

# Healthcare Today

The White House announced Thursday the launch of the first federally supported Test-to-Treat initiative location. The location at a health clinic in Providence, Rhode Island will allow individuals who test positive for COVID-19 at the clinic to immediately receive an assessment from a medical provider and get oral antiviral treatments if prescribed. The location will also offer vaccination. The Administration has plans to open more federally supported Test-to-Treat sites in New York and Illinois in the coming weeks.

The Senate Finance Committee released a [discussion draft](#) Thursday on telehealth policies as a part of the committee's ongoing work on mental health care improvements. Chair Ron Wyden (D-OR) stated that the policies will help strengthen access, awareness, and support for telehealth. The discussion draft includes policies that would remove Medicare's in-person visit requirement and establish Medicare benefit transparency for tele-mental health services, preserve access to audio-only mental health coverage in Medicare, incentivize states to use CHIP programs to serve school behavioral health, and direct Medicare and Medicaid to promote and support provider use of telehealth.

The House Energy and Commerce Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee and the Senate HELP Committee held hearings this week focusing on the current infant formula shortage. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner Robert Califf, along with other representatives from the FDA, testified on the actions the agency is taking to combat the issue. Additionally, leadership from both Abbott Nutrition and Gerber Products Company testified on the origin of the problem and what their respective companies are doing to end the shortage. Califf stated in the hearings that mailroom staffing issues led to the information not being shared with top food safety officials until it was too late. He mentioned that the agency's response was too slow and that certain decisions made along the way were suboptimal. According to FDA officials, a 34-page whistleblower report was sent to the FDA in October alleging unsanitary conditions at an Abbott infant formula factory. Robert Yiannis, FDA's deputy commissioner for food policy and response, did not learn about the complaint until four months later. FDA Veterinary Center Director Steven Solomon will lead an internal agency review of the process and procedures that led to the shortage.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released a new [report](#) on the federal budget deficit. The updated projections say that inflation will persist due to high demand and a restrained supply of goods, services, and labor. Inflation is expected to ease throughout 2023 and slowly return to expected levels in 2024.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will begin probing hospitals where a high rate of patients have been infected with COVID-19. Principal Deputy Administrator and COO Jon Blum stated that the agency is focusing on facilities with COVID-19 outbreaks and considering employee and patient safety complaints. CMS is asking Congress for additional funding for the surveying and compliance efforts after the White House called for improved patient safety measures. CMS will not be publishing facilities' transmission rates but will begin publishing facilities' staff vaccination rates in the fall.

We remember and honor all who have perished in service to our country this weekend on Memorial Day. There will be no HCT next week.