

Special Needs Alliance:

Public Policy News You Can Use



November 3, 2025

Dan Brilliman Named Next Director of Medicaid and CHIP

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz [announced](#) that Dan Brilliman will be the next Director of Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). As the former Chief Executive Officer of [Unite Us](#), a software development company facilitating coordinated community-based care, [Mr. Brillman](#) will likely expand the administration's initiatives on health care technology to the Medicaid and CHIP programs. Previously, he served as a pilot in the U.S. Air Force Reserve, was the principal at a venture capital firm, and as an analyst at a human resources firm. Mr. Brillman earned his Master of Business Administration from Columbia Business School and his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Yale University. Once Brillman is onboarded, Acting Director Caprice Knapp will step down to become the Principal Deputy Director.

AAP Declines to Recommend Drug for Autism Supported by Trump Administration

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is [advising against](#) the routine use of leucovorin for children with autism, despite rising demand from families following recent federal promotion of the drug. Although Trump administration officials highlighted leucovorin as a potential treatment in September and the FDA moved toward approving it for cerebral folate deficiency – a condition associated with autism features – the AAP says evidence of its benefit for autism is limited. Interest among families has surged, but the organization notes that it remains unclear which children might benefit, what appropriate dosing would be, and whether the drug is safe long-term. The AAP urges pediatricians to engage in shared decision-making, emphasize the current lack of strong evidence, and closely monitor any cases in which the drug is prescribed, while calling for larger, well-controlled clinical trials to better understand leucovorin's effectiveness and safety.

OIG Finds Gaps in Behavioral Health Provider Networks for Medicare Advantage and Medicaid Managed Care Plans

A new [Office of Inspector General \(OIG\) review](#) finds that many Medicare Advantage and Medicaid managed care plans have limited networks of behavioral health providers, further weakened by the inclusion of inactive or “ghost” providers who are not actually seeing patients. OIG found that some listed providers no longer worked at the locations shown in network directories or declined to see patients from the plan altogether, making networks appear larger than they are. The report highlights that 72 percent of inactive behavioral health providers should not have been listed in the network. OIG noted providers cited administrative burdens and low payment rates as reasons for opting out of participation in these plans.

Despite CMS’s efforts to improve behavioral health access for Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries over the last several years, this latest report indicates significant room for improvement. To address these issues, OIG recommended that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) use data to better monitor network adequacy, work with states to improve directory accuracy, and continue exploring a nationwide provider directory to reduce errors and ease administrative strain.

What’s on Tap

The month-long government shutdown is on track to set a new record this week, surpassing the length of the longest previous government shutdown during President Trump’s first term that lasted 35 days. Over the weekend, funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) lapsed due to the shutdown. The lack of funding puts the more than 40 million Americans who rely on the program at risk of going hungry. A federal judge on Friday [ordered](#) the Department of Agriculture to utilize contingency funds to support SNAP by today – something the Department had initially refused to do. Some state governments have also taken steps to preserve access to SNAP by declaring states of emergency and shifting funding from other programs, although these measures are intended only to support the nutrition program temporarily.

In parallel to the funding lapse for SNAP this past Saturday, the Affordable Care Act’s (ACA) open enrollment period began on November 1st. More than 24 million individuals seeking health insurance coverage via the ACA Marketplace likely saw [higher monthly premiums](#) due to the looming expiration of the ACA tax subsidies at the end of this year. Lawmakers have remained divided over how to approach the expiring tax credits throughout the shutdown, with Republicans looking to deal with the matter after the government has been reopened.

and Democrats seeking an extension in exchange for support of the House-passed continuing resolution (CR) from September. Although both parties have remained unified in their positions over the past month, public pressure on lawmakers to end the shutdown has allowed cracks within both parties to emerge.

A group of at least eight moderate Senate Democrats [reportedly](#) met in private late last week with the goal of finding a path forward on government funding. The eight Democratic lawmakers, along with Senators Fetterman (D-PA), Cortez Masto (D-NV) and King (I-ME) who have repeatedly voted with Republicans on the CR throughout the shutdown, represent more than enough votes to reopen the federal government. Despite the potential Democratic support, there is minimal chance of a deal being struck this week and ahead of the Veteran's Day recess. Speaker Johnson continues to keep the House out of session and has indicated that House members will receive a 48-hour notice before they need to be in Washington to vote on a bill. With both chambers scheduled to be in recess throughout next week, the likelihood of the shutdown extending through November grows.

Tuesday marks [election day](#) for Virginia and New Jersey who are holding closely watched gubernatorial races, in addition to a divisive mayoral election in New York City and a congressional redistricting referendum in California. Many believe the various elections to be yet another inflection point in the federal shutdown, with some conservative lawmakers anticipating Democratic leadership will come to the negotiating table after the votes are tallied on November 4th. Democrats have rejected this notion that they are holding out on a deal for political reasons, pointing instead to a lack of direction from the President, who recently [called on](#) Republican leadership to eliminate the Senate filibuster to end the shutdown.

Upcoming Events

Senate

- In session: November 3 – 7
- Wednesday, November 5, 3:30pm|[Senate Special Committee on Aging holds a hearing on How the Older Americans Act Uplifts Families Living with Aging-Related Diseases](#)|SH-216
- Thursday, November 6, 2pm|[Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee holds a Hearing titled "Assessing the Damage Done by Obamacare"](#)|SD-342 Dirksen Senate Office Building

House of Representatives

- Out of session