

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Thursday, May 6, 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

- President Biden travels to the Calcasieu River Bridge in Lake Charles, La., to continue selling his economic and infrastructure package.
- Biden will deliver remarks at 1:25 p.m. on his American Jobs Plan.
- In New Orleans, the president will tour the Carrollton Water Plant at 4:20 p.m.

CONGRESS:

- The House and Senate have no floor work scheduled this week, but the House will be conducting committee work.

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg: Incentives Seen Needed to Fight Superbugs:** New incentives in drug development will help bring more affordable drugs to market, including those to fight antimicrobial resistance, FDA acting commissioner Janet Woodcock said. “I believe there probably are some adjustments to be made the ecosystem,” she said at The Hill’s Future of Healthcare event. “We have too little innovation to make affordable drugs.”
- **New England Journal of Medicine: Therapy For Anemia In Chronic Kidney Disease – New Interventions And New Questions:** Anemia, including its causes and treatments, in patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD) has been a focus of research for 40 years. Huge strides were made when erythropoietin was discovered and injectable erythropoiesis-stimulating agents (ESAs) were developed, followed by the conduct of randomized, controlled clinical trials that changed clinical practice. Multiple trials in which various ESAs have been compared with placebo or with each other have tested hypotheses about the value of targeting higher hemoglobin levels in patients with CKD. Such investigations showed variable signals for benefit (e.g., a reduced need for transfusions or improved quality of life) but also signals for harm (e.g., increased thrombosis of arteriovenous fistulas, stroke, and cancer-associated mortality).
- **Bloomberg: Pandemic Delayed Some FDA Inspections:** Pandemic disruptions severely hampered federal regulators’ ability to inspect drug and device-makers’ manufacturing plants, delaying at least 68 applications for approval to market new products, according to an FDA review. Seven of the delayed applications were mission-critical, meaning they represented a medical advancement, the agency said in a report, and six of those were for new drugs.
- **The Wall Street Journal: U.S. Backs Waiver Of Intellectual Property Protection For Covid-19 Vaccines:** Overriding objections from the pharmaceutical industry, U.S. Trade

Representative Katherine Tai said the U.S. would support a proposal working its way through the World Trade Organization. Such a policy would waive the IP rights of vaccine makers to potentially enable companies in developing countries and others to manufacture their own versions of Covid-19 vaccines. “The administration believes strongly in intellectual property protections, but in service of ending this pandemic, supports the waiver of those protections for Covid-19 vaccines,” Ms. Tai said in a statement.

- **The Washington Post: CDC Says Coronavirus Could Be Under Control This Summer In U.S. If People Get Vaccinated And Are Careful:** The CDC report is not a prediction or forecast. Rather, it is a set of four scenarios based on modeling of the pandemic, using different assumptions about vaccination rates, vaccine efficacy and precautions against transmission. ... Under the most optimistic scenario, deaths from COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, could drop into the low 100s per week in August and into the “tens” per week in September, according to Justin Lessler, an epidemiologist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and one of the paper’s senior authors.
- **CIDRAP: Pandemic Linked With Mental Health Changes In Older Americans:** Almost 1 in 5 US adults ages 50 to 80 said they were experiencing worse depression or sadness since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, and 28% reported worse anxiety or worry, according to a University of Michigan poll today. About 46% of adults said they felt isolated, down from 56% in a spring 2020 poll but still up 28% from before the pandemic.
- **Modern Healthcare: AMA: Most Physicians Now Work Outside Of Private Practice:** For the first time, most physicians worked outside of physician-owned practices in 2020, as doctors continue to gravitate toward employment by hospitals and other organizations, according to a new American Medical Association survey. The trade group's latest Physician Practice Benchmark Survey found that 49.1% of patient care physicians worked in physician-owned practices in 2020, a drop of almost 5 percentage points from 2018, when that figure was 54%. It's 11 percentage points lower than 2012, when 60% of physicians worked in physician-owned practices.