

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Monday, July 20, 2020

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

- Republican congressional leaders gather at the White House for talks on a new coronavirus stimulus package
- 5:50pm: President Trump leaves White House for Trump International Hotel in Washington
- 6:15pm: Trump takes part in a roundtable with supporters of a joint fundraising committee
- 7:20pm: Trump leaves Trump International Hotel
- 7:25pm: Trump arrives White House

CONGRESS

- House meets at 9am, first votes expected as early as 11:30am
 - Begins consideration of the National Defense Authorization Act
- Senate meets at 3pm; considers nomination of Russell Vought to be director of the Office of Management and Budget
- Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is set to unveil a GOP-only virus aid bill this week before engaging in negotiations with Democrats on what would be the fifth legislative action to address the pandemic

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Appropriations:** House leaders on Thursday and Friday plan to take up the first package of fiscal 2021 appropriations measures (H.R. 7608), including the Agriculture-FDA and State and Foreign Operations bills. The State and Foreign Operations measure would require Trump to send \$200 million to the World Health Organization and block the U.S. policy, often called the “Mexico City policy,” that bars federal funding for international groups that perform or recommend abortions.
- **The Wall Street Journal: Congress To Start Negotiations On Next Round Of Coronavirus Aid:** Congress returns to work Monday with just weeks to craft new agreements on aid to households and protections for businesses, urged on by signs of a faltering economic recovery, a resurgent coronavirus pandemic and a looming deadline for enhanced unemployment payments. Some early areas of potential compromise have emerged on pulling together what would be the fifth coronavirus package since the beginning of the year. Both parties appear eager to pass another bill.

- **Bloomberg Government: Outpatient Medicare Payment Policy Wins Nod:** The Medicare program can continue to pay the same rate for medical services whether they were provided at a doctor's office or a hospital outpatient clinic, a federal appeals court ruled Friday. The decision from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit reverses a lower court ruling saying the so-called "site-neutral" payment policy was unlawful.
- **Bloomberg Government: Trump Wins on Obamacare Alternative:** Short-term health plans that don't meet Obamacare standards can remain in place after the D.C. federal appeals court said on Friday that they don't violate the Affordable Care Act. Short-term plans let people buy health insurance when they experience a gap in health-care coverage due to circumstances like being out of work. Those plans aren't required to offer the same 10 essential benefits required of ACA-backed plans.
- **AP: FDA Approves Quest COVID-19 Test For 'Pooled' Sample Use:** The Food and Drug Administration has given emergency approval to a new approach to coronavirus testing that combines test samples in batches instead of running them one by one, speeding up the process. The FDA said Saturday that it reissued an emergency use authorization to Quest Diagnostics to use its COVID-19 test with pooled samples. It is the first test to be authorized to be used in this way.
- **Bloomberg Government: Hospitals File Appeal Over Disclosure Rule:** Leading hospital trade groups say a federal district judge was wrong to uphold a Trump administration rule forcing hospitals to publicly disclose prices they negotiate with insurance companies for medical procedures. In an appeal Friday to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, hospital industry groups led by the American Hospital Association allege the Health and Human Services Department overstated the rule's benefits while inadequately considering its burden.