

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Wednesday, June 2, 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 will host Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.) at the White House today at 2:45 p.m., as negotiations over a potential bipartisan infrastructure bill enter a critical phase. The meeting is just with Capito, and no other Republican members will join despite several attending previous conversations.
  - Also today, Biden will deliver remarks at 1:15 p.m. on the administration's Covid-19 response and vaccination program. The president will depart for Rehoboth Beach, Del., at 5:15 p.m.

### CONGRESS:

- The House and Senate are out this week.

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government:** Sanofi Loses Bid to Halt HHS Drug Discount Order: Sanofi and Novo Nordisk lost a legal bid to delay a deadline to respond to a Biden administration order that they resume drug discounts to health providers for lower-income people while lawsuits against the U.S. government play out. The U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey yesterday rejected motions for administrative stays filed by the drugmakers over an HHS advisory opinion mandating steep discounts under the government's 340B program.
- **The New York Times: Moderna Applies To F.D.A. For Full Vaccine Authorization:** Moderna on Tuesday became the latest pharmaceutical company to apply to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for full approval for its Covid-19 vaccine for use in people 18 and older. F.D.A. approval would allow the company to market the shot directly to consumers, and could also help raise public confidence in the vaccine. Full approval could also make it easier for schools, employers, government agencies and the U.S. military, which has encountered resistance to coronavirus vaccines, to mandate vaccinations.
- **Fox News: US Launches Study Mixing COVID-19 Booster Vaccine Regimens:** The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has initiated an early-stage study testing mixed COVID-19 booster vaccine schedules among fully vaccinated adults. The goal is to understand safety and immune responses following mixed boosted regimens, should booster vaccines become necessary. The NIAID-funded study involves some 150 people who already received one of the authorized COVID-19 vaccine regimens developed by Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson & Johnson.

- **Stateline: Obamacare Prices Continue To Fall:** In addition to the decrease in premiums since costs spiked in 2018, more insurance carriers are now participating in the marketplaces, according to a report published by the Urban Institute, a left-leaning think tank based in Washington, D.C. The authors examined policies offering similar benefits in the 15 states that run their own marketplaces and the 36 states that rely at least in part on the federal marketplace. Premiums fell by an average of 1.2% from 2018 to 2019, 3.2% from 2019 to 2018 and 1.7% from 2020 to 2021, they found. That contrasts with a huge increase from 2017 to 2018 of nearly 32%, which the authors attributed largely to policies of the Trump administration intended to undercut the Affordable Care Act.
- **Modern Healthcare: COVID Unlikely To Be Passed Through Blood Donations:** People who previously had COVID can donate blood without transmitting the virus, according to a National Institute of Health study released Tuesday. The findings show donors have a less than 1% chance of transmitting the virus as long as any COVID-related symptoms and infections cleared up 14 days prior to donating blood, per U.S Food and Drug Administration guidelines.
- **Stat: Global Agencies Call For \$50 Billion Investment To Combat Covid-19:** In a plea to halt the Covid-19 pandemic, four global agencies are calling for investments of up to \$50 billion – mostly from wealthy nations – to boost manufacturing capacity and supplies and ease trade rules to ensure equitable distribution of vaccines and other medical products. The “call to action” comes as the pandemic reaches a “perilous point,” but such an investment could reduce infections and the loss of lives, while accelerating an economic recovery, according to a statement from the World Health Organization, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, and the International Monetary Fund.
- **Stat: A Bootcamp For Digital Health Execs Seeks To Demystify The Drug Industry:** Naomi Fried has watched the same plot unfold over and over again: A digital health startup pitches software to accelerate drug discovery, track medication use, or identify patients for clinical trials. But initial interest from pharma executives quickly fades. They stop returning emails, often with no explanation. But if the reasons are mysterious to startups, they are not to Fried, who has spent her career driving technology innovation at Biogen, Boston Children’s Hospital, and Kaiser Permanente. She said the startups are simply misunderstanding their audience and the business concerns that drive decision-making.