

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Tuesday, August 25, 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 attends first lady Melania Trump's speech to RNC in evening

CONGRESS

- House, Senate out

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Flu Shot Requirements for Nursing Home Workers Sought:** The potentially deadly confluence of a raging Covid-19 pandemic and the upcoming flu season is prompting growing calls for states to mandate influenza vaccinations for all nursing home health-care personnel. The nation's 15,000-plus nursing homes are already struggling with rising Covid infections due to unchecked community spread. Seasonal influenza, which has symptoms similar to Covid, also poses a deadly threat to older, frail nursing home residents with compromised immune systems.
 - States should provide additional financial help to nursing homes that have been reeling from the Covid-19 pandemic, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services said in guidance issued yesterday. State officials should make use of the flexibilities the CMS provided during the crisis to increase Medicaid reimbursements to nursing homes that created isolation wings for Covid-19 patients and paid for additional personal protective equipment, the agency said in an informational bulletin.
- **Bloomberg Government: Congress Eyed to Solve Remote Work Tax Dilemma:** Businesses are pushing lawmakers to streamline income tax requirements so workers and employers don't risk double taxation or taxation by different states as teleworking persists. Payroll departments are used to handling withholding obligations for multiple states. But once workers fled to homes and other locations, many in different states – and the work-from-home period stretched beyond states' regulations – daunting questions arose.
- **AP: UN Cautions That Virus Plasma Treatment Still Experimental:** The World Health Organization on Monday cautioned that using blood plasma from COVID-19 survivors to treat other patients is still considered an experimental therapy, voicing the concern as a U.S. boost for the treatment has many scientists afraid formal studies will be derailed. On Sunday, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration authorized what's called "emergency use" of the treatment under its special powers to speed the availability of promising experimental drugs during a public health crisis. The action isn't the same as approving plasma as safe and effective, and numerous rigorous studies are underway to find out if it really works.
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- The Philadelphia Inquirer: The coronavirus is damaging kidneys. Doctors worry that some survivors will need dialysis forever: There had been signals from China that the new disease was hard on kidneys, but nephrologists like Kliger were not prepared for what happened when cases surged in New York. So many patients suffered kidney injury that dialysis supplies ran short. Two studies of New York patients found that 68% to 76% of intensive-care patients with COVID-19 had kidney damage. In one, a third of ICU patients needed dialysis, a process in which a machine performs the kidney's blood-filtering work.