

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Weekly Capitol Hill Update - Tuesday, June 9, 2019

Congressional Schedule

Senate

- Senate is in session July 8 - July 12

House

- House is in session July 9 - July 12

Legislative Update

- **Week in Review**
 - During the week of July 4th both the Senate and House were out of session.
- **Week Ahead**
 - *ObamaCare repeal lawsuit faces major court test:* "ObamaCare will be back in court on Tuesday in a closely watched case hanging over the health care system. The 5th Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans will hear arguments in a lawsuit backed by the Trump administration seeking to overturn the entire 2010 Affordable Care Act (ACA). Legal experts on both sides of the aisle say the challengers' legal arguments are weak and the lawsuit is unlikely to ultimately succeed, but nothing is assured. And regardless of the outcome, Democrats are using the lawsuit to argue Republicans are a threat to the 20 million people who rely on ObamaCare for health insurance."
 - <https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/451627-obamacare-repeal-lawsuit-faces-major-court-test>
 - *GOP senators raise concerns over potential deal to lower drug prices:* "Republican Senators and Trump administration officials met Tuesday morning to debate a potential deal to lower drug prices, with some

attendees raising concerns about a possible agreement with Democrats. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) held the meeting with GOP committee members to discuss a possible agreement that he has been negotiating for months with Sen. Ron Wyden (Ore.), the top Democrat on the panel. But pushback from some in the GOP may pose an obstacle to a final breakthrough.”

- <https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/452197-gop-senators-meet-to-discuss-potential-deal-on-lowering-drug-prices>

Regulatory and Administration Update

- ***Trump aims to shake up kidney care market:*** “The Trump administration this week will announce a series of initiatives to encourage more kidney transplants and treatment at home, the start of a process intended to overhaul a market in which the federal government spends more than \$100 billion per year. President Donald Trump is slated to unveil the strategy in a speech Wednesday morning and is eyeing additional actions like a possible executive order, according to four individuals with knowledge of the upcoming announcement.”
 - <https://www.politico.com/story/2019/07/08/trump-kidney-care-market-1573651>
- ***Trump says administration preparing an executive order on drug prices:*** “President Donald Trump said Friday he’s preparing an executive order declaring a “favored nations clause” for drug prices, where the U.S. will pay no more than the country with the lowest prescription drug prices. “As you know for years and years other nations pay less for drugs than we do,” Trump told reporters on the South Lawn of the White House. “We’re working on a favored nations clause, where we pay whatever the lowest nation’s price is. Why should other nations – like Canada – why should other nations pay less than us?” The SPDR S&P Pharmaceuticals ETF, which tracks the pharma industry’s biggest companies, was down 1.4% after Trump’s announcement.”
 - <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/07/05/trump-administration-preparing-drug-price-executive-order.html>
- ***U.S. judge strikes down Trump administration rule requiring drug prices in TV ads:*** (Reuters) - A federal judge on Monday dealt a blow to the Trump administration by striking down a new rule that would have forced pharmaceutical companies to include the wholesale prices of their drugs in television advertising. U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta in Washington sided with drugmakers Merck & Co Inc, Eli Lilly and Co and Amgen Inc by halting the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) rule from taking effect on Tuesday as planned.”

- <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-drugpricing-lawsuit/us-judge-strikes-down-trump-administration-rule-requiring-drug-prices-in-tv-ads-idUSKCN1U32L2>
- ***CMS Expands Coverage of Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitoring (ABPM):***
 “Today the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) finalized its national coverage policy for Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitoring (ABPM). ABPM is a non-invasive diagnostic test that uses a device to track blood pressure over 24-hour cycles, allowing a doctor to assess a patient’s blood pressure during routine daily living, instead of when they are sitting nervously on an examination table. ABPM may measure blood pressure more accurately and lead to the diagnosis of high blood pressure in patients who would not otherwise have been identified as having the condition.”
 - <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/cms-expands-coverage-ambulatory-blood-pressure-monitoring-abpm>

Articles of Interest

- ***Medtronic recalls MiniMed insulin pumps as FDA warns about hacking risk:***
 “The US Food and Drug Administration issued a warning on Thursday about possible risk of hacking for some diabetes patients' insulin pumps. Certain insulin pumps from Medtronic MiniMed have been recalled due to potential cybersecurity risks and it's recommended for people who use those insulin pumps to switch to different models, according to the FDA. In its warning, the FDA noted that these devices pose the risk of someone nearby connecting wirelessly and then potentially hacking into the devices.
 - <https://www.cnn.com/2019/06/27/health/medtronic-insulin-pump-recall-cybersecurity-fda-bn/index.html>
- ***Why Limiting Anti-Rejection Coverage Costs Transplant Patients More Than Money:*** “For the 726,000 Americans with irreversible kidney failure, getting a kidney transplant offers the best chance at living a long, healthy life. A successful transplant means freedom from dialysis and an opportunity for a normal, productive, and fulfilling future. Although transplantation is the best therapy for kidney failure, there are nearly 100,000 patients currently on the kidney transplant waitlist – and only about 21,000 transplants are performed each year.
 - <https://www.futureofpersonalhealth.com/transplants/why-limiting-anti-rejection-coverage-costs-transplant-patients-more-than-money/#>
- ***Kidney Care Partners Calls On CMS, Lawmakers To Reform ESRD Policies:***
 “Kidney Care Partners calls for a legislative and regulatory overhaul of renal disease treatment, including changes to the Medicare end-stage renal disease prospective payment system, an expansion of the Medicare Kidney Disease Education benefit, an

extension of Medigap access for those with kidney disease and an HHS study on the social, behavioral and biological factors that lead to the disease. “We’re confident that the goals laid out in Kidney Care First – after more than a year of development by leading stakeholders in the kidney community – will help empower patients, improve care quality, delay or prevent disease, and strengthen the existing care network that so many Americans depend upon,” said Allen Nissenson, KCP chair, describing the framework released by the coalition.”

- <https://kidneycarepartners.com/press/kidney-care-partners-calls-on-cms-lawmakers-to-reform-esrd-policies/>
- ***Caravan of Americans battling diabetes heads to Canada for affordable insulin:***
“Insulin is cheaper in Canada primarily because the country has public health care, so the government negotiates pricing with drug companies and caps prices. In the U.S., drug makers negotiate individually with private insurance companies and the uninsured pay list price. Approximately 7.5 million Americans rely on insulin to stay alive. The drug is largely supplied by three companies, who all offer patient assistance programs. Novo Nordisk, one of those three companies, told CBS News in a statement that “we recognize that our healthcare system is broken ... we know more must be done to ensure insulin affordability and we are committed to being part of the solution.”
 - <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/insulin-caravan-battling-high-drug-prices-in-the-us-diabetes/>
- ***Stevie Wonder tells London concert he will have a kidney transplant:***
“LONDON (Reuters) - Stevie Wonder told thousands of fans watching him perform in London on Saturday night he is due to have a kidney transplant in September. The singer, songwriter and musician told the crowd at an event in Hyde Park that he had a donor lined up, and was making the announcement to avoid rumors spreading about his health. “I’m going to have surgery, I am going to have a kidney transplant in September of this year,” he said as he finished his performance, according to footage posted on Twitter by those at the concert.”
 - https://www.reuters.com/article/us-people-stevie-wonder/stevie-wonder-tells-london-concert-he-will-have-a-kidney-transplant-idUSKCN1U20G8?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter_axiosam&stream=top