

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Monday, August 30, 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 and Vice President Kamala Harris will receive an update at 10 a.m. from the national security team on Afghanistan. The president will also receive regular briefings from the homeland security team on Hurricane Ida.

CONGRESS:

- Out of Session

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Pediatric Nephrology: Kidney implications of SARS-CoV2 infection in children:** Research indicates that severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV2) infection can impact every organ, and the effects can range from asymptomatic to severe disease. Since it was first discovered in December 2019, our understanding has grown about its impact on kidney disease. In general, children have less severe disease than adults, and this tendency appears to extend to special pediatric kidney populations (e.g., chronic kidney disease and immunosuppressed patients with solid organ transplants or nephrotic syndrome). However, in a fraction of infected children, SARS-CoV2 causes an array of kidney manifestations, ranging from acute kidney injury to thrombotic microangiopathy, with potential implications for increased risk of morbidity and mortality. Additional considerations surround the propensity for clotting extracorporeal circuits in children with SARS-CoV2 infection that are receiving kidney replacement therapy. This review provides an update on our current understanding of SARS-CoV2 for pediatric nephrologists and highlights knowledge gaps to be addressed by future research during this ongoing pandemic, particularly the social disparities magnified during this period.
- **Bloomberg Government: Biden HHS Quadruples ACA Sign-Up Helpers:** The Biden White House is quadrupling the number of Obamacare “navigators” who help connect the uninsured with marketplace coverage to 1,500, the Health and Human Services Department announced. Sixty organizations will receive \$80 million to help train navigators for the 2022 health insurance plan year, the largest funding increase for this program. But lawmakers disagree over how effective those navigators really are.
- **Bloomberg Government: White House Rushes to Booster Doses as Advisers Bide Time:** U.S. public-health advisers are moving slowly toward considering the nationwide plan for booster doses of Covid-19 vaccines to ward off the fast-spreading delta variant, even as the

administration seeks a Sept. 20 kickoff. While the booster plan laid out earlier this month had targeted those who received their last dose at least eight months ago, Biden said Friday that Americans may get a booster even faster: five months after completing the first regimen. The White House quickly clarified its stance, saying that the plan hasn't changed, but Biden's interest in a rapid rollout is clear. Booster shots were supposed to be the main topic of discussion at an Aug. 24 meeting that was pushed to today.

- Anthony Fauci said the door is open to administering booster shots in the U.S. sooner than eight months. "We're still planning on eight months. That was the calculation we made," Fauci, the president's chief medical adviser, told NBC. But "we're totally open to any variation in that based on the data," he said. Fauci also said he favors requiring shots for students as "a good idea" for the U.S., where only kids age 12 and older are eligible for the shot.
- **Bloomberg Government: Immune System's Plan for Waning Antibodies:** Antibodies against the coronavirus wane over time, but the immune system has a backup plan that doesn't rely on boosters, according to a study by scientists at the University of Pennsylvania, where technology for mRNA vaccines was developed. They tracked 61 people over six months after immunization with the mRNA vaccines and found that although antibodies waned, the shots generated durable immune memory to ward off serious illnesses.
- **Bloomberg Government: Insurers Wary of Dental, Hearing Benefits for Medicare:** The Biden administration's proposal to add dental, vision and hearing benefits to traditional Medicare could end up shortchanging program beneficiaries enrolled in private Medicare Advantage plans, a new report finds. Unless Congress adjusts the Medicare Advantage "benchmark" base rate, the plans would receive 48% to 73% fewer rebate dollars, said an analysis funded by America's Health Insurance Plans, a leading industry group. Tony Pugh has more.
 - Relatedly, House Democrats are careening toward an "ugly" intra-party collision over parts of Biden's \$4.1 trillion economic agenda, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) warned. The New York lawmaker predicted Friday that she and other progressives would come under increasing pressure to help pass a \$550 billion public works bill – as a stand-alone legislation – and to drop their insistence on pairing it with a sweeping \$3.5 trillion package of social, climate and health care-reform initiatives.