

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Wednesday, October 21, 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

- 4:45pm: President Trump leaves White House en route to N.C.
- 7pm: Trump holds rally in Gastonia, N.C.
- 10:30pm: Trump returns to White House

CONGRESS

- Noon: Senate convenes, resumes consideration of judicial nominee
- 1pm: Senate begins live quorum; will proceed to procedural vote on measure relating to coronavirus aid with additional procedural votes expected
- House out

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Stat: What Do Patients Think About AI In The Clinic? The FDA Wants To Find Out:** Autonomous AI systems are rapidly making their way into the health care system, presenting regulators with thorny questions about how to protect data, prevent bias, and make sure constantly evolving machines can operate safely in clinical practice. The urgency of those inquiries will be on display Thursday during a key meeting hosted by the Food and Drug Administration, which is convening patients to collect their perspectives on AI development and regulation.
- **Bloomberg Government: Senate GOP Passes Small Business Aid:** Senate Democrats yesterday opposed a GOP standalone bill providing coronavirus aid to U.S. small businesses, saying it was a political ploy that failed to provide the comprehensive aid the pandemic-ravaged U.S. economy needs. The bill was put forward as a procedural test vote by Republicans, who staged it to press Democrats to allow piecemeal pandemic stimulus to advance in the absence of a wider stimulus deal. Democrats demonstrated on the motion that they had the votes to block a standalone Paycheck Protection Program bill.
- **The Washington Post: New Results From A Once-Promising Therapy Show The Difficulty Of Treating Covid-19:** An arthritis drug that showed promise to treat coronavirus infections – at least in small studies early in the pandemic – did not produce consistent results across three larger trials, according to studies published Tuesday in JAMA Internal Medicine. The drug, named tocilizumab, blocks specific immune molecules from triggering inflammation. Clinical observations in the outbreak's first months suggested the drug could tamp down the hyperactive, and sometimes fatal, immune reactions in critically ill patients with covid-19, the disease the novel coronavirus causes.

- **CNBC: 'Long Covid': These 5 Factors Make It More Likely You'll Suffer Long-Term From Coronavirus:** A new study has identified the main factors that make it more likely that patients will suffer long term from the coronavirus. "Long Covid" is the term given to people who had a confirmed (or suspected) coronavirus case and who recover from the initial infection but continue to suffer from a wide range of symptoms, from shortness of breath and migraines to chronic fatigue. ... The team found that older or overweight people, women, those with asthma and those with a greater number of different symptoms in the first week of their illness were more likely to develop "long Covid."
- **CIDRAP: Experts: Don't Count On Mild Flu Season Amid COVID-19:** The Southern Hemisphere had a very light flu season in 2020, with Australia seeing only 315 cases over its winter, down 99.8% from the 130,000 cases seen in most years. But flu experts say that, while the low numbers could portend a similar scenario in the Northern Hemisphere, it would be a foolhardy not to prepare for high caseloads this winter. Edward Belongia, MD, an infectious disease epidemiologist at Marshfield Research Institute in Wisconsin, said that he doesn't think anyone can predict how severe the flu season will be or how it will co-circulate with COVID-19, because much is still unknown about the novel coronavirus and there is no clear relationship between events in the hemispheres.