



AFFORDABLE CARE ACT MASSACHUSETTS IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

April 24, 2017

Quick Links

[MA-ACA Website](#)



These Updates, published by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) in consultation with the other state agencies involved in ACA implementation, will bring you news related to the implementation of provisions of the ACA here in Massachusetts.

Grants and Demonstrations

The ACA provides funding opportunities to transform how health care is delivered, expand access to care and support healthcare workforce training.

Grant Activity

For information about ACA grants awarded to and grant proposals submitted by the Commonwealth, visit the Grants page of the **Massachusetts National Health Care Reform website** at: <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/commissions-and-initiatives/healthcare-reform/national-health-care-reform-plan/grants-and-demonstrations.html>

Guidance

4/18/17 HHS/CMS published a final rule called "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; Market Stabilization." The proposed rule implements portions of the following ACA Sections: § 1302, § 1321.

According to CMS, this final Market Stabilization rule will help lower premiums, stabilize individual and small group markets, increase choices for individuals seeking insurance and is designed to provide some relief for patients and issuers now.

CMS notes that the final rule makes several policy changes to improve the market and promote stability, including: Adjusting the annual open enrollment period for 2018 to more closely align with Medicare and the private market (November 1 – December 15, 2017); requiring supporting documentation for special enrollment periods and encouraging individuals to stay enrolled in coverage all year; allows issuers to require individuals to pay back past due premiums before enrolling in a plan with same issuer the following year; allows issuers additional actuarial value flexibility to develop more choices with lower premium options for consumers, and to continue offering existing plans; and eliminates duplicative review of network adequacy by federal government.

Read the final rule (which was published in the Federal Register on April 18, 2017) at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/04/18/2017-07712/patient-protection-and-affordable-care-act-market-stabilization>

News

4/6/17 HHS/CMS selected 32 participants to serve as local 'hubs' linking clinical and community services through the Accountable Communities Model. This program is authorized under ACA Section: § 3021

CMS announced the participants for the Assistance and Alignment Tracks of the Accountable Health Communities (AHC) model. According to CMS, by addressing critical drivers of poor health and high health care costs, the model aims to reduce avoidable health care utilization, impact the cost of health care, and improve health and quality of care for Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries. The organizations in the AHC Assistance Track will provide person-centered community service navigation services to assist high-risk beneficiaries with accessing needed services. The organizations in the AHC Alignment Track will also provide community service navigation services, as well as encourage community-level partner alignment to ensure that needed services and supports are available and responsive to beneficiaries' needs. These tracks will begin on May 1, 2017 with a five-year performance period.

The Accountable Health Communities Model is authorized under Section 1115A of the Social Security Act (§3021 of the ACA), which established the Innovation Center to test innovative payment and service delivery models to reduce Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program expenditures while maintaining or enhancing the quality of beneficiaries' care. Through the Innovation Center, CMS will implement and test the three-track AHC model to support local communities in addressing the health-related social needs of Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries by bridging the gap between clinical and community service providers over a five-year period. Social needs include housing instability, food insecurity, utility needs, interpersonal violence and transportation.

To view a list of the Assistance and Alignment Tracks bridge organizations in the Accountable Health Communities Model (note that none are located in Massachusetts), please visit: <https://innovation.cms.gov/initiatives/ahcm>.

For more information about the Accountable Health Communities Model, please visit: <https://innovation.cms.gov/initiatives/ahcm>.

Bookmark the **Massachusetts National Health Care Reform website** at: [National Health Care Reform](#) to read updates on ACA implementation in Massachusetts.

Remember to check the Mass.Gov website at: [Dual Eligibles](#) for information on the "**Integrating Medicare and Medicaid for Dual Eligible Individuals**" initiative.



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