



WEEKLY E-MAILING

August 2, 2022

Table of Contents

[Helpful Links](#)

[New 988 Dialing Code for Suicide Prevention & Mental Health Crisis](#)

[Gun Violence: The Impact on Public Health](#)

[Medicare: Development of Appeal Process for Certain Hospital "Observation Status" Patients](#)

[Justice Department and HHS Issue Guidance on Nondiscrimination in Telehealth](#)

[National Center on Law & Elder Rights Free Webcast:](#)

[Home Equity Theft & Other Emerging Scams Impacting Older Adults](#)

[Accessory Dwelling Units Build Affordability and Hidden Density](#)

[DSS: The Affordable Connectivity Program](#)

[Nominations for the 2022 Virginia Housing Awards](#)

[2022 Children's Health Insurance Program Beneficiary Profile & Infographic](#)

[Link to DARS Independent Living Newsletter](#)

Helpful Links

ACL News & Information

Here is a link to news & information from the Administration for Community Living (ACL):

<https://acl.gov/>

ADvancing States (NASUAD) Information

Here is a link to state technical assistance from ADvancing States:

<http://www.advancingstates.org/state-technical-assistance/enhancedtechnical-assistance>

New 988 Dialing Code for Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis

988 – the new universal three-digit dialing code for suicide prevention and mental health crisis – goes into effect nationwide on Saturday, July 16, 2022. SAMSHA (the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) will administer the new “[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#),” which will replace the current toll-free National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255). Importantly, the pre-existing 10-digit number will remain active and will connect callers to the new 988 Lifeline.

The 988 Lifeline is designed to become a simple alternative to both 911 and the existing 1-800 number. One of the goals of the new number is to reduce the use of 911 for suicide and mental health crises, because calling 911 in such situations too often results in inadequate or inappropriate intervention by the police, or unnecessary hospitalization or incarceration. Calling 988 instead will direct the caller to representatives specifically trained in the management of suicide risk and other mental health crises.

This new, simplified tool is critical for older adults and those living with a disability because such individuals are at greater risk for mental health crisis and suicide. As SAMSHA pointed out in its [Appropriations Report for 988](#), suicide rates are higher among older adults. Among men, the suicide rate is highest for adults aged 75 and older, while among women, the suicide rate is highest among those aged 45 to 64. Likewise, [a recent study](#) found that people with disabilities were significantly more likely than those without disabilities to report suicidal ideation, planning, or attempt. The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline offers a simpler and more effective way for older adults and those living with disabilities to access help in the event of a mental health crisis.

Some helpful tips about using Lifeline:

- After dialing 988, a caller in need of the Veterans Crisis Line can then press “1” to be routed to that resource, while a caller in need of assistance in Spanish can press “2.” Interpretation through Language Line Solutions is also available in over 250 other languages.
- People who are deaf or hard of hearing can access TTY by dialing [711](#) then [1-800-273-8255](#) or using their preferred relay service. Lifeline is in the process of expanding to video phone service.
- Lifeline also offers services through chat and text (in English only).

For more information, please see the following resources:

- SAMSHA, “[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#)”

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline [general information](#)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, "[988 Planning Grants: A funding opportunity by Vibrant Emotional Health and the Lifeline to plan for the implementation of 988](#)"
- Health Affairs, "[Implementing The 988 Hotline: A Critical Window to Decriminalize Mental Health](#)"

Gun Violence: The Impact on Public Health

Gun violence is a major public health problem in the United States, with negative mental and physical impacts that reach far beyond any single event and may endure for years. Between 2015 and 2020, both overall firearm deaths and the number of mass shootings increased across the US. Among children and adolescents, guns have become the leading cause of death nationwide with nearly 6.1 deaths per 100,000 people relating to firearms.

Poor mental health is often stigmatized as being the cause of an attack, but mental illness is not a significant risk factor for gun violence. When compared to other high-income countries, the US ranks highest in levels of gun violence and gun ownership, yet rates of mental illness in the US are similar to those in other countries.

This infographic explores the mental health impacts from mass shootings and firearm related incidents as well as the recent federal legislation to address gun violence.

[More on this Infographic](#)

Medicare Announces Development of Appeal Process for Certain Hospital “Observation Status” Patients

Kathy B. Miller, Director of Aging Programs

As the result of a court case, the Medicare.gov website now alerts a nationwide class of Medicare beneficiaries that they “have appeal rights” when a hospital changes their status from inpatient to outpatient observation, and that the appeal process is currently under development. View the information [here](#) (click on “Appeals in Original Medicare” and scroll to “Coming Soon: Appeal when a hospital changes your status from an inpatient to an outpatient with observation services.”).

The “observation” designation can have severe ramifications for beneficiaries. Many will face no coverage for post-hospital nursing home care, which requires a prior “inpatient” hospitalization of at least three days. Time spent in observation status does not count towards the required inpatient stay, even though observation stays can last several days and the care can be indistinguishable from inpatient care.

The Center for Medicare Advocacy, Justice in Aging, and Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati represent a class of Medicare beneficiaries who were not permitted to appeal the issue of whether their hospitalizations should be covered as inpatient services or outpatient observation services. Many class members had to pay thousands of dollars for medically necessary nursing home care, or forgo that care altogether, because they were labeled as “observation status” and not permitted to appeal for inpatient coverage. In 2020, a federal court [held](#) that as a matter of due process, Medicare must provide appeal procedures for such patients. The ruling was [affirmed](#) in January 2022.

As of July 26, 2022, the Medicare website contains general information about the court decision and who will be eligible to appeal. It explains that the court-ordered appeal process is still under development and not currently available. It also states that appeals can be filed once the process is set up, and more information will be posted on Medicare.gov when it is available. Class counsel is continuing to advocate for implementation as soon as possible.

- For more information about the court decision, see the Center’s [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

**Justice Department and HHS Issue Guidance on Nondiscrimination in
Telehealth 07/29/2022**

Kathy B. Miller, Director of Aging Programs

As we commemorate the 32nd anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Justice Department and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) are partnering to publish guidance on the protections in federal nondiscrimination laws, including the ADA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 1557 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, requiring that telehealth be accessible to people with disabilities and limited English proficient persons.

ADUs Build Affordability and Hidden Density

by Maria Dougherty

The FWD #169 • 505 Words

Accessory Dwelling Units can modestly increase housing stock without drastically changing surrounding neighborhoods.

With housing prices rising beyond the reach of low- and middle-income Americans, many cities across the country are exploring new options, including smaller, add-on dwellings to create more affordable rentals. These are commonly known as garage apartments, in-law suites, carriage houses, and more, but the official name for apartments created from converted space is accessory dwelling units or **ADUs**.

[Affordable housing advocates promote ADUs](#) as a flexible way to modestly increase housing stock without drastically altering the neighborhoods that surround them, and a steady stream of new [city, county and state regulations and ordinances](#) is making them easier to build. The American Planning Association cites ADU reform as one of the many policy levers available to planners leading local change efforts to [rethink zoning in communities](#).

In issue [#116](#)—two years ago!—we showcased the Austin Alley Flat Initiative expanding accessory dwelling units in Texas and hosted a [webinar](#) digging into ADU design and policy. What has changed since then and what else have we learned?

Statewide, cities including [Alexandria](#), Charlottesville, and [Arlington](#) now have ordinances and zoning that allow for ADUs. A number of other cities, including Virginia Beach and Blacksburg, are also updating or reviewing their ordinances with an eye towards potential new ADU development, and Richmond’s ADU public input process will begin this August.

In 2021, lawmakers in the General Assembly requested a comprehensive state of the market study on ADUs in the Commonwealth. HousingForward Virginia, along with researchers from the Virginia Center for Housing Research and George

Mason University, helped the Department of Housing and Community Development and a diverse advisory group complete the report.

Based on relevant housing informant interviews, literature review best practices, and stakeholder discussions, some of the key findings include:

1. While ADUs are not enough to meet most major demand, they are a useful means of supplying more affordable housing in high-cost neighborhoods and helpful where land is limited to create “hidden density.”
2. Since the construction of an ADU effectively has no land cost, it is possible to add housing units at a lower cost than building a new home or buying an existing home. However, several surveys and [reports](#) point out that difficulty in financing remains a key barrier.
3. Educating homeowners and HOAs is essential. Builders, real estate and mortgage professionals, and lenders all have roles to play in making homeowners aware of ADUs and the flexibilities and opportunities they offer.
4. ADUs represent a potential wealth-building opportunity for cost burdened homeowners, a way for elderly residents to age in place while maintaining privacy, and an alternative for young people who want to live at home to save money.

The full 2021 ADU study can be read [here](#). As zoning and density policies are changed and adopted across the state, localities can consider if ADUs make sense for their communities’ affordable housing needs and keep an eye on places where ADUs have already been adopted to see how they progress and integrate into existing development. The post [ADUs Build Affordability and Hidden Density](#) appeared first on [HousingForward Virginia](#).

Spread the Word: The Affordable Connectivity Program

Charlotte Arbogast, MS, Policy Analyst

The **Virginia Department of Social Services (DSS)** is working to promote the **Affordable Connectivity Program**, a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) benefit program that helps ensure that households can afford the broadband they need for work, school, healthcare and more.

DSS is hoping your organization will work with her to ensure information about this vital program is shared with your customers.

Here is a link to the ACP Consumer Outreach Tool Kit: [ACP Consumer Outreach Toolkit | Federal Communications Commission \(fcc.gov\)](https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/affordable-connectivity-program/ACP-Consumer-Outreach-Toolkit). This site has a wealth of information about how to spread the word, tips for outreach partners, and flyers that can be distributed.

For questions, contact:

Jennifer Murray
Project Management, Benefit Programs
Virginia Department of Social Services
801 East Main Street, Richmond, VA 23219
(804) 804-432-1713

jennifer.murray@dss.virginia.gov

www.dss.virginia.gov

2022 Virginia Housing Awards Nominations

Charlotte Arbogast, MS, Policy Analyst

Submit your nominations for the 2022 Virginia Housing Awards!

Mark your calendar to attend the [2022 Virginia Governor's Housing Conference \(VAGHC\)](#) on Nov. 16-18 at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City in Arlington, Virginia. Join us for Virginia's largest housing and community development event. [Dr. Elliot Eisenberg has been announced as this year's keynote speaker!](#)

Each year, one of the conference's highlights is the Virginia Housing Awards Luncheon, which recognizes innovative, effective efforts that address our housing needs. All awards are presented at the conference during the luncheon on Thursday, Nov. 17.

The six award categories for 2022 include:

Best Affordable Housing Development

The award in this category will go to a housing development that is innovative in its concept and design and exceptional in meeting the needs of the targeted client population. Nominations may be for new construction, renovation or adaptive reuse projects. Examples might include a housing development for senior citizens that is designed with their needs in mind or an affordable housing development that will offer low-income persons an opportunity to become homeowners for the first time.

Best Housing Program or Service

The award in this category will go to a housing program or service that has demonstrated innovative and creative efforts in providing services or assistance to citizens in need of help in meeting any aspect of housing needs. Examples might include financial counseling programs for prospective homeowners, shelters for homeless individuals or families, programs to assist homeless citizens' transition into permanent housing or fair housing programs.

Best Housing Preservation/Revitalization Effort

The award in this category will go to a housing activity that preserves existing housing or uses housing as a critical component of a broad revitalization effort. Examples might include a housing rehabilitation program that allows residents to remain in their homes while improving the overall conditions of the neighborhood or the development of affordable housing in a structure not previously used for housing that contributes to a revitalization effort.

Outstanding Rural Community Development

This award will reflect superior rural community development efforts that include an affordable housing element. Nominations may be for new construction, preservation, renovation or adaptive reuse projects. Downtown revitalization projects, which include a substantial housing component, are also eligible as are broader community and economic projects which feature the creation or preservation of workforce housing. Examples might include preservation and rehabilitation of an existing neighborhood, repurposing a derelict, underutilized building for mixed use, revitalization of a business district corridor where the development of housing units significantly contributes to the vitality of the area or housing development to support job creation and retention activities.

Community Engagement and Inclusivity Award

The award recognizes projects or practices or policies that exemplify intentional efforts to create affordable and inclusive, diverse housing opportunities. Projects and efforts that result in the expansion of mixed income, accessibility, income integration and inclusiveness in neighborhoods and communities are the focus of this award category. Further, efforts which exemplify community engagement activities to give voice to stakeholders, particularly to maximize inclusivity and diversity, are eligible. Examples may include a notable effort to bring workforce housing into a community where very little currently exists, a locality that has adopted inclusionary housing policies, projects which have resulted in a deconcentrating of poverty, organizations leading the industry by promoting inclusionary practices or efforts to provide integrated housing opportunities for a range of special needs

populations, or listening and engagement sessions which ultimately result in broader participation by community members as it relates to housing and neighborhood development.

Best Regional Partnership

Regional collaborations are essential to maintaining safe, supportive and affordable housing and sparking economic and community development in communities across the commonwealth. This award will go to a regional effort that exemplifies how leveraging successful partnerships can lead to vibrant communities. Whether a collaboration of regional organizations, localities or a public-private partnership, this award will demonstrate how regional teamwork is impacting a community.

Nominations must be received by 5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 2, 2022.

For more information about the Virginia Housing Awards, contact Rhonda Spear at (804) 371-7000 or rhonda.spear@dhcd.virginia.gov

[Submit a Nomination](#)

For more information on the conference, visit vaghc.com.

2022 Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Beneficiary Profile and Infographic

Charlotte Arbogast, MS, Policy Analyst

[View in browser](#) | Distributed by Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services (CMCS)

Today, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the **2022 Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Beneficiary Profile and Infographic**. The Beneficiary Profile and associated Infographic provide an overview of the enrollment, expenditures, characteristics, health status and experience of the beneficiaries served by Medicaid and CHIP.

- Learn more here: <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/quality-of-care/index.html>

Link to DARS Independent Living Monthly Newsletter

Kevin Koziol, Director of Independent Living

The current issue of IL Impact is available here:

<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/IL-Impact-Newsletter.html?soid=1134646283912&aid=L0fKZoz9eM4>
