

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Tuesday, September 22, 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

- Trump to deliver virtual remarks to United Nations
- 12:30pm: President Trump receives intelligence briefing
- 5:35pm: Trump departs White House for Pittsburgh, Pa.; delivers remarks at 7pm
- 9:45pm: Trump returns to White House

CONGRESS

- Senate meets at 10am; holds weekly caucus luncheons
- House meets at 9am, considers H.R. 8319, the stopgap funding bill

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: House Set to Vote on Government Funding:** The House plans to vote today on legislation that would avert a government shutdown and extend federal funding through Dec. 11. Democrats unveiled the measure yesterday and face resistance from Republicans for the exclusion of aid for farmers. The House will likely pass the measure, but the outlook in the Senate less than one week before the Sept. 30 deadline to keep the government open is uncertain.
- **Bloomberg Government: Loan Fraud, Data Shortfalls Hinder Covid Aid:** Loan fraud, testing shortages and incomplete health data continue to plague the U.S. coronavirus response, but the federal government has been able to correct some previous mistakes, such as sending millions of stimulus payments to deceased people, the GAO said.
- **Kaiser Health News: Rural Hospitals Teeter On Financial Cliff As COVID Medicare Loans Come Due:** David Usher is sitting on \$1.7 million he's scared to spend. The money lent from the federal government is meant to help hospitals and other health care providers weather the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet some hospital administrators have called it a payday loan program that is now, brutally, due for repayment at a time when they still need help. Coronavirus cases have "picked up recently and it's quite worrying," said Usher, chief financial officer at the 12-bed Edwards County Medical Center in rural western Kansas. Usher said he would like to use the money to build a negative-pressure room, a common strategy to keep contagious patients apart from those in the rest of the hospital.
- **Bloomberg Government: HHS Takes Back Control of Buying Supplies:** The Department of Health and Human Services is reclaiming its duties to buy, distribute, and track the supply of masks, gloves and other personal protective equipment, the GAO said. HHS has shared those duties with FEMA and the Pentagon since March, when early surges of

Covid-19 caused mass shortages across the U.S.

- **The Wall Street Journal: Medicare Wouldn't Cover Costs Of Administering Coronavirus Vaccine Approved Under Emergency-Use Authorization:** Medicare wouldn't cover the cost of administering any coronavirus vaccine approved for emergency use, leaving Trump administration officials exploring options to quickly fix the government's plan to make the vaccine free for all Americans. Lawmakers in March passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, or Cares Act, which ensures free coronavirus vaccine coverage, including no out-of-pocket costs for people on Medicare. But Medicare doesn't cover costs for drugs approved under emergency-use designations.
- **USA Today: COVID-19 Survivors May Need To Get Screened For Heart Damage: Doctors:** While COVID-19 is known as a respiratory infection, there's emerging evidence linking it to heart damage, too. Cardiologists are seeing patients with signs of inflammation and scar formation in their hearts even after recovery from COVID-19, experts say. For that reason, anyone who plans on participating in vigorous exercise and was sick with COVID-19 for three or more days should get a cardiac screening before working out or participating in their sport, said Dr. Steven Erickson, medical director for Banner University Sports Medicine and Concussion Specialists in Phoenix.