

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Wednesday, June 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

- President Biden departs for his first international trip as president today, departing for the U.K. at 8:30 a.m. Biden arrives this evening, with plans to meet tomorrow with U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

CONGRESS:

- The Senate will consider Biden's nominee for the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey, Zahid Quraishi.
- The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will mark up Democrats' \$547 billion surface transportation bill as well as major wastewater infrastructure legislation.

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Rebound in Health Care to Drive 2022 Spending:** U.S. medical costs are expected to increase in 2022 as health care deferred during the pandemic returns and Covid-19 testing and vaccinations continue, according to an analysis released today. Industry efforts to improve the health-care supply chain, increase staff wages, and update infrastructure – to prepare for the next crisis – will also drive higher prices, PwC Health Research Institute found in the report.
 - PwC expects costs to increase by 6.5% in 2022, slightly slower than 2021, but higher than in other years. “The pandemic made a pronounced impact on how and where Americans gain access to care, a shift large enough to influence multiple aspects of price and utilization,” PwC said.
- **Bloomberg Government: Rollback of Trump-Era Insulin Rule Clears Hurdle:** A rescission of a Trump administration drug rule requiring community health centers to give all their insulin and epinephrine discounts to patients has cleared White House review and can be published at any time. The proposal to retract the rule was approved by the White House Office of Management and Budget for Health and Human Services Department to release in the Federal Register.
- **Bloomberg Government: Top Obama Medicare Deputy Returns:** Jonathan Blum has rejoined the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services as principal deputy administrator, returning to the same job he held during the Obama administration “A tireless public servant and health policy expert, he brings invaluable experience to CMS,” Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure said in a statement to Bloomberg Law yesterday.

- KHN: Zooming Into The Statehouse: Nursing Home Residents Use New Digital Skills To Push For Changes:** Patty Bausch isn't a Medicaid expert, lawyer or medical professional. But she still thinks Connecticut legislators need her input when they consider bills affecting people like her – the roughly 18,000 residents who live in the state's nursing homes. With help and encouragement from Connecticut's Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, Bausch signed up and testified remotely before a legislative hearing this year. Nursing home residents who have been using digital technology to reach out to family and friends – after the covid pandemic led officials to end visitation last year – could also use it to connect with elected officials once the legislature moved to remote hearings. Speaking into an iPad provided by the ombudsman's office, Bausch testified without ever leaving her room at the Newtown Rehabilitation & Health Care Center, where she has lived since having a stroke three years ago.
- Bloomberg Government: Health Preparedness Pick Vows to Apply Lessons from Pandemic:** “Be ready for the next public health emergency.” That's the top priority for Biden's nominee to lead the agency within the HHS that prepares for and works to stop pandemics and biohazard attacks. “Make sure that we have the advantage of everything that we've learned this time” from the Covid-19 crisis, said Dawn O'Connell, who is seeking confirmation to be HHS assistant secretary for preparedness and response.

 - She testified yesterday before the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. Republicans on the committee didn't state how they would vote on O'Connell's nomination or that of Miriam Delphin-Rittmon for assistant secretary for mental health and substance use, who also testified yesterday.
- Modern Healthcare: Biden Administration Pushes Domestic Pharmaceutical Production:** The Biden administration aims to boost U.S.-based production of pharmaceuticals and their ingredients, among other initiatives looking to shore up the supply chain, according to a new report. HHS, the Defense Department and other agencies should increase their funding related to producing active pharmaceutical ingredients in critical drugs, the White House recommended in its review of supply chain disruptions caused or exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. HHS should also track production by facility and where API is sourced to improve transparency.
- CNN: People With Diabetes Who Sleep Badly Are At Greater Risk Of Dying Prematurely, Study Suggests:** People with diabetes who had trouble falling or staying asleep were 87% more likely to die of any cause over the next nine years than people without diabetes or sleep problems, a new study finds. The study, published Tuesday in the Journal of Sleep Research, analyzed data from nearly half a million middle-aged participants in the UK Biobank Study, which houses in-depth genetic and health information on UK residents.