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**

- 9:50am: President Biden receives Daily Brief
- 11am: Press Briefing by White House COVID-19 Response Team and public health officials
- 12:30pm: Press Briefing by Press Secretary Jen Psaki
- 1:45pm: President Biden holds event to discuss the implementation of his $1.9 trillion stimulus
- First Lady Jill Biden travels to Burlington, NJ to promote the coronavirus relief package
- VP Kamala Harris and Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff travel to Las Vegas, NV to promote the coronavirus relief package

**CONGRESS**

- U.S. House next meets March 16
- U.S. Senate convenes at 3pm
  - Full Senate will vote on the confirmation of Deb Haaland to be Secretary of the Interior

**Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News**

- **Bloomberg Government: Becerra Nomination**: Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) may file cloture today to set up a vote as soon as Wednesday for Biden’s choice of Xavier Becerra to lead the Department of Health and Human Services after the Senate advanced the nomination with just one Republican vote Thursday, Nancy Ognanovich and Alex Ruoff report. The 51-48 vote moved Becerra’s nomination to the Senate floor, signaling that Becerra could get the least amount of Republican support of any of Biden’s cabinet pick.
  - The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee will vote Wednesday on the nominations of Vivek Murthy to be the U.S. surgeon general and Rachel Levine to serve as assistant secretary of Health and Human Services.

- **Bloomberg Government: Telehealth Researchers Look to Sway CBO**: Telehealth organizations are rushing to publish a sweeping study of the surge in virtual doctor’s visits in the past year in hopes of convincing congressional scorekeepers that allowing seniors to see their health-care providers remotely won’t break Medicare’s bank. The Center for Telehealth and e-Health Law is raising funds for a national analysis of telehealth use, made possible by a boom in remote doctor visits to help prevent the spread of Covid-19 at clinics and hospitals.
• **Modern Healthcare: Why Commercial Insurers See New Opportunity In ACA Exchanges:** After a rocky start marked by losses, legal challenges and a general feeling of uncertainty, health insurers are increasingly expanding their footprint on Affordable Care Act exchanges. During its investors day on March 8, Cigna announced that it plans to double its geographic coverage on the individual market to 20 states by 2025. UnitedHealthcare and Aetna are also reentering the space. While a few regional insurers entered the ACA for the first time in 2021, the majority of payers getting back into the exchange are larger and for-profit insurers, according to Ceci Connolly, president of the Alliance for Community Health Plans, adding competition to the long-time regional holdouts.

• **Bloomberg Government: Telehealth Researchers Look to Sway CBO:** Telehealth organizations are rushing to publish a sweeping study of the surge in virtual doctor’s visits in the past year in hopes of convincing congressional scorekeepers that allowing seniors to see their health-care providers remotely won’t break Medicare’s bank. The Center for Telehealth and e-Health Law is raising funds for a national analysis of telehealth use, made possible by a boom in remote doctor visits to help prevent the spread of Covid-19 at clinics and hospitals.

• **Stat: White House Set To Unveil Sweeping Vaccine-Confidence Campaign:** The White House this week will unveil a wide-reaching, $1.5 billion public relations campaign aimed at boosting vaccine confidence and uptake across the U.S., Biden administration aides told STAT. This television, radio, and digital advertising blitz, set to kick off within weeks, will focus on Americans outright skeptical of vaccines’ safety or effectiveness as well as those who are potentially more willing to seek a Covid-19 immunization but don’t yet know where, when, or how. Specifically, the campaign will target three groups in which access, apathy, or outright skepticism may pose a barrier to vaccinations: young people, people of color, and conservatives, according to a Biden aide.

• **The Washington Post: Covid Vaccine Is Safe And Effective For Heart Disease Patients:** More than 30 million people in the United States have heart disease, which alone kills hundreds of thousands each year. It’s also a significant risk factor for developing serious complications from another major threat right now: covid-19. That’s because the disease caused by the coronavirus often attacks the lungs, forcing the already injured heart to fight that much harder.

• **CIDRAP: Study Notes Moderate Depression, Anxiety In Health Workers During COVID:** In a review of 65 studies from around the world, pooled data indicate that one in five healthcare workers (HCWs) have experienced moderate depression, anxiety, and/or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a study published this week in PLOS One. The study covered patients in 21 countries, most commonly in East Asia (46 studies, with 43 in China), the Middle East (7), and Europe (5). More than 97,000 HCWs were included, of whom 45% were nurses, 27% were physicians, 11% were other medical workers, and 1% were administration and support staff.

• **Modern Healthcare: 1.1M Patients Had Data Compromised In February-Reported Breaches:** More than 1.1 million patients had data exposed in healthcare data breaches reported to the federal government last month. Nearly 6.9 million patients have had data
exposed in breaches reported so far in 2021. Healthcare providers, insurers and their business associates reported 74 breaches in January and February combined, marking the second-highest number of breaches reported in the first two months of the year since HHS' Office for Civil Rights began maintaining its breach database in 2010. It follows 2020, when organizations reported 96 breaches in the same period.