



HEALTH CARE HEADLINES 2021

UNIVERSAL MEANS EVERYBODY.

SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS. NONPROFITS. POOR PEOPLE. UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS. PARENTS. CHILDREN. TRANS FOLKS. LGBTQIA+. GROCERY STORE WORKERS. BLACK. LATINX. ASIAN. WHITE. FREELANCERS. UBER DRIVERS. 26 YEAR OLDS. MEN. WOMEN. NON BINARY FOLKS. THE HOMELESS. FRONT LINE WORKERS. GIG WORKERS. SMALL BUSINESS EMPLOYEES. NON PROFIT EMPLOYEES. IMMIGRANTS. THE DISABLED. THE ELDERLY. CAREGIVERS. THE INCARCERATED. AND YOU, TOO.

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You could be eligible for \$0 premiums and out of pocket costs

This is all thanks to the Covered Connecticut Program, which is run through the Office of Health Strategy in partnership with the Department of Social Services, Insurance Department, and Access Health CT.



HUSKY A parents and caretakers between 160 and 175% of the federal poverty level who are enrolled in an Access Health CT Silver Plan are eligible NOW during the special enrollment period, which lasts until August 15. Visit [Access Health CT's website](#) to learn more and get covered!

The White House released an executive order focusing on enforcing Anti-Trust laws. What does it mean for Connecticut? Some highlights are protecting patients in hospital mergers, increased support for development of generic prescription drugs to prevent price gouging, and making hearing aids available over-the-counter. For more detail, see the graphics below:

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**What does any of that mean?
Hearing aids**

According to the executive order, hearing aids are so expensive that only 14% of people who suffer hearing loss actually use them.

Imagine being able to get hearing aids without having to go through your doctor.

The order directs the department of Health and Human Services to issue new rules allowing hearing aids to be purchased over-the-counter.

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**What does any of that mean?
Prescription drug pricing:**

According to the executive order, "pay-for-delay", a system in which drug manufacturers pay generic manufacturers to stay out of the market, raises prices by \$3.5 billion annually and reduces innovation.

How much less might you be paying if you could opt to purchase the generic version of your Rx?

The order encourages the Federal Trade Commission to ban pay-for-delay.

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**What does any of that mean?
Hospital mergers:**

According to the executive order, the 10 largest health care systems own a quarter of the market. This leads to higher prices and shutting down needed services.

Since 2000, CT has gone from having 22 independent hospitals to only having 5.

The order encourages the Dept. of Justice and Federal Trade Commission to enforce anti-trust laws and stop monopolies that harm patients.

Insurance Rate Increases?

Insurance Rate Increases?

We know what you're thinking: how can health insurance get more expensive? That's a good question.

Health insurers certainly do not need to raise their rates, especially since the COVID crisis is not yet over. We're asking the State Insurance Department to use the tools available to them (a brand new health care affordability index, which we helped fund the creation of) to keep insurers in check as they ask for more money from hard working Connecticut residents. [Read our full statement on the rate hikes here.](#)



Two weeks ago, we asked you to support Life-Saving Dialysis Treatment for the undocumented

Patients like Maria were living trapped in the hospital because it is the only place she was able to access

dialysis treatment. Governor Lamont has changed the policy that was keeping her anchored in a hospital bed and away from her family. Now, after seven long months, she will be able to soon return home. [Read more here.](#)

As always, [tell us what you'd like to hear more about](#) so you can see the latest on all the issues you care about.

Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut

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