



EUGENE S. FARLEY, JR. HEALTH POLICY CENTER

Friday's Features

Issue 012717

Happy Friday Everyone,

I apologize that last week's features didn't hit your 'inbox.' We have switched distribution list hosts and for some reason last week's email didn't transmit. If you become aware of other issues with this new option, please let me know. Unfortunately I am unable to test the 'look' of this email, so I'm hoping that there will be a link at the bottom that allows you to unsubscribe to this list if desired, as well as to be able to subscribe for those who wish to share this email with friends/colleagues. I guess this will be considered my "test."

- **News, Announcements, Celebrations**

- *Re-thinking Suicide Prevention: The Challenge of Increasing Rates of Self-Injury Mortality* is the title of a seminar to be given February 14th, 1-2PM on the Anschutz Medical Campus in Ed 2N, #1201. Dr. Eric D. Caine, Director of Injury Control Research Center for Suicide Prevention and Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Rochester Medical Center will give this lecture. For questions, contact Sara Brandspigel 303-724-6998.
- [Integrated Behavioral Health Academy](#) is offering training February 21-22 at the Westside Family Health Center in Denver. Two courses...4-hour training for primary care providers and clinical support staff new to integrated behavioral health care and a 12-hour course geared for BH professionals new to behavioral health delivery in primary care settings are being offered.
- [The Collaborative Family Healthcare Association](#) is establishing a speaker/consultant bureau to help build technical assistance for the benefit of the field. If you are interested in participating as a contract consult you can apply through the above link. Applications are encouraged by February 28th. Qualifications include 5+ years of applied experience in either academic/clinical integrated behavioral health settings, 2+ years consulting experience in identified areas, evidence of scholarship in BH integration (research/publications), demonstrated experience/accomplishments in identified areas, and CFHA membership.

- **Policy Efforts**

- [The Politics of Medicaid](#) is a book (one of Ben Miller's favorites on the topic) by Laura Katz Olson, an expert on health, again, and long-term care policy, published in 2010. She unravels the multifaceted and perplexing puzzle of Medicaid with respect to those who invest in and benefit from the program.

- [*Caps on Federal Medicaid Funding Would Give States Flexibility to Cut, Stymie Innovation*](#) is an article by Judith Solomon posted on *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities* who describes what it would mean to convert Medicaid to a block grant or a per capita cap, as Republican leaders support...resulting in a drastic cut in federal funding for the program over time.
- [*To Lower the Cost of Health Care, Invest in Social Services*](#) is a posting on the *Health Affairs Blog* by Kenneth Davis about evidence overseas and at home tells us social services should be considered a component of overall health care spending. He suggests Expanding health counseling, nutritional programs, the availability of affordable housing and engaging more caseworkers in patient outreach all can have societal impact.
- [*Obamacare's Demise Is A Looming Disaster for Mental Health*](#) is an article by Issie Lapowsky in *Science* that reports how mental health and substance abuse issues have become a key talking point for Trump, yet late last week, Senate and House Republicans set in motion the first steps of a plan that researchers warn could cut mental health and substance abuse treatment off at the knees: the repeal of Obamacare.
- [*High-Risk Pools for Uninsurable Individuals*](#) is an issue brief posted on *The Henry Kaiser Family Foundation website* by Karen Pollitz about how proposals have emerged that would repeal or weaken rules prohibiting health insurance discrimination based on health status. This issue brief reviews the history of the state high-risk pool programs from the past several decades, to provide context for some of the potential benefits and challenges of a high-risk pool as part of HR 2653.
- [*Trump White House abruptly halts Obamacare ads*](#) is a posting on *Politico* by Paul Demko about how the Trump administration has pulled the plug on all Obamacare outreach and advertising in the final days of the 2017 enrollment season, though individuals can still sign up for care plans until the January 31st deadline.
- [*What Medicaid Block Grants Would Mean for Seniors*](#) is a story by Howard Gleckman on the *Forbes* site about how more than four of every 10 Medicaid dollars are spent on people with disabilities...and though often ignored, these people would be profoundly affected if the program is redesigned.
- [*Dayton, GOP legislators strike deal on insurance rebates*](#) is a story in the *StarTribune* by Erin Golden about how 125,000 Minnesotans who face surging health insurance premiums can expect rebates funded by the state soon due to a compromise between Governor Mark Dayton and Republicans who control the Legislature.
- [*SB17-065 Transparency in Direct Pay Health Care Prices*](#) is the proposed bill being considered by Colorado legislation looking at health care prices and transparency.
- [*'Not Turning Back': California Governor Vows to Protect State's Health Care*](#) is a story by Pauline Bartolone on the *Kaiser Health News* site about California, a state more than others, has embraced the ACA; and Governor Brown told state legislators and appointees that he will join with other Governors and Senators to do all he can to protect the health care of people and has no intention of turning back on advances to date.
- [*Health insurers quietly shape Obamacare replacement with fewer risks*](#) is an article by Caroline Humer and Susan Cornwell posted to the *Reuters* site talks of how health insurers including Independence Blue Cross and Molina Healthcare, Inc. are recommending ways to put more control over insurance in the hands of states as the federal oversight of Obamacare is dismantled, and emphasize the importance of keeping government subsidies for low income people.

- [*The Meaning of 'Access' to Health Care*](#) is a story in *The Atlantic* by Olga Khazan that discusses why Republicans are emphasizing “universal access” over “universal coverage,” a term (access) that means a person would have access if they had the financial means.
 - [*Trump advisor says Medicaid will become a block grant. What would that mean for Colorado?*](#) Is a story in *Denverite* by Erica Meltzer who reports that “it depends on how much money Congress makes available, what conditions it puts on that money, and how it’s allowed to grow. Governor Hickenlooper’s concern is that it will leave states carrying more of the costs and “force us to make impossible choices in our Medicaid program.”
 - [*Taking the Long View on Health Care: A note to Congress*](#) is a posting on the *Milbank Memorial Fund Blog: The View from Here* by Christopher Koller, President, who is suggesting three considerations for discussion as both Houses continue to debate whether and how the ACA should be repealed and what it would be replaced with...1) health insurance matters, 2) health insurance is not enough, and 3) it’s the costs. Koller ends his piece with, “For the problem of our expensive health care system that does not improve the health of our populations, it is important that your ACA deliberations avoid well-known, near, plausible, and wrong solutions.”
 - [*Haight Ashbury’s Free Health Clinic: Middle-Aged and Still Groovy*](#) is an *NPR* story by Laurie Udesky about the history of the 50 year-old free clinic that has evolved into a multi-million-dollar conglomerate called HealthRIGHT360.
- **Research, Data, Evaluation**
 - [*Seeking Mental Health Care Early in Adolescence Tied to Lower Depression Risk Later*](#) is an article on the *NEJM Journal Watch* by Kelly Young that discusses a study in the UK where researchers surveyed 1200 adolescents aged 14-17 years. It was discovered that for adolescents with mental health disorders contact with a mental health provider in early adolescence was associated with reduced risk for depression three years later.
 - [*Right Place, Right Time: Consumer Perspectives*](#) is a report on the *Altarum Institute* website about a project that investigated how vulnerable consumers search for and use health care information, and how that information can be made more useful and accessible. It seems that most of these consumers seek health care information from providers, friends and family, and online searches; but they are dissatisfied with health care cost information.
 - [*90 Strangers in 30 Days: From Painfully Shy to Socially Skilled*](#) is a Ted Talk about a self-study made by writer Andrew Elsass who struggled with shyness and social anxiety for most of his life. He challenged himself to talk to 90 strangers in 30 days, kept track of his interactions and after talking to 118 people realized social skills can be learned.
 - [*Five questions for Jill Landsbaugh Kaar*](#) is a story in *CU Connections* by Cynthia Pasquale about CU pediatrician, Jill Landsbaugh Kaar and her work related to childhood obesity related to the rise in Type 2 diabetes.
 - [*Looking at ants to find answers about aggression*](#) is a story in *CU Denver Today* by Michael Davidson about research done by Michael Greene and Andrew Bubak involving pavement ants. They report that collective intelligence of ants living in

huge colonies is one of the reasons they have survived and it's all the more impressive because ants don't give or take orders from each other.

- [*Building a Culture of Workplace Health: More Complicated than Offering Workers Money to Be Healthy*](#) is a posting on the *Health Affairs Blog* by Ron Goetzel and colleagues that highlights a foundational difference between effective and ineffective wellness programs is their intervention focus.
- [*Do high-deductible plans make the health care system better?*](#) is a story by Dan Gorenstein posted on *Marketplace* about physician and Harvard healthy policy professor, Dr. Ashish Jha, who conducted a personal experiment...that of switching his family's care to a high-deductible plan to determine how such a program would influence health care. He learned what many health care researchers are finding...that people behave differently, which is not always in their best interest.
- [*Stop smoking services may boost mental health of people with depression*](#) is an article in *Science Daily* that reports on a study by UK and Czech researchers who found that some smokers with depression who successfully quit smoking using smoking cessation services experienced an improvement in their mental health.
- [*Who Is Medicaid For?*](#) is an article by Kevin Drum on *Mother Jones* who reports that the real reason the Republicans are gung ho about block grants is that they will steadily reduce spending on Medicaid. Those most affected are poor adults, poor kids, the elderly, and the blind and disabled.
- [*How Iceland Got Teens to Say No to Drugs*](#) is an interesting story in *The Atlantic* by Emma Young that discusses how Iceland drastically reduced its teen substance use rates where the community made changes based on local data that had huge implications for substance use prevention. The lead scientist, Harvey Milkman, is a psychology professor at Metro State in Denver.

Post-Truth Era vs Post-Trust Era

[*A Finder's Guide to Facts*](#) is an NPR story by Steve Inskeep who offers guidance when reading/hearing news stories about how to judge the value, and reminds us that learning the truth is a process.

Have a good one.