

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Wednesday, June 30, 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

- 11:00am – President Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris deliver remarks and convene Cabinet officials, Governors, and private sector partners to discuss the devastating intersection of drought, heat, and wildfires in the Western United States, and strengthening prevention, preparedness and response efforts for this wildfire season.

CONGRESS:

- The House plans to vote today on a resolution to establish a congressional panel to investigate the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol. The chamber will also begin considering Democrats' combined highway and water infrastructure funding package.

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Modern Healthcare: Proposed ACA Rule Change Could Drive Enrollment Among Low-Income Obamacare, Medicaid Beneficiaries:** The Biden administration's proposal to give consumers more time to enroll in the Affordable Care Act's health insurance exchanges will lead to more low-income people gaining coverage, but analysts are uncertain whether that would encourage more insurers to offer policies on the marketplaces. On Monday, CMS unveiled a plan to give exchange customers an additional 30 days to enroll, extending the enrollment period from Nov. 1 to Jan. 15; currently, signups end on Dec. 15 each year. The agency also plans to establish a monthly special enrollment period to allow people with low incomes more opportunities to enroll in a premium-free silver plan.
- **Stat: Primary Care Docs Need To Prepare For CGMs For Type 2 Diabetes:** In the last year, Jai Smith has cycled through 13 primary care doctors. Ever since being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in 1995, she's tried her best to manage a disease that has devastated her family: Her grandmother and four uncles died from its complications. But she's struggled to find a doctor in her hometown of Little Rock, Ark., that will give her what she wants to manage the condition: a continuous glucose monitor.
- **Bloomberg Government: HHS Watchdog to Speed Up Advisories:** Health lawyers and compliance officers will have an easier, faster time navigating key documents from the HHS inspector general under an overhaul of the watchdog agency's communications and data arms. "The pandemic and a compulsory switch to working remotely for many required us to think differently," said Christi Grimm, principal deputy inspector general of the Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General.

- **KHN: States Step Up Push To Regulate Pharmacy Drug Brokers:** Under pressure to rein in skyrocketing prescription drug costs, states are targeting companies that serve as conduits for drug manufacturers, health insurers and pharmacies. More than 100 separate bills regulating those companies, known as pharmacy benefit managers, have been introduced in 42 states this year, according to the National Academy for State Health Policy, which crafts model legislation on the topic. The flood of bills comes after a U.S. Supreme Court ruling late last year backed Arkansas' right to enforce rules on the companies. At least 12 of the states have adopted new oversight laws. But it's not yet clear how much money consumers will save immediately, if at all.
- **Modern Healthcare: Hospitals Decry Extending Medicare Cuts To Pay For Infrastructure Bill:** Not only did hospitals not get the money they sought in President Joe Biden's bipartisan infrastructure package, they could actually see Medicare payment cuts under the proposal. Under the framework Biden announced alongside Democratic and Republican senators at the White House last week, Medicare reimbursement reductions would help cover the legislation's \$1.2 trillion cost. The plan would reduce Medicare payments to hospitals and other providers by 2% through at least 2031.
- **Bloomberg Government: Ag-FDA Funding Markup:** The House Appropriations Committee is scheduled to mark up the fiscal 2022 Agriculture-FDA spending bill. The Agriculture-FDA Subcommittee last week advanced its \$26.6 billion spending bill, which offers a more than 10 percent bump from 2021.
- **Bloomberg Government: Employers Fear Costs of Public Option Health Plans:** Businesses are concerned that public option health plans taking shape in some states may end up costing them more than the high premiums they already pay. Employers increasingly have been open to government involvement in the health-care system out of frustration for high costs that they have been largely unable to rein in. But they fear plans set by states could hurt their own plans by peeling off younger, healthier staff.