

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Tuesday, December 1, 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

- President Trump has no public events scheduled
- 3pm: Vice President Mike Pence leads White House Coronavirus Task Force meeting

### CONGRESS

- House not in session
- Senate to meet at 10am
  - At 11am will vote on confirmation of Taylor McNeel to be a judge for the Southern District of Mississippi
  - NOTE: On Monday, Majority Leader Mitch McConnell set up a vote to advance the nomination of Christopher Waller to the Federal Reserve Board but took no action to open Judy Shelton's path to the Fed

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Biden's Tools to Bolster ACA Include Enrollment:** Reopening enrollment in the Obamacare marketplace is one of the first steps President-elect Joe Biden may take to fulfill his pledge to shore up the landmark health-care law, policy experts say. "He can just say, 'It's an emergency' and he can just do it" without going through a lengthy regulatory process, Karen Pollitz, a senior fellow with the Kaiser Family Foundation, said. Broadly reopening enrollment in the Affordable Care Act marketplace would make it easier for millions to obtain vital health care during the pandemic.
- **USA Today: First Responders? Long-Term Care Patients? CDC Committee Considering Who's In Group '1a' For COVID-19 Vaccine:** The committee that decides who gets the coronavirus vaccine first meets virtually Tuesday as officials prepare for distribution that could potentially come within two weeks. Look for discussion of two questions: Where should people in long-term care facilities be in the vaccine line and the power of states and governors to shift priorities for who gets immunized first. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices is an independent group convened by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to offer advice on who should get specific vaccines and when.
- **Bloomberg Government: CDC Advisers Move Up Vaccine Meeting:** A meeting to weigh who should get vaccinated first for Covid-19 was moved up to today because states need to lock in by Friday where they'll send the initial doses they get from the federal government. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, or ACIP, is a group of medical and public health experts that advise the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention on the use of vaccines. The advisers decided to meet earlier to “make sure that we offered guidance to the states and other entities so they could make an informed decision about where to make that ask for an allocation,” said Jose Romero, chairman of the advisory panel and the Arkansas Health Secretary.

- Eventually, the decision on who gets the first inoculations will sit with the individual states, who will get a set number of doses from the federal government to distribute as they choose.
- **Bloomberg Government: Pence Pegs Mid-December for Vaccine Distribution:** Vice President Mike Pence told governors yesterday that distribution of a coronavirus vaccine could begin the week of December 14, signaling that U.S. regulators will swiftly approve an emergency authorization for the first shots. Vaccines will be largely administered by pharmacies such as those owned by CVS Health and Walgreens, HHS Secretary Alex Azar, who was also on the call, said.
- **CIDRAP: COVID-Related Nursing Shortages Hit Hospitals Nationwide:** COVID-19-related shortages of personal protective equipment and drugs continue to plague the US healthcare system, but now in the third US pandemic wave, nursing and other staffing shortages are sweeping the country. An Associated Press report found that at Hurley Medical Center in Flint, Michigan, the nurse-to-patient ratio went from its recommended 1:1 to 1:4, and Andrew Pavia, MD, chief of the pediatric infectious disease division at the University of Utah School of Medicine said it's the same in his state.
- **AP: First Blood Test To Help Diagnose Alzheimer's Goes On Sale:** A company has started selling the first blood test to help diagnose Alzheimer’s disease, a leap for the field that could make it much easier for people to learn whether they have dementia. It also raises concern about the accuracy and impact of such life-altering news. Independent experts are leery because key test results have not been published and the test has not been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration – it’s being sold under more general rules for commercial labs. But they agree that a simple test that can be done in a doctor’s office has long been needed.