

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Friday, October 16, 2020

The following information comes from directly from news sources including Bloomberg Government, Kaiser Health News, and other news sources.

## Schedules: White House and Congress

### WHITE HOUSE

- 1:30pm: President Trump delivers remarks on seniors in Fort Myers, Florida
- 4:15pm: Trump holds campaign rally in Ocala, Florida before traveling to Macon, Georgia
- 7pm: Trump holds campaign rally in Macon, Ga.
- Trump arrives back at White House at 10:30pm
- 10:30am: VP Mike Pence leads White House virus task force meeting
- 2:30pm: Pence speaks at campaign event in Selma, N.C.

### CONGRESS

- House is out until mid-November, though lawmakers could be called back with 24 hours' notice to vote on legislation
- Full Senate on recess until Oct. 19
- Discussions to continue on stimulus deal between House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Treasury Sec. Steven Mnuchin

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Barrett Vote Set for Oct. 22 in Senate Judiciary Committee:** The Senate Judiciary Committee will vote Thursday on Amy Coney Barrett's nomination to the Supreme Court. The vote means a floor vote by the entire Senate will likely take place the week before the election.
  - Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) yesterday said Barrett has enough support to win Senate confirmation to the Supreme Court and he expects to bring her nomination to the floor next Friday.
- **Bloomberg Government: Sign of Hope in Stimulus Talks:** Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin told Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) yesterday that Trump will personally lobby to get reluctant Senate Republicans behind any stimulus deal they reach.
  - Trump said he's willing to go beyond the \$1.8 trillion offer for a virus relief plan that's already been offered by the administration, but Senate Majority Leader McConnell rejected that, saying GOP lawmakers won't go along.
  - Pelosi spoke with Mnuchin yesterday for 82 minutes on a call in which Mnuchin said he'd accept Democrats' demands for a national testing plan for the coronavirus, with "minor edits" to be shared today, according to Pelosi spokesman Drew Hammill. Staff will exchange language on several areas, he said.
- **Bloomberg Government: Medicare to Pay Labs More for Fast Tests Turnaround:** Medicare is adding performance bonuses to its Covid-19 lab payment policy. Beginning next year, Medicare will pay \$100 only to labs that process high throughput Covid-19

diagnostic tests within two days of specimen collection. Labs that take longer will be paid a rate of \$75. The goal is to ensure that patients are alerted quickly to a positive test so they can self-isolate and get treatment, according to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

- **The Washington Post: President Trump's Medicare Drug Discount Cards Face Uncertain Path:** Three weeks after President Trump announced the government would send tens of millions of older Americans \$200 to help pay for medicine, the election-season idea is mired in uncertainty over whether such drug discount cards are legal, proper or will ever exist. Since the last-minute inclusion of the cards in a presidential speech, Trump's aides and Medicare officials have been hastily drafting and revising a proposal to build scaffolding under the president's promise. This account of those efforts draws on interviews and information from five individuals familiar with the work, all of whom spoke on the condition of anonymity to disclose internal matters.
- **NBC News: What's Your Blood Type? It May Affect Your Risk For Covid-19:** A growing body of evidence suggests that blood type may play a role in the risk of becoming infected with the coronavirus or developing life-threatening complications from the illness. But it does not mean that any single blood type is more protective or more dangerous regarding Covid-19, and the evidence may indeed raise more questions than answers. ... "Blood group O is significantly associated with reduced susceptibility to SARS-CoV-2 infection," the study authors wrote, meaning that people with type O blood seemed to be less likely to become infected. SARS-CoV-2 is the virus that causes Covid-19.