice*  On August 9, 2021, the Senate Budget Committee released its fiscal year 2022 [Budget Resolution Agreement Framework](https://www.democrats.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/MEMORANDUM%20for%20Democratic%20Senators%20-%20FY2022%20Budget%20Resolution.pdf), including a commitment to filling in the Medicaid “coverage gap.” [Over 3 million Americans](https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/104523/most-uninsured-people-gaining-medicaid-eligibility-under-potential-expansion-would-have-incomes-below-the-federal-poverty-level.pdf) living below poverty lack health insurance today because they are too poor to qualify for subsidized Marketplace coverage. The authors of the Affordable Care Act envisioned that these people would be covered by the law’s Medicaid eligibility expansion. But a 2012 Supreme Court decision made that expansion voluntary for states and 12 states have so far refused to participate. Consequently, in these states, there remains an unlucky and ill-fated group of people who are both ineligible for Medicaid under their states’ pre-ACA rules and ineligible for subsidized insurance through the nongroup insurance Marketplaces, which serve those with higher income.  Providing insurance to those in the coverage gap is a high priority for Congress and the Biden administration due to the [extensive evidence](https://www.kff.org/report-section/building-on-the-evidence-base-studies-on-the-effects-of-medicaid-expansion-february-2020-to-march-2021-report/) that Medicaid expansion expands health care access, improves health outcomes, and enhances financial wellbeing.  The [best way to close](https://www.commonwealthfund.org/blog/2021/extend-marketplace-coverage-insure-more-people-states-have-not-expanded-medicaid) this gap is being developed at this very moment. But one obstacle that opponents are likely to attempt to raise is the Federal cost of such an expansion. That’s a surprising roadblock. After all, Congress [already fully funded the Medicaid expansion](https://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/111th-congress-2009-2010/costestimate/amendreconprop.pdf) across all states when the Affordable Care Act passed back in 2010.  This apparent paradox is an outcome of Federal budgetary accounting rules – but it’s one Congress can choose to overcome.  Link: [Filling Medicaid Gap](https://www.healthaffairs.org/do/10.1377/hblog20210820.398954/full/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=hasu&utm_campaign=blog&utm_content=blumberg&utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=A+Busy+Health+Affairs+Blog+Week&utm_campaign=HASU%3A+8-29-21&vgo_ee=5SX86xUdOQbzlFklrO%2F5WDpxdzkQNl9LgdxZ9pnzLRY%3D)   1. **The Mighty**   *Biden Administration to Cancel Student Debt for over 300,000 Disabled People*  On Thursday, August 19, 2021, the Biden administration and other leading officials announced that they will be erasing the student for over 300,000 Americans [with severe disabilities](https://themighty.com/2021/04/chronic-disability-student-loan-forgiveness/) who are no longer able to earn significant income to pay off their loans. This erases over $5.8 billion in debt.  [Biden-administration-cancels-student-debt-disabled-people](https://themighty.com/2021/08/biden-administration-cancels-student-debt-disabled-people/?utm_source=newsletter_disability&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter_disability_2021-08-27&%24deep_link=true&%243p=e_cordial&_branch_match_id=772915239709592956) | | |
| Olympics | 1. **\*New York Times**   August 29, 2021  *Morgan Stickney’s Race Against the Clock*  Stickney, who endured first one amputation and then another, has put off surgery to chase a world record. After years of pain, she is closer to it than ever.  Link: <https://nyti.ms/3sXutBK> | | |
| Book Review  Blind Man’s Bluff  By James Tate Hill | 1. **\*New York Times**   August 23, 2021 (updated)  *A Memoir of Pretending to See*  A writer’s humorous and often-heartbreaking tale of losing his sight—and how he hid it from the world. At age sixteen, James Tate Hill was diagnosed with Leber’s hereditary optic neuropathy, a condition that left him legally blind. When high-school friends stopped calling and a disability counselor advised him to aim for C’s in his classes, he tried to escape the stigma by pretending he could still see. In this unfailingly candid yet humorous memoir, Hill discloses the tricks he employed to pass for sighted, from displaying shelves of paperbacks he read on tape to arriving early on first dates so women would have to find him. He risked his life every time he crossed a street, doing his best to listen for approaching cars.  Link: [blind-mans-bluff](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/05/books/review/bllind-mans-bluff-james-tate-hill.html) | | |
| Webinars / Online sessions | 1. **Medical Group Management Association**   Tuesday, August 31, 2021, 1:00 p.m.  *Healthcare Fraud and the Federal Perspective*  This 60-minute webinar will provide you with the knowledge to:   * Recognize how fraud schemes target clinicians and medical practices * Identify COVID-19-specific fraud schemes * Review how to work with the federal government on possible cases of fraud   Registration: [healthcare-fraud-and-the-fed](https://www.mgma.com/events/protect-your-practice-healthcare-fraud-and-the-fed) | | |
| Nursing homes | 1. **Home Health News**   August 29, 2021  *‘Mass Exodus’ of Nursing Home Staff Likely to Impact Home Health Providers*  The survey’s results found that one in five caregivers had not started the vaccination process at all and that only 50% had been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Of those who weren’t vaccinated, one-quarter planned on remaining so. The reasons for why they were not vaccinated ranged from distrust of the vaccines — the most popular reason — to believing that COVID-19 was a hoax completely. About one in 10 of vaccine-hesitant caregivers believe that COVID-19 is a hoax. “In response to vaccine mandates, 54% of vaccine-hesitant caregivers would rather lose their job than get vaccinated,” the Caring.com survey results said. “More than 50% of unvaccinated caregivers don’t wear masks when in public or around at-risk individuals.”  [mass-exodus-of-nursing-home-staff](https://homehealthcarenews.com/2021/08/mass-exodus-of-nursing-home-staff-likely-to-impact-home-health-providers/?euid=9ec99f304e&utm_source=hhcn-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=4c6e8c3dd9)   1. **Centers for Disease Prevention and Control**   August 27, 2021  *Effectiveness of Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna Vaccines in Preventing SARS-CoV-2 Infection Among Nursing Home Residents Before and During Widespread Circulation of the SARS-CoV-2 B.1.617.2 (Delta) Variant — National Healthcare Safety Network, March 1–August 1, 2021*  **What is already known about this topic?**  Early observational studies among nursing home residents showed mRNA vaccines to be 53% to 92% effective against SARS-CoV-2 infection.  **What is added by this report?**  Two doses of mRNA vaccines were 74.7% effective against infection among nursing home residents early in the vaccination program (March–May 2021). During June–July 2021, when B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant circulation predominated, effectiveness declined significantly to 53.1%.  **What are the implications for public health practice?**  Multicomponent COVID-19 prevention strategies, including vaccination of nursing home staff members, residents, and visitors, are critical. An additional dose of COVID-19 vaccine might be considered for nursing home and long-term care facility residents to optimize a protective immune response.  Link: [Vaccination Effectiveness in Nursing Homes](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7034e3.htm?s_cid=mm7034e3_e&ACSTrackingID=USCDC_921-DM64385&ACSTrackingLabel=This%20Week%20in%20MMWR%20-%20Vol.%2070%2C%20August%2027%2C%202021&deliveryName=USCDC_921-DM64385)   1. **Skilled Nursing News**   August 23, 2021  *Biden Nursing Home Vaccine Mandate Expected to Devastate CNA Recruitment, Retainment*  “Our ability to serve our communities and provide quality care directly correlates with the number of staff we employ,” Stonerise Healthcare CEO Larry Pack told Skilled Nursing News. . . “We strongly encourage the Biden administration to consider broadening this requirement to all health care settings to avoid making an already difficult clinical workforce challenge even worse,” he said.  [Biden-nursing-home-vaccine-mandate](https://skillednursingnews.com/2021/08/biden-nursing-home-vaccine-mandate-expected-to-devastate-cna-recruitment-retainment/?euid=__test_email__&utm_source=snn-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ce581765eb?euid=9ec99f304e&utm_source=snn-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=4db4a11acf)   1. **\*Boston Globe**   August 21, 2021  *State backsliding on COVID-19 data transparency*  Just when the public needs more data about COVID-19′s impact on everything from nursing homes to schools, it’s getting less from the Baker administration. Just when the state’s most vulnerable — its elderly and children who cannot be vaccinated — are being exposed to breakthrough infections, the state has reduced the amount of easily accessible information available to worried families.  Link: [state-backsliding-covid-19-data-transparency](https://www.bostonglobe.com/2021/08/21/opinion/state-backsliding-covid-19-data-transparency/)   1. **\*New York Times**   August 19, 2021  *Nursing Homes Face Quandary: Vaccinate Staff or Don’t Get Paid.*  A new policy from President Biden will require all nursing home workers to be vaccinated against Covid. Facilities that fall short could be penalized or lose federal funding.  Link: [coronavirus-nursing-homes-vaccination](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/19/health/coronavirus-nursing-homes-vaccination.html)   1. **\*New York Times**   August 12, 2021  *A Return to Freedom, After Nearly a Year Trapped Indoors Under Lockdown*  “This is more fun than I’ve had in a year.” In June, a long-term-care home resident experienced the joy of the outside world after nearly a year locked indoors because of coronavirus restrictions.  Link: [Canada-Toronto-nursing-home](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/12/world/canada-toronto-care-home.html) | | |
| Home and Community | 1. **Senior Housing News**   August 29, 2021  *Choose Home Care Act Presents Senior Living Opportunities, Draws Skilled Nursing Backlash*  A bill introduced last month in the United States Senate would allow in-home care alternatives to skilled nursing facilities and poses substantial ramifications for private-pay senior living providers. Sponsored by Sens. Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.) and Todd Young (R-Ind.), the [Choose Home Care Act of 2021](https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/2562/text) would allow certain Medicare beneficiaries to receive extended Medicare services such as skilled nursing or rehabilitation services in their homes for up to 30 days following hospitalizations or surgeries, in addition to their usual home health allowance.  Additionally, beneficiaries may also receive traditional home health services for longer than 30 days, as needed.  Link: [choose-home-care-act](https://seniorhousingnews.com/2021/08/29/choose-home-care-act-presents-senior-living-opportunities-draws-skilled-nursing-backlash/?utm_hsid=262050710&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=153979377&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--GuR35QXqzl5ZPHBlOARrpZI15QqW6vQUMtyvsWVf46QiYY36xIM6sOh_0uFdbthwtgdi2-C6Vx6Awq5XBXqa5oeQsmQ&utm_source=shn-newsletter)   1. **Centers for Disease Prevention and Control**   August 27, 2021  *Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, United States, 2021–22 Influenza Season*  The 2021–22 influenza season is expected to coincide with continued circulation of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Influenza vaccination of persons aged ≥6 months to reduce prevalence of illness caused by influenza will reduce symptoms that might be confused with those of COVID-19. Prevention of and reduction in the severity of influenza illness and reduction of outpatient visits, hospitalizations, and intensive care unit admissions through influenza vaccination also could alleviate stress on the U.S. health care system. Guidance for vaccine planning during the pandemic is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pandemic-guidance/index.html>*.*  Link: [Seasonal flu vaccinations](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/rr/rr7005a1.htm?s_cid=rr7005a1_e&ACSTrackingID=USCDC_921-DM64385&ACSTrackingLabel=This%20Week%20in%20MMWR%20-%20Vol.%2070%2C%20August%2027%2C%202021&deliveryName=USCDC_921-DM64385)   1. **STAT News**   August 27, 2021  *Does breast density matter for older women’s risk of cancer?*  Breast density is a known risk factor for developing breast cancer, but that well-accepted research finding is derived from studies conducted in women under age 75. That makes sense because breast density declines with age, but cancer epidemiologist Dejana Braithwaite of the University of Florida’s Cancer Control and Population Sciences Program wondered about older women: How much does density drop, and how much might it matter? In an analysis of more than 220,000 mammograms published Thursday in JAMA Oncology, her team reports that density — and the risk of breast cancer — doesn’t disappear.  Link: [breast-density-cancer-risk-older-women](https://www.statnews.com/2021/08/27/breast-density-cancer-risk-older-women/?utm_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm_campaign=42c7de2464-Daily_Recap&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8cab1d7961-42c7de2464-152759366)   1. **STAT News**   August 26, 2021  *My aunt’s ‘Kafkaesque journey’ to get the home care she needs*  A case illustrating why Medicaid recipients must be given a way to independently appeal *all* managed care organizations’ determinations and hold them accountable for improper denials of care.  Link: [Kafkaesque-journey](https://www.statnews.com/2021/08/26/my-aunts-kafkaesque-journey-to-get-the-home-care-she-needs/?utm_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm_campaign=4aadb229e0-Daily_Recap&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8cab1d7961-4aadb229e0-152759366)   1. **National Academy of State Health Policy**   August 16, 2021 (updated)  *States Use Appendix K and Emergency Waivers to Support Home- and Community-Based Services in Response to COVID-19*  To help Medicaid enrollees get the long-term services and supports they need during the COVID-19 crisis, states use waivers and amendments to incorporate more flexibility into their programs. Many states use these tools to modify their home- and community-based services for older adults and their family caregivers during the crisis. This National Academy for State Health Policy’s Appendix K interactive map, supported by The John A. Hartford Foundation, tracks each state’s new flexibilities in modified 1915 (c) and 1115 waivers and includes information about flexibilities in COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Demonstration 1115 waivers. For more information, read [*States Race to Secure Home- and Community-Based Services during COVID-19*](https://www.nashp.org/states-race-to-secure-home-and-community-based-services-during-covid-19/).  Link: [emergency-waivers-to-support-home-and-community-based-services](https://www.statenetwork.org/resource/states-use-appendix-k-and-emergency-waivers-to-support-home-and-community-based-services-in-response-to-covid-19/?utm_source=Weekly+Updates&utm_campaign=921ead07c9-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2021_8_23%28NonStatePolicy%29&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e0e125bf79-921ead07c9-379944581) | | |
| Housing | 1. **Consumer Financial Protection Bureau**   *What to do if you're facing eviction*  Link: [what-to-do-if-you’re-facing-eviction](https://www.consumerfinance.gov/coronavirus/mortgage-and-housing-assistance/renter-protections/what-to-do-if-youre-facing-eviction/)   1. **CommonWealth Magazine**   August 25, 2021  *ARPA funds open the door for major investment in housing*  The governor’s proposal to allocate $1 billion to housing from the ARPA relief funds represents a substantial step toward [the] goal [of closing the racial wealth gap in housing]. The governor’s plan splits the $1 billion into four buckets, which include: housing production, elderly and veteran housing, affordable homeownership production, and mortgage assistance.  Link: [ARPA-funds-open-the-door-for-major-investment-in-housing](https://commonwealthmagazine.org/economy/arpa-funds-open-the-door-for-major-investment-in-housing/) | | |
| Behavioral Health | 1. **Centers for Disease Prevention and Control**   August 27, 2021  *Mental Health and Substance Use Among Adults with Disabilities During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, February–March 2021*  During February–March 2021, 64.1% of surveyed U.S. adults with disabilities reported adverse mental health symptoms or substance use; past-month substance use was higher than that among adults without disabilities (40.6% versus 24.5%, respectively). Among adults with a diagnosis of mental health or substance use conditions, adults with disabilities more frequently (43% versus 35%) reported pandemic-related difficulty accessing related care and medications.  Link: [Mental health and substance use persons with disabilities](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7034a3.htm?s_cid=mm7034a3_e&ACSTrackingID=USCDC_921-DM64385&ACSTrackingLabel=This%20Week%20in%20MMWR%20-%20Vol.%2070%2C%20August%2027%2C%202021&deliveryName=USCDC_921-DM64385)   1. **Kaiser Family Foundation**   August 27, 2021  *The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on LGBT+ People’s Mental Health*  Larger shares of LGBT+ people experienced negative mental health effects from the COVID-19 pandemic than non-LGBT people. While LGBT+ people were more likely to report seeking mental health care during the pandemic, not all those who need services are obtaining them. Many report barriers to receiving care, particularly related to affordability. However, difficulty getting appointments during the pandemic may also play a role, as might negative past provider experiences. Experiences of stigma and discrimination were widespread among LGBT+ people prior to the pandemic and these underlying disparities could make weathering pandemic related stress more challenging. These findings are important both given the mental health disparities LGBT+ populations have traditionally faced and as the pandemic created new stressors disproportionately impacting the community. As such, targeted and culturally appropriate policy solutions and approaches to engaging the LGBT+ community would be beneficial. Additionally, addressing the wider, systemic factors that drive stigma and discrimination may help to mitigate these disparities.  Link: [the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-lgbt-peoples-mental-health](https://www.kff.org/other/issue-brief/the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-lgbt-peoples-mental-health/?utm_medium=email&_hsmi=153137100&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-8UMygc7lT_DKxO5PDcNct1Nlde2uWkcXD3nbDCPqVQBsmLzLL1ySHPx0rjInrc_0m7X2Hpilt8jCrXwiO69-nj1rC-Gw&utm_content=153137100&utm_source=hs_email) | | |
| Workforce / Caregiving | 1. **National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care Podcast**   *Advocating for Essential Caregivers: A Conversation with Family Member Mary Daniel*  Before COVID-19, Mary Daniel would head to the long-term care facility where her husband resided every day after work and spend the evening with him. When facilities were locked down in March, family members were not allowed in, and residents were left without many of the essential supports that family members provided. In this episode we will hear Mary’s story about how she advocated to be reunited with her husband, the national movement she founded, and talk about what we all can do to make a difference today.  [Mary Daniel podcast](http://act.theconsumervoice.org/site/MessageViewer?dlv_id=7529&em_id=4310.0)   1. **Centers for Disease Prevention and Control**   August 27, 2021  *Effectiveness of COVID-19 Vaccines in Preventing SARS-CoV-2 Infection Among Frontline Workers Before and During B.1.617.2 (Delta) Variant Predominance — Eight U.S. Locations, December 2020–August 2021*  During December 14, 2020–April 10, 2021, data from the HEROES-RECOVER Cohorts,\* a network of prospective cohorts among frontline workers, showed that the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna mRNA COVID-19 vaccines were approximately 90% effective in preventing symptomatic and asymptomatic infection with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, in real-world conditions. This report updates vaccine effectiveness (VE) estimates including all COVID-19 vaccines available through August 14, 2021 and examines whether VE differs for adults with increasing time since completion of all recommended vaccine doses. VE before and during SARS-CoV-2 B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant predominance, which coincided with an increase in reported COVID-19 vaccine breakthrough infections, were compared.  Link: [Frontline worker vaccinations](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7034e4.htm?s_cid=mm7034e4_e&ACSTrackingID=USCDC_921-DM64385&ACSTrackingLabel=This%20Week%20in%20MMWR%20-%20Vol.%2070%2C%20August%2027%2C%202021&deliveryName=USCDC_921-DM64385) | | |
| Disability Rights | 1. **The Mighty**   *3 Major Disability-Focused Changes Coming Soon That We Love*  Globally, there are 1.2 billion individuals who have some kind of disability. [That totals 15% of the entire world’s population](https://www.wethe15.org). Still, there are a great deal of barriers—sometimes even physical ones—that disabled individuals must tackle just to see, do, or experience the same as their able-bodied peers.  These three major changes could help eliminate some of those barriers.   * Walt Disney World has announced a [major change to their Disney Accessibility Service or DAS pass system](https://www.themeparktourist.com/news/20210818/31852/walt-disney-world-makes-big-changes-disability-access-service-das-program). * Tréxo Robotics is a company dedicated to “get your child upright and walking” to [promote disabled children’s mobility and health](https://trexorobotics.com). Their robotic [mobility aid](https://themighty.com/2018/07/choosing-the-right-mobility-aid/) acts as a kind of loose harness inside of which the child can be suspended and supported in such a way to allow them to walk. * Venice, Italy is in the initial stages to make one of the world’s most beautiful and iconic cities [completely wheelchair accessible for the residents who live in the area as well as visitors](https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/venice-wheelchair-accessible-route/index.html).   Link: [disability-focused-changes](https://themighty.com/2021/08/disability-focused-changes-disney-world-mobility-aids-italy/?utm_source=newsletter_disability&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter_disability_2021-08-27&%24deep_link=true&%243p=e_cordial&_branch_match_id=772915239709592956)   1. **The Mighty**   *Biden Administration to Cancel Student Debt for over 300,000 Disabled People*  On Thursday, August 19, 2021, the Biden administration and other leading officials announced that they will be erasing the student for over 300,000 Americans [with severe disabilities](https://themighty.com/2021/04/chronic-disability-student-loan-forgiveness/) who are no longer able to earn significant income to pay off their loans. This erases over $5.8 billion in debt.  Link: [Biden-administration-cancels-student-debt-disabled-people](https://themighty.com/2021/08/biden-administration-cancels-student-debt-disabled-people/?utm_source=newsletter_disability&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter_disability_2021-08-27&%24deep_link=true&%243p=e_cordial&_branch_match_id=772915239709592956)   1. **The Mighty**   January 24, 2021  *Why Attendance Policies Hurt Disabled and Chronically Ill Students*  [attendance-policies-hurt-disabled-students](https://themighty.com/2020/01/attendance-policies-hurt-disabled-students/?utm_source=newsletter_disability&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter_disability_2021-08-27&%24deep_link=true&%243p=e_cordial&_branch_match_id=772915239709592956https://themighty.com/2020/01/attendance-policies-hurt-disabled-students/?utm_source=newsletter_disability&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter_disability_2021-08-27&%24deep_link=true&%243p=e_cordial&_branch_match_id=772915239709592956) | | |
| Covid-19 | 1. **\*New York Times**   August 29, 2021 (updated)  *A new study found half of hospitalized Covid patients had lingering symptoms one year later*  Link: [half-of-hospitalized-covid-patients-had-lingering-symptoms](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/08/26/world/covid-delta-variant-vaccine#a-new-study-found-half-of-hospitalized-covid-patients-had-lingering-symptoms-one-year-later)   1. **Centers for Disease Prevention and Control**   August 27, 2021  *Effectiveness of Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna Vaccines in Preventing SARS-CoV-2 Infection Among Nursing Home Residents Before and During Widespread Circulation of the SARS-CoV-2 B.1.617.2 (Delta) Variant — National Healthcare Safety Network, March 1–August 1, 2021*  **What is already known about this topic?**  Early observational studies among nursing home residents showed mRNA vaccines to be 53% to 92% effective against SARS-CoV-2 infection.  **What is added by this report?**  Two doses of mRNA vaccines were 74.7% effective against infection among nursing home residents early in the vaccination program (March–May 2021). During June–July 2021, when B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant circulation predominated, effectiveness declined significantly to 53.1%.  **What are the implications for public health practice?**  Multicomponent COVID-19 prevention strategies, including vaccination of nursing home staff members, residents, and visitors, are critical. An additional dose of COVID-19 vaccine might be considered for nursing home and long-term care facility residents to optimize a protective immune response.  Link: [Vaccination Effectiveness in Nursing Homes](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7034e3.htm?s_cid=mm7034e3_e&ACSTrackingID=USCDC_921-DM64385&ACSTrackingLabel=This%20Week%20in%20MMWR%20-%20Vol.%2070%2C%20August%2027%2C%202021&deliveryName=USCDC_921-DM64385)   1. **Centers for Disease Prevention and Control**   August 27, 2021  *Effectiveness of COVID-19 Vaccines in Preventing SARS-CoV-2 Infection Among Frontline Workers Before and During B.1.617.2 (Delta) Variant Predominance — Eight U.S. Locations, December 2020–August 2021*  During December 14, 2020–April 10, 2021, data from the HEROES-RECOVER Cohorts,\* a network of prospective cohorts among frontline workers, showed that the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna mRNA COVID-19 vaccines were approximately 90% effective in preventing symptomatic and asymptomatic infection with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, in real-world conditions. This report updates vaccine effectiveness (VE) estimates including all COVID-19 vaccines available through August 14, 2021 and examines whether VE differs for adults with increasing time since completion of all recommended vaccine doses. VE before and during SARS-CoV-2 B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant predominance, which coincided with an increase in reported COVID-19 vaccine breakthrough infections, were compared.  Link: [Frontline worker vaccinations](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7034e4.htm?s_cid=mm7034e4_e&ACSTrackingID=USCDC_921-DM64385&ACSTrackingLabel=This%20Week%20in%20MMWR%20-%20Vol.%2070%2C%20August%2027%2C%202021&deliveryName=USCDC_921-DM64385)   1. **\*New York Times**   August 27, 2021  *The Delta variant carries a higher risk of hospitalization, a study finds****.***  People who are infected with the highly contagious Delta variant are twice as likely to be hospitalized as those who are infected with the Alpha variant, according to [a large new British study](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(21)00475-8/fulltext). When the researchers broke down the data by vaccination status, they confirmed that Delta doubled the risk of hospitalization for those who were unvaccinated or had received their first dose less than three weeks earlier. The fully vaccinated group was too small to be rigorously analyzed on its own, the researchers said.  Link: [delta-variant-hospitalization-risk](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/27/health/delta-variant-hospitalization-risk.html?campaign_id=185&emc=edit_yct_20210828&instance_id=39095&nl=coronavirus-tracker&regi_id=76470069&segment_id=67519&te=1&user_id=dd7c8801a664794ad711721ad89bdb18)   1. **Kaiser Family Foundation**   August 27, 2021  *Views Of COVID-19 Vaccines Among LGBT Adults*  This new analysis examines the experiences of LGBT adults from the [July COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor](https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/poll-finding/kff-covid-19-vaccine-monitor-july-2021/) and finds that as a group they are more likely to be vaccinated for COVID-19 and less likely to view getting the vaccine as a health risk compared to non-LGBT adults. Previous analyses have found that the LGBT population bears a disproportionate burden from the pandemic, including [economic hardships](https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/poll-finding/the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-lgbt-people/) and [mental health problems](https://www.kff.org/5e652d2/). In addition, research has found that LGBT individuals have higher rates of [comorbidities](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7005a1.htm?s_cid=mm7005a1_w) and [experience stigma and discrimination in the health system](https://www.kff.org/report-section/health-and-access-to-care-and-coverage-lgbt-individuals-in-the-us-health-challenges/).  Link: [poll-finding/views-of-covid-19-vaccines-among-lgbt-adults](https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/poll-finding/views-of-covid-19-vaccines-among-lgbt-adults/?utm_medium=email&_hsmi=153137100&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9Atctalb2Hcaxi46Bp_R8iB5kJMzWXN1vPS-I7rm7X7lhacctm_pOpmqdlJztw6aAAE6HhR4hUWw3v_FiHzmhdHrsrrg&utm_content=153137100&utm_source=hs_email)   1. **Pro Publica**   August 25, 2021  *A Boy with an Autoimmune Disease Was Ready to Learn in Person. Then His State Banned Mask Mandates.*  High-risk students in states and districts that have made masks optional are staying home. Nationwide, [about 7.3 million students have significant disabilities](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cgg) that impact their education. About 15% of these students receive special education services for health conditions that limit their ability to learn, which include common conditions like diabetes, asthma, or epilepsy, as well as rare disorders.  Chronic diseases affect millions of children nationwide. For example, more than 6 million kids [suffer from asthma](https://www.lung.org/lung-health-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/asthma/learn-about-asthma/asthma-children-facts-sheet), over 200,000 [live with](https://www.jdrf.org/t1d-resources/about/facts/) Type 1 diabetes and more than 14 million [are obese](https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/childhood.html#:~:text=Childhood%20Obesity%20Facts,-Related%20Pages&text=For%20children%20and%20adolescents%20aged,to%2019%2Dyear%2Dolds.).  Link: [autoimmune-disease-was-ready-to-learn-in-person](https://www.propublica.org/article/a-boy-with-an-autoimmune-disease-was-ready-to-learn-in-person-then-his-state-banned-mask-mandates?utm_source=sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter&utm_content=river-links) | | |
| Other | 1. **Massterlist**   August 30, 2021  How do you spend $5 billion?  Gov. Charlie Baker is disappointed.  Why? In his view, the Legislature is not moving quickly enough to distribute billions of dollars in federal COVID aid. Appearing on CBS' Keller at Large Sunday, Baker said he "would obviously like to see the Legislature move quickly on this."  "It's disappointing to me that none of this may start until sometime next year," he said. "I think that's a missed opportunity."  The question of where and how to spend the $5 billion has roiled state politics, with the governor pushing the Legislature for rapid deployment and House and Senate lawmakers moving forward with a hearing process that they say increases transparency and public input.  Several of those hearings have already occurred in the past few months and more are expected when the Legislature returns from its August recess. But the timeline for when the funds will actually be released remains murky.  Baker, for one, did not wait around to put forward a $2.9 billion dollar proposal that floats money to housing, environmental infrastructure, and job training programs. Lawmakers have already held a hearing on Baker's plan, as well as one focused on how to use funds for housing, labor, and workforce development.  "I certainly hope we see progress on it sometime this fall. My view continues to be what it was when we first made this proposal back in June," Baker said. "We thought a lot of this stuff couldn't wait. I especially view that with respect to the housing piece and the environmental infrastructure piece."  House Speaker Ronald Mariano told reporters in early July that he doesn't "think [Baker] should have a monopoly on spending all that federal money.  The governor, however, argues that communities most impacted by COVID and environmental incidents can't wait.  "Just think about all the flooding we've seen since June," Baker said. "It's happened all over the commonwealth and every time that happens, businesses lose customers, in many cases, they have to pay to repair their facilities and their operations. And this is not going away. We're going to be dealing with more storms and storm severity and we really need to get real about this stuff."  Link: <https://massterlist.com/>   1. **Administration on Community Living**   *National Preparedness Month*  Each September, Ready.gov leads the observance of National Preparedness Month, a time to highlight the importance of preparing for disasters and emergencies. The 2021 theme is **“**Prepare to Protect. Preparing for disasters is protecting everyone you love.” Throughout the month, the campaign will focus on several aspects of preparedness for individuals, families, and communities. Visit the [National Preparedness Month](https://www.ready.gov/september) webpage for materials and more information.   1. **\*New York Times**   August 27, 2021  *How to Enjoy Retirement Without Going Broke*  The problem of decumulation is a tricky one, even for Nobel Prize-winning economists.  Link: [how-to-enjoy-retirement-without-going-broke](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/27/opinion/how-to-enjoy-retirement-without-going-broke.html) | | |
|  | \*May require registration before accessing article. | | |
| American Society on Aging  The Legacy Interviews | **American Society on Aging**  Wednesdays, June 23 through September 8, 2021, 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. *The Legacy Interviews*  The Legacy Interviews is a 12-week webcast series produced by the American Society on Aging will featuring interviews with diverse legendary pathfinders who have spent decades in the field of aging, health, and social services. Each interview will be conducted by Ken Dychtwald, to capture the wisdom and character of gerontology’s pioneers to inform, inspire and guide current and future professionals in the fields of aging and related services for years to come.  These conversations will delve into topics such as:   * How our healthcare, financial, social services and infrastructure systems can better support older adults and their caregivers; * Ageism in the workplace, politics, media and popular culture; * The opportunities and obligations of today’s and tomorrow’s elders; * The individual, social and systemic dimensions of diversity and equity.   Scheduled interviews:   * September 1 | **Marc Freedman, MBA**, CEO and President of Encore.org * September 8 | **John W. Rowe, MD**, Julius B. Richmond Professor of Health Policy and Aging at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. Previously, he served as Chairman and CEO of Aetna, Inc.   <https://tinyurl.com/ASALegacyInterviews> | | |
| Newly recommended websites | **TheMighty.com**  <https://themighty.com>  The Mighty is a comprehensive website, dealing with many kinds of disabilities and chronic health issues for all ages. Included are schedules of upcoming virtual events. Other features include information on how to use the website, including writing a column on any disability, rare disease, chronic illness, etc. Some interest groups include: Ask a Bipolar Advocate; Chronic Illness Support Group; Navigating PTSD. Access to the website is free; to get email alerts on new articles or events happening, a free subscription is required. | | |
| Previously recommended websites | The comprehensive list of recommended websites has migrated to the Dignity Alliance MA website: <https://dignityalliancema.org/resources/>. Only new recommendations will be listed in *The Tuesday Digest.* | | |
| Previously posted funding opportunities | For open funding opportunities previously posted in *The Tuesday Digest* please see <https://dignityalliancema.org/funding-opportunities/>. | | |
| Nursing Home Closures | Closure Notices and Relocation Plans available at: <https://tinyurl.com/MANursingHomeClosures> | | |
| Websites of Dignity Alliance Massachusetts Members | See: <https://dignityalliancema.org/about/organizations/> | | |
| **Participation opportunities with Dignity Alliance Massachusetts**  Most workgroups meet bi-weekly via Zoom.  Please contact workgroup lead for more information | **Workgroup** | **Workgroup lead** | **Email** |
| General Membership | Bill Henning  Paul Lanzikos | [bhenning@bostoncil.org](mailto:bhenning@bostoncil.org)  [paul.lanzikos@gmail.com](mailto:paul.lanzikos@gmail.com) |
| Behavioral Health | Frank Baskin | [baskinfrank19@gmail.com](mailto:baskinfrank19@gmail.com) |
| Communications | Pricilla O’Reilly  Samantha VanSchoick | [prisoreilly@gmail.com](mailto:prisoreilly@gmail.com)  [svanschoick@cil.org](mailto:svanschoick@cil.org) |
| Facilities (Nursing homes, rest homes, assisted living) | Arlene Germain | [agermain@manhr.org](mailto:agermain@manhr.org) |
| Home and Community Based Services | Meg Coffin | [mcoffin@centerlw.org](mailto:mcoffin@centerlw.org) |
| Housing | Shaya French | [sfrench@bostoncil.org](mailto:sfrench@bostoncil.org) |
| Legislative | Richard Moore | [rmoore8743@charter.net](mailto:rmoore8743@charter.net) |
| Topical Conversations | Lachan Forrow | [lforrow@bidmc.harvard.edu](mailto:lforrow@bidmc.harvard.edu) |
| Veteran Services | James Lomastro | [jimlomastro@comcast.net](mailto:jimlomastro@comcast.net) |
| ***The Tuesday Digest*** | For a free weekly subscription to *The Tuesday Digest:*  <https://dignityalliancema.org/contact/sign-up-for-emails/> | | |
| Note of thanks | Thanks to the contributors to this issue of *The Tuesday Digest*   * Wynn Gerhard * Dick Moore * Sandy Novack * Dorothy Weitzman   Special thanks to Sue Rorke and Paul Spooner with the MetroWest Center for Independent Living for their assistance with the website and MailChimp versions of *The Tuesday Digest.*  *If you have submissions for inclusion in The Tuesday Digest or have questions or comments, please submit them to* [*paul.lanzikos@gmail.com*](mailto:paul.lanzikos@gmail.com)*.* | | |
| *Dignity Alliance Massachusetts is a broad-based coalition of organizations and individuals pursuing fundamental changes in the provision of long-term services, support, and care for older adults and persons with disabilities.*  *Our guiding principle is the assurance of dignity for those receiving the services as well as for those providing them.*  *The information presented in “The Tuesday Digest” is obtained from publicly available sources and does not necessarily represent positions held by Dignity Alliance Massachusetts.*  *Previous issues of The Tuesday Digest are available at:* [*https://dignityalliancema.org/the-tuesday-digest/*](https://dignityalliancema.org/the-tuesday-digest/)  *For more information about Dignity Alliance Massachusetts, please visit* [*www.DignityAllianceMA.org*](http://www.DignityAllianceMA.org)*.* | | | |