**Feature Stories**

**State Policy Innovations to Support Family Caregivers**

Innovative programs are improving the lives of family caregivers, who provide nearly $470 billion in unpaid services each year to older relatives, friends, and neighbors. Programs like the Medicaid State Officials’ Supportive Care Plan webinar help family caregivers remain in their roles, improving health outcomes for their loved ones.

**Q&A: How Maryland Uses Policy Levers to Improve Health Coverage and Access**

Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, Dr. Carron Brown, shares some of the significant initiatives included in the Maryland Blueprint for Healthier Maryland, a multi-year state strategy to improve health and wellbeing. Dr. Brown emphasizes the importance of collaborative partnerships with advocates and stakeholders to achieve lasting change.

**Federal Judge Blocks Implementation of Public Charge Rule**

Last week, a US federal judge issued an injunction to block the Trump Administration’s public charge policy. This policy could deny legal status and benefits to immigrants and lawful permanent residents who are found to have a reasonable likelihood of relying on public benefits. The judge ruled that the policy was implemented to achieve illegal immigration goals and that the government failed to provide substantial evidence supporting its claims.

**Californians First State to Enact Law to Combat “Pay-for-Delay” Deals**

In a major victory for consumers and public health, California passed the California Healthy Competition Act, which is the first state law to combat “pay-for-delay” deals that protect drug manufacturers from competition by delaying the entry of generic drugs. These deals reduce competition and keep prices high, harming consumers.

**Flu Season Is Here! State Resources to Promote Immunization among Medicaid Enrollees**

State and local public health officials are bracing for a tough flu season. In 2019, only 38% of adults and 78% of children received their flu shots, and vaccination rates among children aged 6-17 were particularly low. This year, health departments are urging families to get vaccinated early to protect themselves and their communities.

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The National Academy for State Health Policy is a nonpartisan forum of state policymakers working together to strengthen state leadership, learning, and implementing innovative solutions to help address policy challenges.

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