

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Friday, April 9, 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

- 2:45pm: Biden, Vice President Harris receive weekly economic briefing in Oval Office
- 11am: White House Covid-19 Response team holds press briefing
- 12:30pm: White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki holds press briefing with Transportation Sec. Pete Buttigieg

CONGRESS

- Senate, House adjourned until the week of April 12

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Modern Healthcare: CMS Wants To Boost Payments Over 2% For Inpatient Rehabilitation, Psychiatric:** CMS wants to boost Medicare payments for inpatient rehabilitation facilities by 2.2% and inpatient psychiatric facilities by 2.3% next year, the agency said Wednesday. According to CMS, the changes would increase federal spending on inpatient rehab by \$160 million compared to 2021. Likewise, federal spending on inpatient psychiatric facilities would go up by about \$90 million. Regulators plan to require inpatient rehabilitation and psychiatric facilities to report COVID-19 vaccine coverage among their healthcare personnel.
- **Bloomberg Government: Medicare Proposes Rate Hike for Hospice, Nursing Homes:** Hospice providers would see an additional \$530 million in Medicare payments in fiscal year 2022 under a proposed 2.3% rate hike announced yesterday by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Nursing homes would net an additional \$444 million if a proposed 1.3% rate increase is finalized, the CMS said in a separate proposed rule.
- **Bloomberg Government: Democrats Call for Making ACA Expansion Permanent:** Rep. Lauren Underwood (D-Ill.) and 35 other House lawmakers urged House and Senate leadership to make the health care affordability provisions included in the American Rescue Plan permanent, according to a statement. In a letter to Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), the members said the inclusion of expanded premium tax credits in the \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief bill, which is set to expire in 2023, should be made permanent.
- **Modern Healthcare: CMS Wants To Bump Pay For Hospices, SNFs Next Year:** Hospices and skilled nursing facilities are likely to get a pay bump in 2022, CMS said Thursday. The agency plans to increase hospice payments by 2.3%, or \$530 million, in 2022. The proposed

aggregate cap for hospice payments is just under \$31,390. According to a CMS fact sheet, CMS also plans to update the labor shares for continuous home care, route home care, inpatient respite care, and general inpatient care.

- **Modern Healthcare: MACPAC Wants To Cut Medicaid Spending On High-Cost Specialty Drugs:** The Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission is poised to recommend changes to how Medicaid pays for high-cost specialty drugs. At MACPAC's April meeting on Thursday, commissioners signaled they would recommend Congress increase the minimum rebate percentage and additional inflationary rebate on drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration through the accelerated approval program. According to the draft recommendations, the increased minimum rebate percentage and additional inflationary rebate would apply to a drug until the drugmaker completes the confirmatory trial and gets full FDA approval.
- **Bloomberg Government: CMS, HHS Nominations Get Hearings:** Senate Finance Chair Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) announced the committee will hold a hearing next Thursday to consider the nominations of Chiquita Brooks-LaSure to be administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and Andrea Palm as deputy secretary of the Health and Human Services Department under Secretary Xavier Becerra.