

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Tuesday, August 3, 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

- President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris will meet at 1 p.m. with Latino community leaders to discuss the economy, immigration, and voting rights. They will also commemorate the second anniversary of a 2019 mass shooting in El Paso, Texas.
- The president will speak at 3:45 p.m. on Covid-19 vaccinations.

### CONGRESS:

- The Senate will resume work on the infrastructure bill with at least one vote scheduled on an amendment.

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Democrats Seeking Drug Cost Cap in Employer Plans:** House Democrats agree with employer, labor and consumer groups that commercial health plans should be included in sweeping legislation designed to curb drug prices, sources say. Whether the plans sponsored by employers or insurers are covered under H.R. 3's proposed cap on drug price inflation will depend on whether it's allowed via a budget move Congress will use to advance widened Medicare benefits this fall.
- **Modern Healthcare: CMS Wants To Help Home Health Aides Get Health Coverage:** CMS wants to allow state Medicaid programs to pay for home health aides' benefits, including health insurance. A proposed rule would permit state Medicaid agencies to use voluntary payroll deductions from home health workers' wages to pay third parties for employee benefits. Offering part-time workers benefits could help home health agencies recruit and retain employees, which in turn can improve access to home and community-based services, CMS said in a news release Friday.
- **Bloomberg Government: HELP Markup:** The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee is scheduled to mark up four bills including:
  - S. 1486, to eliminate discrimination and promote women's health and economic security by ensuring reasonable workplace accommodations for workers whose ability to perform the functions of a job are limited by pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition; and
  - S. 1543, to provide best practices on student suicide awareness and prevention training and to condition state educational agencies, local educational agencies, and tribal

educational agencies to establish and implement a school-based student suicide awareness and prevention training policy.

- **Modern Healthcare: Inpatient Pay Rule Gives Hospitals A \$2.3 Billion Boost:** Providers will no longer have to disclose their contract terms with Medicare Advantage insurers after CMS signed off on its 2022 inpatient pay rule Monday. The final rule gives providers a 2.5% bump for inpatient services payments, or \$2.3 billion more than 2021. CMS expects Medicare disproportionate share hospital payments and Medicare uncompensated costs to fall by \$1.4 billion compared to 2021. Long-term care hospitals will also get a 1.1% raise, a boost of \$42 million. In addition, Medicare will continue paying add-on payments for COVID-19 treatments through the end of the fiscal year in which the pandemic ends.
- **Bloomberg Government: Democrats Push HHS on Drug Prices:** Sens. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) and Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) and Rep. Lloyd Doggett (D-Texas) asked HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra to update the lawmakers on the department's use of tools like "Section 1498 compulsory licensing" and "Bayh-Dole march-in rights" to address drug prices, they said yesterday, referring to two laws dealing with government patent use including for patented drugs.
- **Bloomberg Government: Hospitals to Get \$2.3 Billion Pay Hike From Medicare in 2022:** Medicare will pay hospitals \$2.3 billion more, a 2.5% hike, for inpatient stays in 2022, under a new rule issued yesterday by the Biden administration.