

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Weekly Capitol Hill Update - Tuesday, January 30, 2018

Congressional Schedule

White House

- 9:10 pm: President Trump delivers State of the Union Address.

Senate

- Senate meets at 10 am.

House

- House meets at 10 am for morning hour and 12 pm for legislative business. First votes 1:30 pm-2:30 pm.

Legislative Update

- **Week in Review**
 - *Short-term spending bills leave public health agencies in suspense.* “Congress’s inability to pass a long-term spending bill has major ramifications for public health, advocates and former agency officials warn. The short-term measures hinder efforts to play ahead and recruit staff even as they keep the government open, the advocates say. They have left public health agencies “treading water,” said Ellie Dehoney, vice president of policy and advocacy at Research!America.”
 - To read more: <http://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/370407-short-term-spending-bills-leave-public-health-agencies-in-suspense>
 - *Congress funds children's health program after four-month delay.* “Months-long uncertainty over the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) ended Monday after Congress passed a six-year reauthorization of the program.”

- To read more: <http://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/370195-congress-funds-childrens-health-program-after-four-month-delay>
 - *Senate confirms Trump health secretary.* “The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has a new boss, Alex Azar, after nearly four months without a permanent leader. The Senate confirmed Azar, a former pharmaceutical executive, on Wednesday by a 55-43 vote with six Democrats and Independent Sen. Angus King (Maine) joining all but one Republican to support the nominee.”
 - To read more: <http://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/370511-senate-advances-trumps-health-secretary-nominee>
- **Week Ahead**
 - *Five things to watch for in Trump’s State of the Union.* “President Trump will deliver his first State of the Union address on Tuesday, a week after a three-day government shutdown was sparked by a bitter partisan fight over immigration. The drama over efforts to protect so-called Dreamers is sure to grab some of the spotlight during the highly anticipated address, though Trump is also expected to use the stage to take an economic victory lap and pitch a bipartisan infrastructure plan to Congress.”
 - To read more: <http://thehill.com/homenews/administration/371329-five-things-to-watch-for-in-trumps-state-of-the-union>
 - *Freedom Caucus Likely to Oppose Next Stopgap Funding Bill.* “House Freedom Caucus members are likely to oppose another continuing resolution needed to keep the government funded beyond Feb. 8, yet again raising questions whether House Republicans can pass one given that Democrats are also expected to oppose it.”
 - To read more: <http://www.rollcall.com/news/politics/freedom-caucus-likely-oppose-next-stopgap-funding-bill>
 - *Rodney Frelinghuysen Won’t Seek 13th Term.* “New Jersey Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, announced Monday he will not run for re-election in November. He is the eighth Republican committee chairman to announce his retirement.”
 - To read more: <http://www.rollcall.com/news/politics/rodney-frelinghuysen-wont-seek-13th-term>
 - *House retirement sets off scramble for coveted chairmanship.* “The race to lead the House Appropriations Committee is already heating up following Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen’s (R-N.J.) retirement announcement on Monday. Reps. Robert Aderholt (R-Ala.) and Kay Granger (R-Texas), two of

the most senior members on the spending panel, both threw their hats into the ring for the gavel after Frelinghuysen said he would not seek reelection. Rep. Tom Cole (R-Okla.), another long-time appropriator, followed suit shortly after.”

- To read more: <http://thehill.com/policy/finance/371283-house-retirement-sets-off-scramble-for-coveted-chairmanship>
- ***Immigration Progress Elusive as Next Deadline Approaches.*** “No. 2 congressional leaders and White House officials involved in ongoing immigration negotiations sounded dour about any progress after their latest meeting Monday but nonetheless vowed talks would continue.”
 - To read more: <http://www.rollcall.com/news/policy/immigration-progress-elusive-as-next-deadline-approaches>
- ***Azar sworn in as HHS chief.*** “President Trump said prescription drug prices will come “rocketing down” under the leadership of Alex Azar, who was sworn in on Monday as the new head of the Department of Health and Human Services.”
 - To read more: <http://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/371212-azar-sworn-in-as-hhs-chief>

Regulatory and Administration Update

- ***FDA approved record number of generic drugs last year.*** “The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved 1,027 generic drugs last year, a record number, the Trump administration said Friday. The figure came as part of a year-end report from the Department of Health and Human Services, and was touted as part of the administration’s efforts to fight high drug prices.”
 - To read more: <http://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/370955-fda-approved-record-number-of-generic-drugs-last-year>
- ***Trump says new health secretary will ‘get those prescription prices way down’.*** “President Trump used the swearing-in of the new secretary of health and human services as an opportunity to decry high prescription drug prices and pledge to bring them down – an intention he has long trumpeted but on which he has yet to follow through.”
 - To read more: <https://www.statnews.com/2018/01/29/trump-azar-drug-prices/>
- ***UM-KECC Call for Nominations: ESRD Patient Reported Outcomes Focus Groups.*** “UM-KECC is seeking nominations for patients, caregivers, and providers to participate on one of several focus groups on Patient Reported Outcomes (PRO). The

focus groups will be held to elicit feedback and suggestions for draft question content for two PRO measure topics: Patient Life Goals; Patient Feeling of Safety. The focus groups will be 2 hour webinar teleconference meetings. All patient and caregiver nominations require a brief statement of interest. Any conflicts of interest must be disclosed. Please submit all materials to dialysisdata@umich.edu by close of business (5:00pm ET) on February 28, 2018.

- Please do not hesitate to contact Jordan Affholter (affjorda@med.umich.edu) with any questions.
- ***CMS reviewing RPA shared savings model for initial dialysis care.*** “A proposal to implement a shared savings model for nephrologists’ reimbursement during the initial 6 months of dialysis care has won approval from a government advisory committee and is under review by CMS for possible implementation.”
 - To read more: <https://www.nephrologynews.com/cms-reviewing-rpa-shared-savings-model-initial-dialysis-care/>

Articles of Interest

- ***HHS leadership, health care reform will impact progress on priorities for nephrology.*** “NN&I asked Donna Bednarski, RN, MSN, ANP-BC, CNN, Kidney Care Partners consultant for the American Nephrology Nurses Association (ANNA), and Robert Blaser, director of public policy for the Renal Physicians Association (RPA), for their thoughts on what the next 12 months could look like on Capitol Hill for the kidney care community. In Part 1, published in the January issue of NN&I, our policy experts covered the ongoing vacancy at HHS and the rising interest in regulating staff-patient ratios in dialysis clinics. This month, Part 2 continues with a look at physician payment, acute kidney injury (AKI) and outpatient care, and concerns about restricting the use of more frequent dialysis.”
 - To read more: <https://www.nephrologynews.com/part-2-hhs-leadership-health-care-reform-will-impact-progress-priorities-nephrology/>
- ***Push to better track living kidney donors’ long-term health.*** “The big unknown when someone donates a kidney: The long-term health consequences. Now the U.S. is taking a step toward finally tracking how living donors fare over decades — just as candidates are getting some new cautions to consider. Specialists insist the surgery seldom brings serious complications for the donor. What happens later in life is less certain.”
 - To read more: <https://apnews.com/5e952f0a81ca4be7a281c8b353330101>
- ***CDC: This flu season worst since 2009 swine flu pandemic.*** “Federal health officials warned Friday that this year's flu outbreak is more severe than any other since the 2009 swine flu pandemic, and that its intensity is still increasing. Officials at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said in a phone call with

- reporters that the number of people experiencing flu-like symptoms is increasing. Hospitalizations for influenza are also rising.”
- To read more: <http://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/371021-cdc-this-flu-season-worst-since-2009-swine-flu-pandemic>
 - ***Poll: Parent Misconceptions May Hinder Child Organ Donation.*** “Just 1 in 4 parents of driving age teens say their child is registered to be an organ donor. Major concerns among parents included inaccurate views on care and cost.”
 - To read more: <http://www.newswise.com/articles/poll%3A-parent-misconceptions-may-hinder-child-organ-donation>
 - ***Amazon, Berkshire Hathaway and JP Morgan Chase join to tackle health care costs.*** “Amazon, Berkshire Hathaway and JP Morgan Chase announced on Tuesday that they’re working together to create a new health care venture for their own staff aimed at “improving employee satisfaction and reducing costs.” The three say that they will create a new, independent company “free from profit-making incentives and constraints” to reduce healthcare costs for their employees, according to a statement they released on Tuesday.”
 - To read more: <http://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/371351-amazon-berkshire-hathaway-and-jp-morgan-chase-to-form-health-care-company>
 - ***Apple, in Sign of Health Ambitions, Adds Medical Records Feature for iPhone.*** “In the latest indication of Apple’s growing ambitions in the digital health market, the tech giant on Wednesday unveiled a new feature that would allow users to automatically download and see parts of their medical records on their iPhones.”
 - To read more: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/24/technology/Apple-iPhone-medical-records.html>
 - ***Hospitals’ Best-Laid Plans Upended By Disaster.*** “America’s hospitals were beset by an unusual number of calamities in 2017: The fires that raged in Northern and Southern California; hurricanes that displaced thousands in Houston, Florida and Puerto Rico; the deadliest mass shooting in modern history that killed 58 people and wounded more than 500 others in Las Vegas; and the attack at a Bronx hospital in which a doctor turned a gun on his former colleagues, killing one and injuring six.”
 - To read more: <https://khn.org/news/hospitals-best-laid-plans-upended-by-disaster/>