

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Wednesday, September 16,
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

- 12:30pm: President Trump participates in a High Holy Days Call with Jewish Leaders
- 1:30pm: Trump has lunch with VP Mike Pence
- 6:50pm: Trump departs White House for Capitol Hill Club for Republican fundraiser
- 7pm: Trump speaks at NRCC fundraising dinner
- 8pm: Trump returns to White House

CONGRESS

- House meets at 9am; set to consider 7 bills incl. H.R. 4990, election security bill
- Senate meets at 10am; set to resume consideration of judicial nominees

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Health Affairs: The Beneficial Effects Of Medicare Advantage Special Needs Plans For Patients With End-Stage Renal Disease:** Patients with end-stage renal disease (ESRD) are a vulnerable population with high rates of morbidity, mortality, and acute care use. Medicare Advantage Special Needs Plans (SNPs) are an alternative financing and delivery model designed to improve care and reduce costs for patients with ESRD, but little is known about their impact. We used detailed clinical, demographic, and claims data to identify fee-for-service Medicare beneficiaries who switched to ESRD SNPs offered by a single health plan (SNP enrollees) and similar beneficiaries who remained enrolled in fee-for-service Medicare plans (fee-for-service controls). We then compared three-year mortality and twelve-month utilization rates. Compared with fee-for-service controls, SNP enrollees had lower mortality and lower rates of utilization across the care continuum. These findings suggest that SNPs may be an effective alternative care financing and delivery model for patients with ESRD.
- **Bloomberg Government: Poison Pill Quiets Hospitals on Defying Price Rule:** Hospitals that threatened to defy the federal government’s requirement to disclose their negotiated prices with insurers by Jan. 1 are reconsidering after a harsh new penalty – a potential loss of Medicare payments – was buried in a subsequent regulation. Some had considered not complying, protesting that disclosing prices would put some of their business practices in jeopardy. The fine set out by the initial transparency regulation was \$300 per day, whereas major hospitals project their initial costs of complying at more than \$1,300 a day, the American Hospital Association said.
 - But a recent yearly payment rule said hospitals that don’t provide their median negotiated rates with Medicare Advantage private insurance plans may also be denied Medicare payments. That would make a rebellion difficult – an analysis

from 2019 says about 18% of hospital revenue came from Medicare, according to Definitive Healthcare.

- **Politico: More Americans Lacked Health Insurance Last Year – Even Before Pandemic Hit, Census Reports:** The ranks of the nation’s uninsured continued to grow last year, even before the arrival of the coronavirus pandemic that’s devastated the economy, new federal data show. Nearly 30 million Americans went without health coverage at some point in 2019, up by roughly 1 million from the previous year, according to new U.S. Census Bureau data. The figures show continued losses in health insurance under the Trump administration, slightly eroding coverage gains made following passage of Obamacare a decade ago.
- **USA Today: Coronavirus Stimulus: Pelosi Says House Will Stay Until Deal On Bill:** House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said Tuesday the House will stay in session until a breakthrough is made on a coronavirus stimulus bill, while moderate lawmakers pressed leaders to come up with a relief deal before the November elections. "We are committed to staying here until we have an agreement, an agreement that meets the needs of the American people," Pelosi said on CNBC Tuesday. Her words signaled relief talks between congressional Democrats and President Donald Trump's White House may be salvaged even though the two sides don't appear any closer to an agreement.
- **Stat: Lawmakers Demand Drug Makers Stop Threatening To End Drug Discounts:** Dozens of U.S. lawmakers sent sharply worded letters to the Trump administration and the pharmaceutical industry trade group to demand drug makers stop threatening to curtail discounts provided to a federal program for safety-net hospitals. The bipartisan effort comes in response to recent steps taken by at least five large drug companies to reduce discounts they offer to the 340B drug discount program.