

Office of Community Living Update Webinar for Providers & Case Managers

March 17, 2022

Agenda - Providers

- **Pause on PARs**
DOJ Findings
Public Health Emergency Unwind
Budget Update
HCBS ARPA 2.11% Rate Increase Extension
Base Wage Reporting
Colin Laughlin, Office of Community Living Deputy Director, HCPF
- **Case Management Updates**
Rhyann Lubitz, Case Management Quality Performance Section
Manager, HCPF
- **IDD Awareness Month**
Ellen Jensby, Senior Director of Public Policy & Operations, Alliance

- **Brain Injury Awareness Month**
Gavin Attwood, CEO, Brain Injury Alliance of CO
- **Health Equity Plan**
Colin Laughlin, Office of Community Living Deputy
Director, HCPF



Pause on PARs:
**Pediatric Long-Term Home Health
Therapies and Services**



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PARs Paused...

Effective Feb. 28, the pause on the requirement to submit a PAR includes:

- Pediatric long-term home health CNA services
- Pediatric long-term home health therapies: occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech-language pathology therapy
- Pediatric long-term home health intermittent skilled nursing

Why the PAR Pause?

- We heard denial rates were much higher for *specific services*, especially CNA.
- We discovered CNA PARs were denied at higher rates Nov. 2021 - Jan. 2022 when PARs were briefly on.
- Two-thirds of *CNA LTHH PARS* during this three-month period were denied.
- **We chose to pause PARs because of this identified discrepancy.**

Our two-year pause allows us to comprehensively evaluate the cause(s) and investigate options, develop solutions *together*.

Partnering with Kepro on Areas of Opportunity

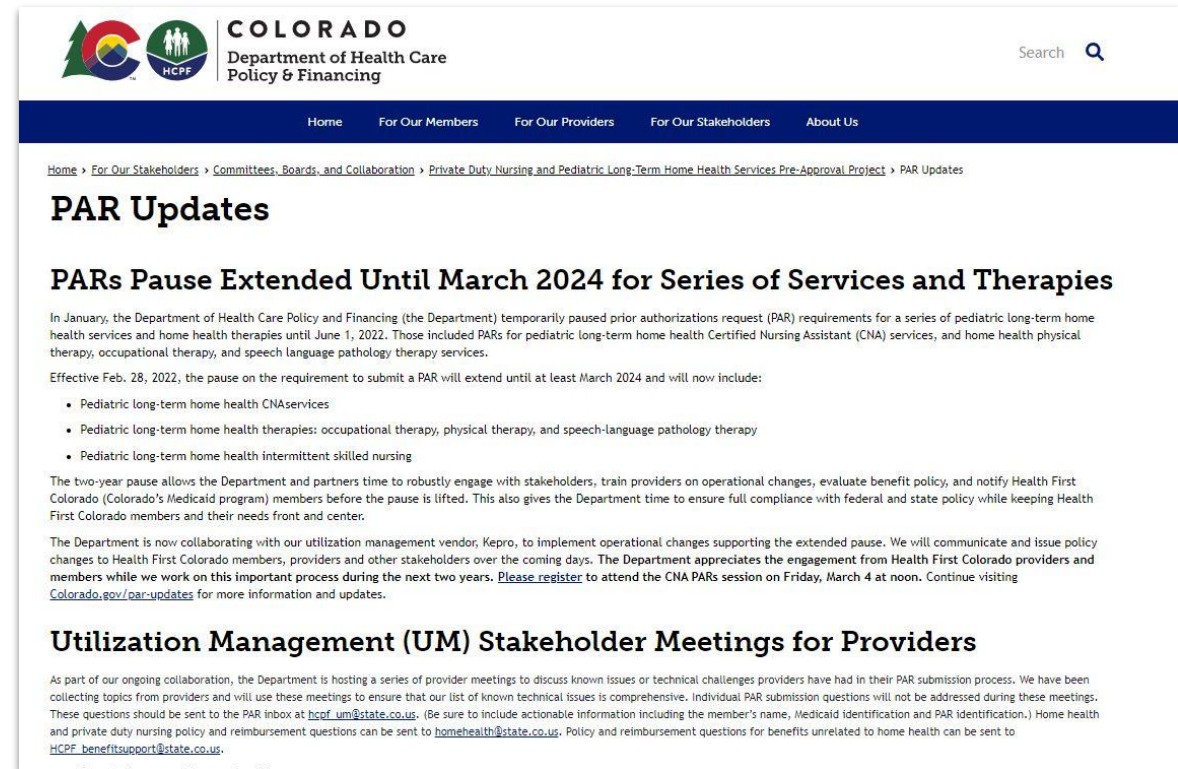


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- Listening sessions with outpatient Speech Therapy, OT/PT, and Durable Medical Equipment providers to understand issues with PAR submission process
- Planning underway for smaller task forces to address policy issues, PAR processes, systems and training issues within state and federal constraints for DME and therapies
- Kepro participated in the listening sessions and will participate on the task forces in addition to their ongoing work to improve provider satisfaction
- Member communication to follow provider meetings

Keep Up to Date



The screenshot shows the website header with the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy & Financing logo and navigation links. The main content area features a breadcrumb trail, a search bar, and a title 'PAR Updates'. The primary article is titled 'PARs Pause Extended Until March 2024 for Series of Services and Therapies'. The text explains that PAR requirements for pediatric long-term home health services and home health therapies were paused until June 1, 2022, and are now extended to at least March 2024. A list of affected services includes pediatric long-term home health CNA services, pediatric long-term home health therapies (occupational, physical, and speech-language pathology), and pediatric long-term home health intermittent skilled nursing. The article also mentions a two-year pause for stakeholder engagement and collaboration with Kepro for utilization management. A secondary section titled 'Utilization Management (UM) Stakeholder Meetings for Providers' describes ongoing provider meetings to address technical challenges.

PAR Updates

PARs Pause Extended Until March 2024 for Series of Services and Therapies

In January, the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (the Department) temporarily paused prior authorization request (PAR) requirements for a series of pediatric long-term home health services and home health therapies until June 1, 2022. Those included PARs for pediatric long-term home health Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) services, and home health physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech language pathology therapy services.

Effective Feb. 28, 2022, the pause on the requirement to submit a PAR will extend until at least March 2024 and will now include:

- Pediatric long-term home health CNA services
- Pediatric long-term home health therapies: occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech-language pathology therapy
- Pediatric long-term home health intermittent skilled nursing

The two-year pause allows the Department and partners time to robustly engage with stakeholders, train providers on operational changes, evaluate benefit policy, and notify Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid program) members before the pause is lifted. This also gives the Department time to ensure full compliance with federal and state policy while keeping Health First Colorado members and their needs front and center.

The Department is now collaborating with our utilization management vendor, Kepro, to implement operational changes supporting the extended pause. We will communicate and issue policy changes to Health First Colorado members, providers and other stakeholders over the coming days. The Department appreciates the engagement from Health First Colorado providers and members while we work on this important process during the next two years. [Please register](#) to attend the CNA PARs session on Friday, March 4 at noon. Continue visiting [Colorado.gov/par-updates](https://colorado.gov/par-updates) for more information and updates.

Utilization Management (UM) Stakeholder Meetings for Providers

As part of our ongoing collaboration, the Department is hosting a series of provider meetings to discuss known issues or technical challenges providers have had in their PAR submission process. We have been collecting topics from providers and will use these meetings to ensure that our list of known technical issues is comprehensive. Individual PAR submission questions will not be addressed during these meetings. These questions should be sent to the PAR inbox at hcpf_um@state.co.us. (Be sure to include actionable information including the member's name, Medicaid identification and PAR identification.) Home health and private duty nursing policy and reimbursement questions can be sent to homehealth@state.co.us. Policy and reimbursement questions for benefits unrelated to home health can be sent to HCPF_benefitsupport@state.co.us.

hcpf.colorado.gov/par-updates

DOJ Findings, CO Violated ADA

- DOJ investigation began in 2018
- Comparing findings to our HCBS programs developed since then and future investment plans to identify gaps
- To address gaps, will form a process and engage you
- Deep commitment to creating a system that ensures people with disabilities always have the option to receive their care in the community

Public Health Emergency (PHE) Unwind & LTSS Services

- Submitted and received approval for fourteen (14) Appendix K Amendments to our HCBS waivers.
- We received approval from CMS to temporarily change several sections of our waiver programs for individuals impacted by the PHE.
- The Department has also adopted permanent changes through the waiver amendment process.

Public Health Emergency (PHE) Unwind & LTSS Services

- Colorado's Appendix K Amendment flexibilities will end 6 months post the PHE. Currently, the PHE is scheduled to end April 2022 which means that the Appendix K flexibility will end October 2022.
- The Department has also submitted, and received approval from CMS, to permanently adopt some of these new options in our waiver programs.

Public Health Emergency (PHE) Unwind & LTSS Services

- Some flexibilities approved for permanent adoption include:
 - Increase in payment rates for several services
 - Modification for Level of Care (LOC) evals and reevaluations including the Telehealth option for several services.

Public Health Emergency (PHE) Unwind & LTSS Services

- Flexibilities ending 6 months post PHE include:
 - Family Caregivers providing Community Connector and Supported Community Connections
 - Some services that are currently available via telehealth
 - A complete list of those that will continue can be found in [10 CCR 2505 - 10 Section 8.615.2](#)
 - Allowing CMAs to complete face-to-face activities via technology based methods
 - Allowing verbal signatures

Budget Items Approved

- Formal spending authority for HCBS ARPA, roll-over authority
- Continuation of HCBS \$15/hr base wage increase
- 2% increase to providers across-the-board (HCBS Providers **INCLUDED**)
- Increased provider rates for transportation, speech therapy, physical & occupational therapy
- Home delivered meal service expansion
- Staffing to support compliance & quality- including an Olmstead FTE

OM 22-010

HCBS Provider ARPA Rate Increase Continuation

→ The 2.11% rate increase has been **extended** and will continue to be applied through **July 31, 2022**

How?

Additional funding for this extension was available through ARPA funds due to the extension of the public health emergency (PHE) beyond what the department initially projected. This allows for additional dollars due to the enhanced federal match during the PHE.

Will this happen again?

At this point, the Department is not anticipating this to occur again.

[OM 22-010 LINK](#)

Coming Soon

HCBS CMA ARPA Rate Increase

- ★ The 2.11% rate increase for CMAs will **begin on April 1, 2022** and will continue to be applied through **June 30, 2023**

Option Letters are forthcoming for Administrative Contracts and TCM increase in the Provider Bulletin

Reminder:

Base Wage Attestation

Providers that are affected by the \$15/hr base wage and per diem increase requirements must complete the [Base Wage Attestation Form](#) and/or [IRSS Per Diem Attestation Form](#) and submit it to the Department to report compliance with the requirements **no later than June 30, 2022.**

[Full List of Provider Types and Waivers Impacted](#)

Note: CDASS Authorized Representatives/Employers of Record are exempt from attestation requirements.

Attestation forms must be submitted to HCPF_WageCompliance_FCU@state.co.us

[Reference: OM 22-004](#)

Case Management Updates

- Case Management Redesign
 - Policy Updates
 - Care and Case Management System Update
- Ongoing Case Management
 - Preparing for post PHE
 - National Core Indicators
 - CM Complaints/Grievances:
hcpf_hcbs_cmescalationinbox@state.co.us

Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities



AWARENESS DAY

March 23, 2022

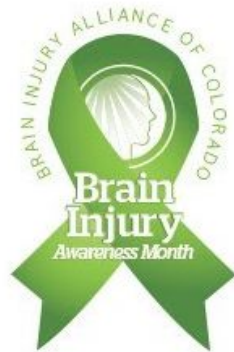
10:00 - 11:00 am - IDD Policy Webinar

12:00 - 1:00 pm - IDD Day Virtual Luncheon
Speeches & 2022 DSP of the Year Award

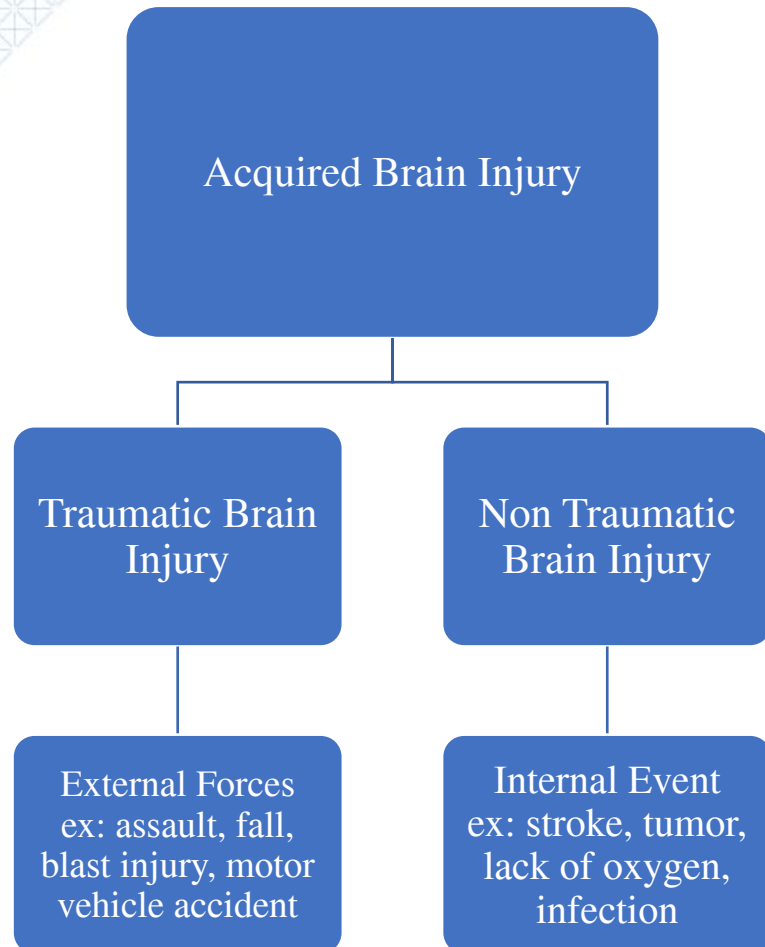
www.alliancecolorado.org/iddawarenessday



March is Brain Injury Awareness Month



What is a “brain injury”?



Scope of Problem

Over 500,000 Coloradans have sustained a brain injury

Colorado ranks **9th** in the nation of fatalities and **13th** in the nation of hospitalizations due to a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Almost **5,000** individuals are hospitalized and nearly **1,000** die due to a TBI in Colorado each year

23,500 emergency room visits each year are due to a TBI

Males are **twice as likely** to sustain a TBI in Colorado as females

The age groups with the highest risk of sustaining a TBI in Colorado are **15-24** and **65+**

Each year, **2,200** individuals continue to experience disability one year after hospitalization for a TBI

Resources



mindsourcolorado.org

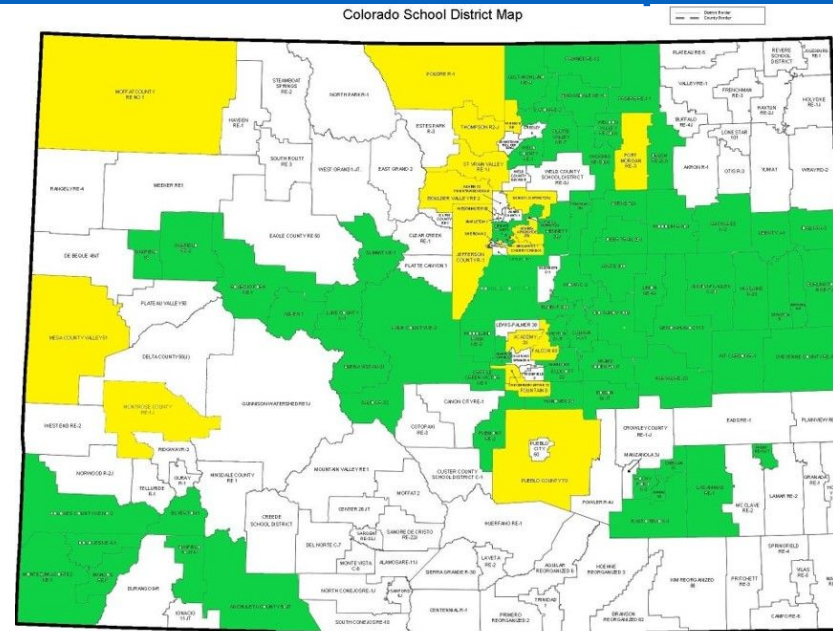


biacolorado.org

- Resource navigation
- Seminars, classes, & workshops
- Skill-building program
- Education consultation for youth with brain injury
- Educational materials for survivors, family, & professionals
- Recreation & social programs
- Peer mentorship program
- Support groups



www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-tbi



Health Equity Plan Public Meetings

Aaron Green - Health Disparities and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer, HCPF

HCPF is committed to ongoing and sustained health equity for all our members.

The purpose of the health equity public meeting is to provide space for providers, members, and community stakeholders to learn about the Department Health Equity Plan, and to provide input and feedback. Our goal is to establish the current state of health equity, and strategically look at innovative ways to improve health outcomes and decrease health disparities for our members in Colorado.

Health equity happens when everyone has equal opportunity to be as healthy as they can be. No one's race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography or preferred language should negatively affect their health care. Health equity work includes removing obstacles to health care access and positive health outcomes.



Health Equity Plan Public Meetings

Aaron Green - Health Disparities and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer, HCPF

To achieve better health outcomes, stakeholder engagement is critical.

Register the following upcoming public meeting focused on engaging the Disability community:

- **June 2, 2022 (12-1 p.m. MDT) - [Registration Link](#) (Focus on Disability)**

This particular session will focus on leveraging federal and local initiatives, and how we can better serve and engage members in the Disability community.

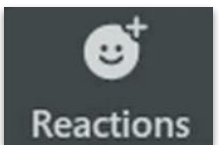
Feedback from sessions will inform the Department health equity strategy & implementation.



Questions & Discussion

*Press *9 to Raise Your Hand if you're on the phone
or*

*Click the Reactions button in Zoom
to find the Raise Hand option*



New Memo Guidance

Issued 1/21/22 - 3/17/22

[Memo Series Page](#)

Case Management Agencies

1/24/22
[OM 22-002](#)

Revised Guidance for the Temporary Enhanced Rate for the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver Respite Benefit

2/8/22
[OM 22-006](#)

Updated HCBS Provider Enrollment Requirements and Revalidation Procedure for CCBs

3/9/22
[OM 22-010](#)

(Supersedes OM 21-072)
HCBS ARPA Rate Increase Continuation

Facilities & PACE

None Issued

HCBS Providers

1/24/22
[OM 22-002](#)

Revised Guidance for the Temporary Enhanced Rate for the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver Respite Benefit

2/4/22
[OM 22-004](#)

Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Base Wage Rate Increase Attestation Form & Worker Letter

- [Base Wage Attestation Form](#)
- [IRSS Per Diem Increase Attestation Form](#)

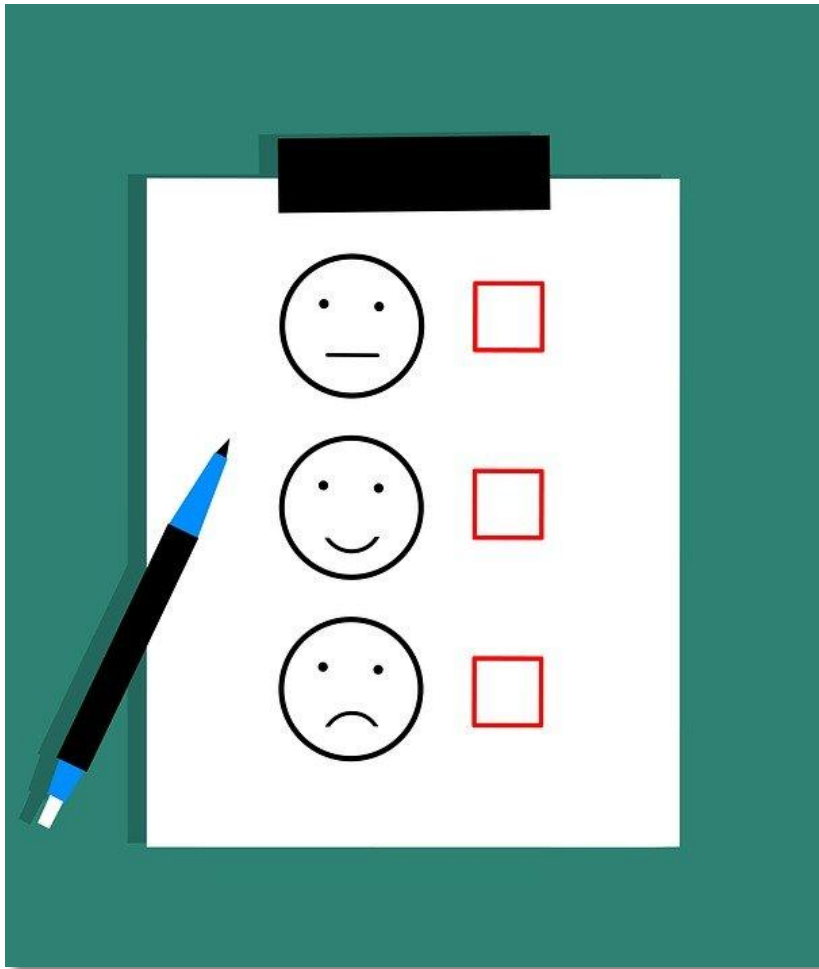
2/8/22
[OM 22-006](#)

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[OM 22-010](#)

(Supersedes OM 21-072)
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Provider 60 Second Satisfaction Survey

www.surveymonkey.com/r/ProvUpWeb

Webinar Topic Suggestions

[Stakeholder Topic Suggestion Form](#)

- Opportunity for all stakeholders to submit their requests for information and topics to be covered during each webinar.
- Link to form published on [OCL Webinar page](#)
- Please submit ideas approx. 2 weeks before the webinar date to allow for adequate planning

Office of Community Living Update Webinars

These webinars are intended to provide various stakeholder groups updates on key projects within the Office of Community Living. Webinar recordings and materials will be posted within a week after each meeting.

[Resources for HCBS Providers page](#)

Have a suggestion for a topic to be covered at a future webinar?



Submit Your Request

▼ Updates for Disability, Older Adult and Advocacy Communities

▼ Updates and Technical Assistance for Providers

Next Webinars



ARPA Quarterly Update Thursday May 19, 2022

9:30 - 11 am - Disability, Older Adult, & Advocacy Communities

3:30 - 5 pm - Providers

OCL General Updates Thursday June 16, 2022

9:30 - 10:30 am - Disability, Older Adult, & Advocacy Communities

3:30 - 4:30 pm - Providers

Stay Engaged



[Stakeholder Engagement Calendar](#)



[2022 Memo Series](#)



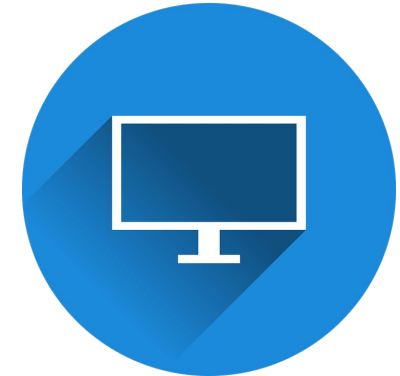
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Thank you!