

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Tuesday, November 23, 2021

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:

- Biden is scheduled deliver remarks on the economy and inflation at 9 a.m.
- Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris, the first lady and the first gentleman will participate in a local service project at the D.C. Central Kitchen at 4 p.m.
- The president and Jill Biden will depart for Nantucket, Mass., around 6 p.m.

CONGRESS:

- Congress is on recess this week and Democrats will get a chance to tout the House's successful passage last week of their social spending and tax passage, as they try to allay voters' concerns about inflation and shortages of goods.

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **The Washington Post: White House To Invest \$1.5 Billion To Attract More Doctors To Underserved Communities:** The Biden administration on Monday announced \$1.5 billion in funding to help eliminate the shortage of doctors and nurses in underserved communities by providing scholarships and repaying the student loans of providers who work in medically needy areas. The pandemic has highlighted what has long been a barrier to accessing quality medical care in rural areas and communities of color: provider shortages. The lack of primary care physicians hindered testing, treating and educating patients about the coronavirus and the vaccines, and now growing staff shortages in hospitals are aggravating an already inadequate health care infrastructure.
- **Bloomberg: Proposal on Obamacare Minimum Coverage, Medicaid Issued by IRS:** Obamacare's minimum essential coverage doesn't include Medicaid coverage that is limited to Covid-19 testing and diagnostic services, the Internal Revenue Service proposed yesterday. Under the proposed regulation (RIN: 1545-BQ11) "minimum essential coverage," the term used to describe Affordable Care Coverage coverage that meets that law's qualifications, doesn't include Medicaid coverage that is limited to Covid-19 testing and diagnostic services provided under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.
- **KHN: Becerra Says Surprise Billing Rules Force Doctors Who Overcharge To Accept Fair Prices:** Overpriced doctors and other medical providers who can't charge a reasonable rate for their services could be put out of business when new rules against surprise medical bills take effect in January, and that's a good thing, Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier

Becerra told KHN, in defending the regulations. The proposed rules represent the Biden administration's plan to carry out the No Surprises Act, which Congress passed to spare patients from the shockingly high bills they get when one or more of their providers unexpectedly turn out to be outside their insurance plan's network.

- **Reuters: GSK Ties Up With Arrowhead To Develop NASH Drug Candidate:** Arrowhead Pharmaceuticals Inc (ARWR.O) on Monday entered a drug development deal with GlaxoSmithKline Plc (GSK.L) under which the British drugmaker will develop and market Arrowhead's potential treatment for patients with fatty liver disease NASH. Under the pact, Arrowhead said it would get an upfront payment of \$120 million and is eligible for additional milestone payments including up to \$190 million at first commercial sale of the product, and up to \$590 million in sales-related milestone payments. The drug candidate, ARO-HSD, is currently in an early-to-mid stage trial for nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH), a fatty liver disease. It is based on RNA interference technology, where genes that contribute to disease are silenced.
- **Bloomberg: Brainard Gives Biden a Jobs Ally:** Lael Brainard, picked to be vice chair of the Federal Reserve, is expected to be a critical defender of its commitment to maximum employment across demographic groups at a time when other U.S. central bankers are more worried by inflation.
 - Her promotion from Fed governor is also the latest step in a career -- spanning top echelons of the federal government and academia -- that may eventually see her move even higher. She was interviewed by Biden for the post of chair before he opted to keep Jerome Powell at the helm and offer her the No. 2 slot instead.
 - Brainard is also co-author of the "broad-based and inclusive" language describing the Fed's full employment mandate in the framework Powell unveiled in 2020 -- language was also in the last line of her acceptance remarks Monday. While Brainard sought to strike a balance with the Fed's goal of controlling prices in her remarks Monday, she's widely seen as someone firmly committed to spreading job gains as far and wide as possible.