American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Monday, July 26, 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

- 11:10am - President and Vice President deliver remarks to celebrate the 31st anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- 2:00pm – President participates in a bilateral meeting with his Excellency Mustafa Al-Kadhimi, Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq

CONGRESS:

- The House is scheduled to vote on 20 bills under expedited floor procedure.
- The Senate plans to vote on Biden’s nominee to lead the Department of Justice’s Environment and Natural Resources Division.

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- Bloomberg Government: House Panel Prepares Minibus: The House Rules Committee is set to meet today to agree on the terms of debate for a seven-bill spending package (H.R. 4502) that includes the Agriculture-FDA, Energy and Water, Financial Services, Interior-Environment, Labor-HHS-Education, Military Construction-VA, and Transportation-HUD spending bills. The House plans to consider the measure later this week.

- Bloomberg Government: VA Drug Disposals: The Veterans Affairs Department would have to designate times and allow any individual to dispose of controlled substance medications at covered VA medical facilities under S. 957. The VA was given a deadline of Jan. 1, 2022, to ensure that there are drop-off locations at VA medical facilities that have an onsite pharmacy or a physical location dedicated for law enforcement purposes.

- Bloomberg Government: VA Medical Facility Authorization: The Veterans Affairs Department would be authorized to carry out specific major medical facility projects in fiscal 2021 by S. 1910. The bill would authorize $2.08 billion for major VA construction and renovation projects.

- KHN: The Pandemic Made Telemedicine An Instant Hit. Patients And Providers Feel The Growing Pains: Crystal Joseph pays for two telemedicine video services to ensure that her small therapy practice in Silver Spring, Maryland, can always connect with its clients. She’s been burned before. During one hours-long service outage of SimplePractice in late May,
PsycYourMind, which offers mental health counseling and group sessions for Black patients, lost about $600 because of missed appointments. Livid, Joseph requested a small credit from the telemedicine service, which costs $432 monthly for her team of clinicians and trainees. SimplePractice refused, she said.

- **Modern Healthcare: The High Cost Of Temporary Nurses Forces Providers To Get Creative:** Healthcare providers are finding new ways to adequately staff facilities in response to escalating costs for travel nurses and rising COVID-19 cases. The high demand for nurses has created a competitive market for temporary staffing, leading some healthcare companies to leverage internal resources and change up existing staff structures to meet patients' needs. The resurgence of the coronavirus pandemic driven by the Delta variant, especially in states with low vaccination rates, is burdening providers whose staffing shortages have worsened just as demand spikes. States including Arizona, Arkansas, Missouri and Texas are enduring significant increases in daily cases, hospitalizations and deaths, triggering an urgent need for healthcare professionals.

- **AP: North Carolina Woman To Become Rare 2-Time Organ Donor:** A North Carolina woman is set to join the elite ranks of two-time living organ donors. On Tuesday, surgeons in New York will take part of 54-year-old Stephanie Allen’s liver and transplant it into her brother, Eric Allen, The Wilson Times reported. Stephanie Allen, a delivery driver and mother of four, previously donated a kidney to her sister in 2006. “Right now, she is the sunshine in my world,” said Eric Allen, whose liver was failing after two years of battling primary sclerosing cholangitis and Crohn’s disease.

- **Bloomberg Government: Infrastructure Talks Near Finish Line:** Senators negotiating a $579 billion infrastructure package are aiming to finish negotiations early this week, under pressure from colleagues to salvage an August recess and to allow the Senate to turn to preventing a government shutdown and debt ceiling default in the fall. A pending five-week break scheduled to begin Aug. 9 is motivating the 22-member bipartisan group to end dickering over relatively minor components of their plan.
  - Finishing a bipartisan infrastructure plan also is pivotal to getting all Democrats on board with a budget outline setting up a $3.5 trillion tax and spending package that will carry most of Biden’s agenda through Congress without Republican votes.