HEALTH POLICY UPDATE: December 8, 2022

Congressional Schedule:

- The Senate convenes at 11 a.m. Following leader remarks the Senate will begin consideration of the nomination of Jeffery Paul Hopkins to be a U.S. district judge for the Southern District of Ohio. At 11:30, the Senate will vote on confirmation of the Hopkins nomination and on agreeing to Schumer, D-N.Y., motion to invoke cloture on the Tamika R. Montgomery-Reeves to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the 3rd Circuit. At 1:45 p.m., the Senate will vote on agreeing to the Schumer motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Dana M. Douglas to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the 5th Circuit.

  - Nominations:
    - Jeffery Paul Hopkins to be a U.S. district judge for the Southern District of Ohio.
    - Tamika R. Montgomery-Reeves to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the 3rd Circuit.
    - Dana M. Douglas to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the 5th Circuit.

- The House reconvened at 9 a.m. for legislative business. The chamber is expected to consider a bill (HR 8404) that would repeal the Defense of Marriage Act and prohibit individuals from denying full faith and credit to a marriage recognized under the law of another state. The House is also expected to consider, through suspension of the rules, a bipartisan agreement (HR 7776) that would authorize national defense activities for FY 2023. Finally, the chamber is expected to take final votes under suspension of the rules on one measure.

  - Bills:
    - HR 8404 — Respect for Marriage Act
    - HR 7776 — Legislative Vehicle for the Fiscal 2023 Defense Authorization
    - S 1617 — Disaster Assistance for Rural Communities Act

Health policy update:

- Drug pricing and Inflation Reduction Act-related items

  - Bloomberg: Medicare Drug Price Changes Become a Top Focus of Biden’s HHS - https://www.bloomberg.com/next/news/RMJE0CDWRGG0


- Nurse staffing

- Organ donation and transplantation items
  - Still looking for House Oversight report
  - No new items

- Vision/dental care in Medicare-related items
  - No new items

- Physical rehabilitation

- Hospital and physician payment-related items

- **Axios**: Some red state hospitals pitch Medicaid expansion to solve rural health woes - [https://www.axios.com/2022/12/08/red-state-hospitals-medicaid-expansion-rural-health-woes](https://www.axios.com/2022/12/08/red-state-hospitals-medicaid-expansion-rural-health-woes)

- **Stat News (Opinion)**: If you think health care is dysfunctional now, just wait until after January 1 - [https://www.statnews.com/2022/12/08/health-care-even-more-dysfunctional-after-medicare-cuts/](https://www.statnews.com/2022/12/08/health-care-even-more-dysfunctional-after-medicare-cuts/)

- **Becker’s Hospital Review**: Congress urged to address patient discharge bottlenecks through per diem payments - [https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/finance/congress-urged-to-address-patient-discharge-bottlenecks-through-per-diem-payments.html](https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/finance/congress-urged-to-address-patient-discharge-bottlenecks-through-per-diem-payments.html)

- **Becker’s Hospital Review**: High labor costs, inflation make healthcare outlook negative, Moody's says - [https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/finance/high-labor-costs-inflation-make-healthcare-outlook-negative-moodys-says.html](https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/finance/high-labor-costs-inflation-make-healthcare-outlook-negative-moodys-says.html)


- **Nursing home quality initiative**
  - No new items

- **Health equity-related items**

- **Hospital merger news**
- Modern Healthcare: LHC Group delays $5.4B merger with UnitedHealth -
  https://www.modernhealthcare.com/mergers-acquisitions/unitedhealth-lhc-
group-merger-delayed?utm_source=modern-healthcare-am-
 thursday&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20221207&utm_content=article
  1-headline

• Telehealth news

  - Politico: Telehealth access for some insurance plan subscribers could get more
    expensive in January -
    https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/2022/12/telehealth-access-for-some-
    insurance-plan-subscribers-could-get-more-expensive-in-january-00072854

  - Inside Health Policy: State AGs: Study Shows DEA Can Permanently Allow
    Telehealth Prescribing Of Controlled Substances -
    https://insidehealthpolicy.com/inside-telehealth-daily-news/state-ags-study-
    shows-dea-can-permanently-allow-telehealth-prescribing

  - RevCycleIntelligence: Majority of Americans Value the Convenience Associated
    with Telehealth -
    https://mhealthintelligence.com/news/majority-of-americans-
    value-the-convenience-associated-with-telehealth

• 118th Congress and lame-duck news

  - Health Affairs: Winter Is Coming: Republicans And Democrats Must Work
    Together Now To Strengthen Our Public Health System -
    https://www.healthaffairs.org/content/forefront/winter-coming-republicans-
    and-democrats-must-work-together-now-strengthen-our-public

  - Inside Health Policy: Jeffries’ Negotiation Skills Raise Hopes For Health Policy
    Collaboration -
    https://insidehealthpolicy.com/daily-news/jeffries%E2%80%99-
    negotiation-skills-raise-hopes-health-policy-collaboration

  - Inside Health Policy: VALID Revision Might Include Exemptions For Academic
    Centers -
    https://insidehealthpolicy.com/daily-news/valid-revision-might-
    include-exemptions-academic-centers

• ALS news

  ALS News Today: Effector T-cell Levels May Predict Disease Progression, Survival -
  https://alsnewstoday.com/news/t-cell-levels-als-diagnosis-predict-progression-
survival-study/