

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Thursday, August 13, 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

- President Trump speaks on opening U.S. schools at 3pm

CONGRESS

- House, Senate out
- House Democrats hold call to update caucus on virus talks in afternoon

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **RenalWeb: The impact of COVID-19 on kidney transplantation:** The landscape of solid organ transplantation has dramatically changed since the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded. The transplant workforce has implemented several changes in response to rapidly changing circumstances with the aims of preserving personal protective equipment, maintaining hospital capacity during an anticipated surge in COVID-19 cases and minimizing the risk of virus transmission. There is immense uncertainty about the adequacy of available SARS-CoV-2 testing and concerns about the potential risk of transmitting a virulent disease to heavily immunosuppressed transplant recipients and otherwise healthy live donors.
- **Bloomberg Government: Facebook Launches Voting Center:** Facebook launched a voting information hub to give users election information, including links to register to vote or volunteer at a local polling station. The hub, which CEO Mark Zuckerberg first announced in May, will be promoted atop U.S. users' Facebook and Instagram feeds later this fall. The company expects it will reach 160 million Americans before November's presidential election, according to Emily Dalton Smith, Facebook's director of social impact. Facebook will compile information for the site from state officials and groups like the Bipartisan Policy Center and the Federal Voting Assistance Program.
- **Bloomberg Government: Health CEOs Encouraged by Rural Options:** Health-care executives and policy analysts reacted optimistically to a new method of paying groups of rural health-care providers to coordinate care, but they are wary about the risk involved. These groups – also known as accountable care organizations – will get advanced payments to build up their infrastructure and prepare to be paid based on patient outcomes under a new model announced Tuesday by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.
- **Politico: Standoff Over Covid Relief Could Drag Into September:** White House officials

and top Democratic leaders signaled on Wednesday that they can't agree on what they said to each other, much less forge a compromise, on a Covid-19 relief bill to help the battered U.S. economy or tens of millions of Americans facing financial hardship. The high-stakes stalemate now appears likely to drag on for weeks, or even into September, according to lawmakers and aides in both parties.

- **Bloomberg Government: State Covid Test Fund Gains Allies:** A bipartisan group of lawmakers wants to create a \$25 billion fund to help states collectively buy Covid-19 tests, an effort Democratic supporters say is the best option amid a weak federal government response to the outbreak. Sens. Bill Cassidy (R-La.) and Tina Smith (D-Minn.) are leading the push in the Senate for the next relief measure to encourage states to create interstate compacts for buying test supplies.
- **Becker's Hospital Review: Cash-strapped hospitals press Congress for more aid:** Trade groups representing hospitals are urging Congress to provide more relief aid to healthcare organizations to help offset losses tied to the COVID-19 pandemic. Congress already has allocated \$175 billion in aid to hospitals and other healthcare providers to help relieve financial strain during the pandemic, but hospital groups say more is needed to cover lost revenue and higher expenses linked to COVID-19.