American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Wednesday, April 14, 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

- 2:15pm: Biden to discuss plans to withdraw U.S. troops from Afghanistan
- 11a: White House Covid-19 task force holds briefing
- 12:30pm: White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki holds media briefing

CONGRESS

- Senate convenes at 10:30am, resumes consideration of Gary Gensler’s nomination to SEC
- U.S. House meets at 10am

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Biden Invited to Address Joint Session of Congress:** House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) invited Biden to deliver his first address to a joint session of Congress on April 28. The address will come just before his 100th day in office. While Biden will deliver the speech in the House chamber, other aspects of the night’s format, including Covid-testing requirements and who will be able to attend in person, have yet to be arranged, said an official involved with the planning. The official also said that a security plan for the event must be established, just as it was for the inauguration in January.

- **Bloomberg Government: Education on Biosimilars:** The Health and Human Services Department would be directed to create a central website for educational materials on biosimilars under S. 164. The Senate passed the bill by unanimous consent on March 3.

- **Healthline: How Obamacare Has Lowered Out-Of-Pocket Expenses:** The Affordable Care Act (ACA), also known as Obamacare, has substantially increased health insurance coverage in the United States. It also seems to have helped reduce the amount of money Americans have had to pull out of their wallet to pay for healthcare, a new study finds. Dr. Sara Collins, vice president for healthcare coverage and access at The Commonwealth Fund, which studies the ACA and other health policy, told Healthline that the findings are a “partial success story” for the healthcare reform bill championed by former President Barack Obama.

- **Bloomberg Government: House Postpones Medicare Cuts, Teeing Up Likely Spending Debate:** The House yesterday cleared a bill by a vote of 384 to 38 to delay until 2022 cuts to Medicare, pushing off until next year a larger debate over federal spending. House lawmakers March 19 voted to postpone the cuts and waive budget requirements of the $1.9 trillion stimulus package approved earlier in the month, but Senate Republicans in a
March 25 vote only agreed to deal with the more-immediate threat to Medicare. Congress will be faced with more than $36 billion in pending reductions to Medicare in 2022.

- **NPR: Johnson & Johnson Vaccine And Blood Clots: What You Need To Know**: The FDA says the clots are a rare and severe type that happens in the blood supply that drains the brain. It’s called cerebral venous sinus thrombosis, or CVST, and it is being seen in combination with low levels of blood platelets (a condition called thrombocytopenia). The symptoms of CVST vary, but they can include headache, blurred vision, fainting or loss of consciousness, loss of control over movement in part of the body and seizures.

- **Bloomberg Government: Lawmakers Seek Hospital Transparency Rule**: Energy and Commerce Chair Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-N.J.) and ranking member Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-Wash.), as well as Reps. Anna Eshoo (D-Calif.) and Brett Guthrie (R-Ky.), the leaders of the Health Subcommittee, wrote to HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra yesterday to urge him to conduct “vigorous oversight” of the implementation of HHS’s “Hospital Price Transparency Final Rule,” amid reports that some hospitals are moving slowly to comply with the rule.