

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Friday, April 16, 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

- 10:30am: White House Covid-19 Response team and public health officials hold press briefing
- 11am: White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki holds press briefing
- 1:30pm: Biden hosts Japan's Prime Minister Suga at White House for official working visit
- 2:30pm: Biden, Suga hold expanded bilateral meeting
- 4:15pm: Biden, Suga hold press conference in Rose Garden
- 5:30pm: Biden departs White House en route to Delaware

### CONGRESS:

- House meets at 9am
- Senate next meets April 19

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Holistic Drug Reform Eyed to Fix Inequity:** Lawmakers seeking to lower drug costs should take a comprehensive approach rather than focus solely on manufacturers' pricing practices – a strategy that's only created disparities in the marketplace, policy analysts say. Drug costs will inch back to the forefront of policy discussions in the coming months, but many of about two dozen bills floating around Congress mainly address the prices drug companies set and ignore other aspects of the supply chain, such as the pharmacy middlemen that control how insurance pays for medications.
- **Modern Healthcare: FCC To Open Next Round Of COVID-19 Telehealth Program Applications:** The Federal Communications Commission will begin accepting applications for the second round of its COVID-19 telehealth program on April 29, the agency announced Thursday. The initial application window for the program, under which the FCC will distribute at least \$150 million of the \$249.95 million allocated by Congress, will close the following week on May 6. The agency will award funding in two phases, so that applicants have the opportunity to provide the agency with supplemental information if they're denied funding during the first phase.
- **The Washington Post: Annual Vaccine Booster Shots May Be Needed, Potentially Stretching Supply:** President Biden's chief science officer for the pandemic response, David Kessler, told a House subcommittee hearing Thursday that the United States should plan for booster shots in the future. In remarks from an event earlier this month, but that

were also released Thursday, Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla said that a “likely scenario” included the need for a third vaccine dose six to 12 months after inoculation, after which “there will be an annual revaccination.”

- **Bloomberg Government: Biden Faces Questions on Research Agency Plan:** President Joe Biden’s vision to create a new \$8.5 billion biomedical research agency faces skeptical lawmakers who plan to question administration officials in the coming weeks about the idea. Biden is seeking funds to create what the White House calls the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health, or ARPA-H, modeled after similar research initiatives at the departments of Defense and Energy. Once Biden releases a full fiscal 2022 budget plan in the coming weeks, House appropriators intend to ask officials from the National Institute of Health to detail the purpose of the new agency.