

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Tuesday, June 22, 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

- Biden will meet at 1:45 p.m. with Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator Deanne Criswell and Homeland Security Adviser and Deputy National Security Adviser Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall to discuss FEMA's preparation for extreme weather events

### CONGRESS:

- The House will consider 18 measures under expedited procedure that indicates broad, bipartisan support.
- The Senate plans to vote on whether to advance Democrats' sweeping voting-rights legislation to the Senate floor, but a lack of Republican support indicates the bill is unlikely to advance.

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Bipartisan Duo Push for Diabetes Tech Access:** Sens. Susan Collins (R-Maine) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.), the co-chairs of the Senate Diabetes Caucus, unveiled legislation that would "expand seniors' access to groundbreaking diabetes technologies, such as the artificial pancreas and implantable continuous glucose monitoring systems," according to a statement. The bill would establish a task force to address "barriers that seniors face" in accessing such tech.
- **Stat: HHS Withdraws Drug Discount Opinion Amid Lawsuits By Pharma Companies:** After a defeat in federal court, the Department of Health and Human Services withdrew an advisory opinion which said drug makers participating in a controversial federal program must offer discounts through pharmacies that contract with hospitals serving low-income patients. However, HHS simultaneously maintained the move does not have any bearing on a separate set of "violation" letters sent last month to six drug makers, which could face fines for failing to offer discounts through the 340B drug discount program for safety-net hospitals and clinics. The agency said the letters should be viewed as distinct from the opinion and that enforcement action can be pursued.
- **Bloomberg Government: HHS Fills Drug Discount Dispute Board:** The Biden administration appointed panelists for a long-awaited forum to hear disputes within a government program for providing steep drug discounts to health centers treating lower-income patients. HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra has ordered the appointment of members to the 340B Administrative Dispute Resolution Board, a group of health centers said in a filing in a lawsuit over the discount forum.

- **KHN: Hospitals, Insurers Invest Big Dollars To Tackle Patients' Social Needs:** When doctors at a primary care clinic here noticed many of its poorest patients were failing to show up for appointments, they hoped giving out free rides would help. But the one-time complimentary ride didn't reduce these patients' 36% no-show rate at the University of Pennsylvania Health System clinics. "I was super surprised it did not have any effect," said Dr. Krisda Chaiyachati, the Penn researcher who led the 2018 study of 786 Medicaid patients.
- **Bloomberg Government: Panel to Weigh Assistant HHS Chief Pick:** Senate Finance Chairman Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) yesterday announced he will convene a hearing on June 24, to consider the nomination of Melanie Egorin to be assistant HHS Secretary.
- **The Wall Street Journal: Medicaid Enrollment Surged During Covid-19 Pandemic, Report Shows:** More than 80 million people – a record number – have health coverage through Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program, as enrollments surged due to Covid-19, according to new data released Monday by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Between February of 2020 and January 2021, nearly 9.9 million people enrolled in the two programs – a 13.9% increase, the data shows. And more than 38.3 million children, or nearly half of the total Medicaid and CHIP enrollment, were in both those programs.
- **Axios: The Rising Stakes Of CDC's Vaccine Meeting About Myocarditis Cases:** A CDC advisory committee will meet Wednesday to evaluate the risk of heart inflammation in teens who get the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines. Cases of heart inflammation are rare, but they've raised concerns among some experts and scientists – including some whose job it is to sift through those risks and recommend whether to authorize the vaccines for children younger than 12.