

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Thursday, August 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

- Biden will meet with his national security team at 9:15 a.m. to discuss Afghanistan.
- The president will meet with Bennett at 11:55 a.m. for a bilateral meeting.
- Biden will meet virtually with governors at 3 p.m. to discuss the resettlement of Afghans in the U.S.

CONGRESS:

- Out of Session

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Modern Healthcare: CMS Will Not Immediately Remove Nursing Homes From Medicare And Medicaid Over Vaccine Requirement:** CMS will not immediately remove nursing homes from Medicaid and Medicare if they do not adhere to the employee staff vaccination requirement announced last week, administrators said during a call with industry stakeholders on Wednesday. Instead, CMS will take a stepwise approach to enforcing the mandate. Nursing homes will first be notified they are not in compliance with the regulation, then assessed civil monetary penalties, then denied payment, and ultimately removed from the program if they do not comply.
- **Bloomberg Government: Lawmakers Set to Allow Jobless Aid to End:** Democrats have no plan to extend unemployment insurance benefits before they end on Labor Day, despite the jump in the delta variant's spread. House Ways and Means Chair Richard Neal (D-Mass.), whose committee would be responsible for pushing the end date beyond Sept. 6, cited the lack of appetite from Biden's White House and debates over whether the \$300 weekly benefit is still needed with falling jobless figures and the return of school.
 - "The president's position has been to hold off on it until we see more evidence on it," Neal said. "There's a series of pretty good competing debates about that whole question." Three programs are set to expire on Sept. 6: one providing \$300 extra in weekly unemployment insurance, one offering unemployment aid to otherwise ineligible workers, and one for additional aid to workers after their state benefits run out. Twenty-six states have already stopped at least some of the extra relief.

- **The Wall Street Journal: Biden Administration Likely To Approve Covid-19 Boosters At Six Months:** Federal regulators are likely to approve a Covid-19 booster shot for vaccinated adults starting at least six months after the previous dose rather than the eight-month gap they previously announced, a person familiar with the plans said, as the Biden administration steps up preparations for delivering boosters to the public. Data from vaccine manufacturers and other countries under review by the Food and Drug Administration is based on boosters being given at six months, the person said. The person said approval for boosters for all three Covid-19 shots being administered in the U.S. — those manufactured by Pfizer Inc. and partner BioNTech SE, Moderna Inc. and Johnson & Johnson — is expected in mid-September.
- **Modern Healthcare: Payers, Patient Advocates Warn Against Overuse Of Arbitration In Surprise Billing Disputes:** Patient advocates, unions and business groups are urging President Joe Biden's administration to make clear that arbitration should only be used as a "last resort" in out-of-network billing disputes. In a letter to HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra and other cabinet officers, AFL-CIO, the American Benefits Council and dozens of other groups representing large employers, union members and patients expressed concern that providers could abuse the arbitration process under the new surprise billing ban to inflate costs.