

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Monday, April 26, 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

- 12:00 PM: Press Briefing by Press Secretary Jen Psaki and Director of the National Economic Council Brian Deese

CONGRESS:

- House: Holds pro forma session
- Senate: Convene and proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the nomination of Jason Scott Miller, of Maryland, to be Deputy Director for Management, Office of Management and Budget.

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: End of U.S.'s Mass Vaccinations Coming Soon:** After three months of vaccination across the U.S., a majority of American adults have gotten shots, and the effort will soon shift from mass inoculation to mop-up. As of Saturday, 138.6 million people in the U.S. have received at least a single vaccine dose. About 1.3 million more are getting a first dose every day, according to the CDC. While the rate of new vaccinators is falling, even if were immediately cut in half, it would mean that six weeks from now, over half of the population of the U.S. will have had one dose.
 - Almost all of those who get a first dose are likely to their second, according to one CDC study. On top of that, more than 80% of people aged 60 or over – the most vulnerable group – have had a dose and will likewise complete vaccination. That may be sufficient, at least to see a big impact on U.S. caseloads. The U.S. is currently about where Israel's vaccine campaign was in mid-February, three weeks before cases there began to plunge.
 - But in the next few weeks, what the vaccine campaign is going to look like is going to change dramatically. The Biden administration is pursuing a strategy of abundance, which the White House has referred to as an “overwhelm the problem” approach. That means that there will likely still be widespread shipping of vaccines to pharmacies and health centers, vaccination clinics and mobile resources. But what's likely to disappear are lines and scarcity.
- **Bloomberg Government: Telehealth:** The House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee holds a hearing Thursday on telehealth.
- **Modern Healthcare: Congress May Address Doctor Shortage In Infrastructure Bills:** Physician and hospital groups are hopeful Congress will approve thousands of additional Graduate Medical Education slots this year which, if successful, would mark one of the biggest expansions to the program seen in decades. Citing a looming physician shortage,

doctors and providers have lobbied Congress for more than a decade to increase the number of residents Medicare helps pay to train. That number has been frozen since 1996 until Congress approved an additional 1,000 slots in December. Lobbyists say that was the catalyst needed to break a decades-long resistance to expanding the program, with provider groups pushing for an additional 14,000 slots this year.

- **Bloomberg Government: Broadband Plan Is Bold but Economic Payoff Unclear:** Biden is betting \$100 billion he can deliver a lifeline to rural America, and a boost to the economy overall, by making high-speed internet available to all Americans. The plan could help millions, especially in agrarian states where the Democratic party's support is weakest. Estimating the precise impact, however, is seen as virtually impossible because no one truly knows how many Americans lack access to the internet.
- **The Washington Post: Americans Give Biden Mostly Positive Marks For First 100 Days, Post-ABC Poll Finds:** President Biden nears the end of his first 100 days in office with a slight majority of Americans approving of his performance and supporting his major policy initiatives, but his approval rating is lower than any recent past presidents except Donald Trump, with potential warning signs ahead about his governing strategy, according to a Washington Post-ABC News poll. Overall, 52 percent of adults say they approve of the job Biden is doing, compared with 42 percent who disapprove. At this point in his presidency four years ago, Trump's rating was nearly the reverse, with approval at 42 percent and disapproval at 53 percent. Overall, 34 percent of Americans say they strongly approve of Biden's performance, compared with 35 percent who strongly disapprove.
- **The Washington Post: Fauci Warns That U.S. Rates Of New Cases Still Too High:** President Biden's chief medical adviser, Anthony S. Fauci, warned Americans that 50,000 new coronavirus infections a day is still too high and urged people to get vaccinated. "That's a precarious level, and we don't want that to go up," he said on ABC's "This Week" on Sunday. Public attitudes toward coronavirus vaccinations have been breaking down along party lines, with many more Republicans expressing reluctance to get doses.
- **Modern Healthcare: COVID-19 Ignites Energy Efficient Healthcare Design:** The COVID-19 pandemic is sparking an interest on health systems' energy costs, a new report found. The U.S. healthcare system spends \$8.8 billion a year on energy, but it is an often-overlooked sector, according to a healthcare construction report from construction firm Robins & Morton. COVID-19's squeeze on hospital revenue has reignited cost-cutting initiatives, which increasingly involve reducing energy costs, cutting carbon use and infrastructure efficiency, construction experts said.