

## American Nephrology Nurses Association

### Weekly Capitol Hill Update – Monday, January 30, 2017

#### Congressional Schedule

##### *House*

- “Convenes at 2 p.m. for consideration of seven lands bills under suspension of the rules.” (CQ)
- **Week Ahead:** “On Tuesday the House considers 19 bills under suspension of the rules. Later this week the chamber takes up a number of resolutions disapproving of a variety of agency rules.” (CQ)

##### *Senate*

- “Convenes at 3 p.m. and at 5 p.m. will resume consideration of the nomination of Rex Tillerson to be secretary of State. Following up to 30 minutes of debate, the Senate will hold a cloture vote on the Tillerson nomination.” (CQ)
- **Week Ahead:** Debate is expected to begin Tuesday on the nomination of Elaine Chao to be Secretary of Transportation.

#### Legislative Updates

- **Week Ahead:**
  - **House to Begin Looking at ObamaCare Replacement Bills.** “The ObamaCare battle will heat up in the coming week with a string of hearings and the end of the enrollment period. The Trump administration set off anger among ObamaCare supporters on Thursday by cancelling the remaining outreach ads encouraging people to enroll. The final deadline is on Tuesday, after which a clearer picture of how enrollment did, and whether the lack of ads made a difference, should emerge. The final enrollment numbers could come later in the week. So far, enrollment has been holding steady and is even slightly higher than last year, despite the threat of repeal. On the repeal front, the House Energy and Commerce committee will hold a hearing on Thursday to consider a range of ObamaCare-related bills. Many are narrow in scope, but they are still some of the first signs of action on concrete healthcare reform bills from Republicans this year.”

- To read more: <http://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/316620-week-ahead-house-panel-to-look-at-obamacare-replacement-bills>
- ***Trump to Announce Supreme Court Pick Tuesday.*** “President Trump said early Monday that he will announce his choice for a Supreme Court nominee on Tuesday evening. The president tweeted that the announcement will come Tuesday at 8 p.m. “I have made my decision on who I will nominate for The United States Supreme Court. It will be announced live on Tuesday at 8:00 P.M. (W.H.),” the president tweeted.”
  - To read more: <http://thehill.com/homenews/administration/316822-trump-to-announce-supreme-court-pick-tuesday>
- ***Week in Review:***
  - ***Congressional Republicans Sketch Ambitious Agenda.*** “Congressional Republicans laid plans Wednesday to act on a health care repeal bill by the end of March and rewrite the tax code by August as they sketched out an ambitious agenda for their first 200 days under President Donald Trump. Meeting in Philadelphia for their annual policy retreat, they also discussed action to raise the nation's borrowing limit, write an infrastructure package sought by Trump and push funding for defense and border priorities. The gathering was shadowed by a rocky start to the Trump administration, full of distracting, inaccurate claims about voter fraud and inaugural crowd sizes that some lawmakers fear could distract from their ability to deliver in a new era of GOP control.”
    - To read more: <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2017/01/25/us/ap-us-congress-republican-retreat.html>
  - ***Ryan Maps Out GOP Timeline for ObamaCare.*** “Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) on Wednesday mapped out the GOP's 200-day legislative strategy, saying Republicans will repeal and replace portions of ObamaCare by the spring and tackle tax reform before the August recess. During a private meeting of House and Senate Republicans at their annual policy retreat, Ryan said House committees will mark up a reconciliation package in the next couple of weeks that will both repeal President Obama's healthcare law and replace portions of it, according to several lawmakers in the room. Then, Ryan will bring the final reconciliation package to the House floor by late February or early March. “It will be a repeal with some replacement in it for what we're able to do given the reconciliation process,” Interim House Budget Chairwoman Diane Black (R-Tenn.) told reporters here at the GOP retreat. “Our goal is to make this a patient-centered healthcare system where we give people options.””
    - To read more: <http://bit.ly/2jg71uh>
  - ***Behind Closed Doors, Republican Lawmakers Fret About How to Repeal Obamacare.*** “Republican lawmakers aired sharp concerns about their party's quick push to repeal the Affordable Care Act at a closed-door meeting Thursday, according to a recording of the session obtained by The Washington Post. The recording reveals a GOP that appears to be filled with doubts about how to make good on a long-standing promise to get rid of Obamacare without explicit

guidance from President Trump or his administration. The thorny issues with which lawmakers grapple on the tape – including who may end up either losing coverage or paying more under a revamped system – highlight the financial and political challenges that flow from upending the current law. Senators and House members expressed a range of concerns about the task ahead: how to prepare a replacement plan that can be ready to launch at the time of repeal; how to avoid deep damage to the health insurance market; how to keep premiums affordable for middle-class families; even how to avoid the political consequences of defunding Planned Parenthood, the women’s health-care organization, as many Republicans hope to do with the repeal of the ACA.”

- To read more: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/behind-closed-doors-republican-lawmakers-fret-about-how-to-repeal-obamacare/2017/01/27/deabdafa-e491-11e6-a547-5fb9411d332c\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.99af6781398c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/behind-closed-doors-republican-lawmakers-fret-about-how-to-repeal-obamacare/2017/01/27/deabdafa-e491-11e6-a547-5fb9411d332c_story.html?utm_term=.99af6781398c)
- ***House Dems Introduce Doomed Single-Payer Legislation.*** “Amid countless discussions of how to go about dismantling the Affordable Care Act, a group of more than 50 House Democrats introduced a Medicare-for-all bill late Tuesday. The Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act is the same as one introduced last session and has virtually no chance of passage with a Republican-controlled Congress and White House that are more interested in making Medicare a premium-support system. The idea of a single-payer health system received attention during the Democratic presidential primary last year as a rallying cry for Democratic candidate Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont. His surprising staying power pushed Hillary Clinton more to the left on her healthcare proposals as they fought for the nomination. Sanders continues to endorse the idea and says his plan would lead to lower per-capita health spending. An analysis by the Urban Institute's Health Policy Center and the Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center, however, found that his plan wouldn't raise even half of the money needed to pay for itself. Dr. Carol Paris, president of Physicians for a National Health Program, praised the move and said in a statement that single-payer systems are the “fairest and most cost-effective way to assure that everyone gets high-quality care.” “In addition to the enormous administrative savings from a single payer, such a program would also have the financial clout to negotiate with drug and medical equipment suppliers for lower prices,” she wrote. “And doctors would have more time to spend with their patients, instead of dealing with mountains of paperwork and haggling with insurers. The key step is removing the private health insurers from the picture.”
  - To read more: <http://www.modernhealthcare.com/article/20170125/NEWS/170129943>
- ***Republicans Have Plans To Replace Obamacare – Now They Need To Agree On One.*** “Republicans have a plan to replace Obamacare. In fact, they have several. What they don't have is consensus on which one will guide the party's effort to reshape an insurance system that provides coverage for some 20 million Americans. House and Senate Republicans are gathered in Philadelphia at their

annual retreat in an attempt to find agreement across members of the House and Senate on the path forward. President Trump and Vice President Pence will huddle with Republicans on Thursday to discuss an ambitious 2017 agenda that also includes overhauling the tax code and building a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. The latest GOP Obamacare replacement proposal came earlier this week courtesy of Republican Sens. Susan Collins of Maine, a moderate, and Bill Cassidy of Louisiana, a conservative.”

- To Read more:

[http://www.npr.org/2017/01/26/511675435/republicans-have-plans-to-replace-obamacare-now-they-need-to-agree-on-one?utm\\_source=&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=5922](http://www.npr.org/2017/01/26/511675435/republicans-have-plans-to-replace-obamacare-now-they-need-to-agree-on-one?utm_source=&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=5922)

### **Regulatory Updates**

- ***CMS and UM-KECC Issue Call for Nominations for ESRD Patient-Reported Outcomes Technical Expert Panel (TEP).*** CMS and UM-KECC are seeking nominations of individuals to review potential patient-reported measure concepts and provide recommendations for measure development. The TEP will be comprised of patients and individuals with expertise in the subject matter, methodology, and performance measurement.
  - **Nomination materials are due February 10, 2017.**
  - For more information, please visit: <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/MMS/TechnicalExpertPanels.html#2222>
- ***Trump Orders Two-For-One Repeal For All New Regulations.*** “President Trump promised a massive rollback of federal regulations on small businesses Monday, signing an executive action that he said would "knock out two regulations for every new regulation" adopted by federal agencies. The order greatly strengthens the president's hand in overseeing agency regulations, putting a limit on each agency's regulatory ability through the annual budget process. And it requires that the costs of any new regulations be balanced through the repeal of at least two old regulations... The White House has kept a tight grip on agency regulations since at least the Carter administration, and changes in regulatory policy are a routine part of every presidential transition. But Trump's executive action seems to go even further than the usual changes to the cost-benefit analysis of new regulations. Trump himself called it "the largest cut by far, in terms of regulation," in history.”
  - To read more:  
<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2017/01/30/trump-orders-two-one-repeal-all-new-regulations/97237870/>

### **Articles of Interest**

- ***U.S. Court Issues Injunction on Assistance for Dialysis Patients.*** “A U.S. court has issued a preliminary injunction on a new federal rule that dialysis providers have said would prevent patients from using charitable assistance to buy private health insurance, Fresenius Medical Care (FMC) said on Thursday. The decision upholds a temporary

hold on the rule and is a victory for dialysis providers FMC, DaVita Inc., and U.S. Renal Care Inc., which had filed a lawsuit to block the rule. "The preliminary injunction is indefinite in duration and therefore will remain in effect as long as the court does not change it," FMC said. The rule, announced by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on Dec. 14, would require dialysis providers to disclose to insurers any charitable assistance their patients are receiving for their care. The providers said insurers would use that information to refuse coverage to their patients."

- For more: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-regulation-dialysis-idUSKBN15A0SX>

- ***Everything You Need To Know About Block Grants – The Heart Of GOP’s Medicaid Plans.*** “President Donald Trump’s administration made explicit this weekend its commitment to an old GOP strategy for managing Medicaid, the federal-state insurance plan that covers low-income people – turning control of the program to states and capping what the federal government spends on it each year. It’s called “block granting.” Right now, Medicaid, which was expanded under the 2010 health law to insure more people, covers almost 75 million adults and children. Because it is an entitlement, everyone who qualifies is guaranteed coverage and states and the federal government combine funds to cover the costs. Conservatives have long argued the program would be more efficient if states got a lump sum from the federal government and then managed the program as they saw fit. But others say that would mean less funding for the program – eventually translating into greater challenges in getting care for low-income people. Block granting Medicaid is a centerpiece of health proposals supported by House Speaker Paul Ryan and Rep. Tom Price, Trump’s nominee to run the Department of Health and Human Services. This weekend, Trump adviser Kellyanne Conway emphasized the strategy as key to the administration’s health policy.”

- To read more: [http://khn.org/news/block-grants-medicaid-faq/?utm\\_source=&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=5904](http://khn.org/news/block-grants-medicaid-faq/?utm_source=&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=5904)

- ***Medicaid Panel Eyes Challenge of Possible Shift to Block Grants.*** “An influential advisory panel is studying the myriad decisions that lawmakers would face if congressional Republicans carry through on their proposals for limiting the federal government’s financial responsibility for Medicaid. What lawmakers are mulling would be a “major shift in federal policy” regarding the cost of care of “vulnerable populations,” including people living in poverty and those with disabilities, said Sara Rosenbaum, chair of the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission, at a Thursday meeting. MACPAC is working to inform policy officials and lawmakers about the steps they would have to address in altering the federal government’s approach to paying for Medicaid. Members of MACPAC said they would like to see more information on what causes current differences in rates of spending among states. The general health of local populations may play a role, as might decisions about how much to pay doctors and hospitals for care, commissioners noted. Rosenbaum said Thursday’s discussion was only an initial step in what she expects to be “a lengthy exploration” of this topic.”

- To read more: <http://www.rollcall.com/news/medicaid-panel-eyes-challenge-possible-shift-block->

[grants?utm\\_name=newsletters&utm\\_source=rollcallheadlines&utm\\_medium=email#sthash.RyAPnXaQ.dpuf](mailto:grants?utm_name=newsletters&utm_source=rollcallheadlines&utm_medium=email#sthash.RyAPnXaQ.dpuf)

- ***Clinics for World's Vulnerable Brace for Trump's Anti-Abortion Cuts.*** “The clinic, tucked discreetly inside the student health center on the University of Dakar campus, prescribes birth control pills, hands out condoms and answers questions about sex that young women are nervous about asking in this conservative Muslim country. The clinic performs no abortions, nor does it discuss the procedure or give advice on where to get one. Senegal, by and large, outlaws abortion. But for other health services like getting contraceptives, said Anne Lancelot, the Sahel director at the organization that runs the clinic, “there is a very high demand.” Now, under a Reagan-era policy revived by President Trump, the clinic may no longer be able to count on aid money from the United States Agency for International Development, part of a ban on providing abortion counseling overseas that could curtail a broad range of health services, including those that go well beyond abortion. Known as the Mexico City policy – and by its critics as the global gag rule – the abortion policy prohibits organizations abroad from using American aid to talk about abortion as a method of family planning. Anti-abortion groups like the Family Research Council have welcomed Mr. Trump’s decision, saying it is consistent with “his campaign promise that he will protect taxpayers from having to pay for abortions.”
  - To read more: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/26/world/africa/clinics-health-care-cuts-abortion-trump.html>
- ***Why Home Health Should Embrace Nurse Practitioners.*** “It’s becoming increasingly common for nurse practitioners to visit seniors in their homes—and that could spell good news for those who prefer in-home care, according to a new study published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society. Nurse practitioners made 1.13 million in-home visits to frail and elderly patients in 2013, or more in-home visits than any other type of medical specialist made that year, the study revealed. Internal medicine physicians, for instance, made 1.08 million home visits in 2013. When it comes to in-home visits, nurse practitioners haven’t always led the pack, though. In 2012, nurse practitioners made fewer than 925,000 home visits, while internal medicine doctors made 1.08 million.”
  - To read more: <http://homehealthcarenews.com/2017/01/why-home-health-should-embrace-nurse-practitioners/>

### Hearings

#### **Tuesday, January 31st:**

- The House Energy and Commerce Oversight Subcommittee holds a hearing “Medicaid Oversight: Existing Problems and Ways to Strengthen the Program.”
  - 10:00 am @ 2123 Rayburn House Office Building
- The Senate Finance Committee will hold an Executive Session to consider the nomination of Rep. Tom Price (R-GA) for Secretary of Health and Human Services.
  - 10:00 am @ 219 Dirksen Senate Office Building

**Wednesday, February 1st:**

- The Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Full Committee will hold a hearing “Obamacare Emergency: Stabilizing the Individual Health Insurance Market.”
  - 10:00 am @ 430 Dirksen Senate Office Building
  
- The Health Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee holds a hearing “Strengthening Medicaid and Prioritizing the Most Vulnerable.”
  - 10:00 am @ 2123 Rayburn House Office Building