Schedules: White House and Congress

WHITE HOUSE

- Biden will meet with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen at 10 a.m. at the White House.

- The president will attend the funeral of former Delaware Gov. Ruth Ann Minner in Milford, Del., at 1 p.m.

- At 3:40 p.m., Biden will receive a briefing at the Port of Baltimore, and then speak about his infrastructure plan at 4:10 p.m.

- Biden is scheduled to return to the White House at 6 p.m.

CONGRESS:

- The House plans a committee work week, with no floor activity scheduled. The Senate is also on hiatus for floor work this week.

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: The Drugs Targeted in Democrats’ Big Bill:** Democrats are advancing a plan to negotiate the prices of drugs Medicare spends the most on, potentially saving billions of dollars annually. Medicine from Merck, Johnson & Johnson, AstraZeneca, and other major drugmakers could be targeted. Democrats reached a compromise on their drug proposal that would allow the government to negotiate prices of medicines at least nine years out from their initial approval date. That means new drugs, which can make headlines with high sticker prices, wouldn’t be affected.
  - Nearly half of the prescription pharmaceuticals that were the top 10 costliest to Medicare’s outpatient drug and pharmacy benefits in 2019 could face negotiation, according to a Bloomberg Government analysis. Medicine administered in a doctor’s office is paid for under Part B of Medicare, and drugs obtained through a pharmacy are paid under Part D. “We’re coming out of the gate negotiating over the most expensive drugs: we’re talking cancer, arthritis, anticoagulants,” Senate Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) said last week. “That’s a significant change.”

- **Bloomberg Government: GOP Doctors Press Biden on Surprise Billing Rule:** The GOP Doctors Caucus is the latest group in Congress to urge the Biden administration to reverse
course on its surprise billing regulations. Members sent a letter to HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra and others yesterday seeking major revisions to how billing disputes between doctors and insurers are settled. The interim final rule implementing the No Surprises Act “does not reflect legislation that could have passed Congress or the law as written” and “immediate revisions are necessary,” the lawmakers, including Rep. Michael Burgess (R-Texas), said in their letter.

- **Roll Call: Lobbyists, Advocates Seek To Revise Budget Bill’s Drug Price Changes:** Lobbyists and advocates are pressing for a number of changes to a drug pricing overhaul as the focus on a $1.75 trillion budget bill shifts from the House to the Senate. The lobbyists are angling for tweaks on everything from the time period of drug exclusivity to the tax treatment of rare disease drugs and provisions affecting the pharmacy benefit managers that manage prescription drugs for insurance companies.

- **Modern Healthcare: MedPAC Wades Back Into Outpatient Site-neutral Payments:** The Medicare Payment Advisory Commission wants to keep exploring aligned payment for care provided at hospital outpatient departments, ambulatory surgical centers and physician offices in an effort to reduce incentives for healthcare consolidation and make sure beneficiaries aren't paying more than needed, commissioners said Tuesday.

- **Modern Healthcare: Vizient Alliance Will Push For Drug Supply Chain Solutions:** Vizient is launching a new effort to make sure healthcare providers have adequate access to drug supplies, the company announced Tuesday. The company’s End Drug Shortages Alliance seeks to bring together organizations from all points on the supply chain, from manufacturers to distributors to group purchasing organizations to providers, to resolve longstanding problems with pharmaceutical supplies by sharing information.