

HLB Weekly Newsletter

[View this email in your browser](#)**EDITION:** April 17, 2018

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

Your weekly dose of health care policy

CONGRESSIONAL

Ways and Means Releases Opioid White Paper

As part of Congress' ongoing work on legislation to address the opioid epidemic, last Wednesday the House Ways and Means Committee released a [white paper](#) based on feedback from their February request for information. Recommendations from stakeholders included; increased access to Medication Assistance Treatment, prevent over-prescribing and abuse, and enhance screening for opioid abuse disorders. The [House Energy and Commerce](#), [Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions\(HELP\)](#), and [Senate Finance](#) Committees have all been holding hearings and moving forward on legislation. Senate HELP Committee plans to markup their legislation on

MACRA HIGHLIGHTS

Check your 2018 Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) [participation status](#) and review the available [quality measures](#).

HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES ON THE HILL

House Veterans
Affairs Committee
4/17 at 3:30pm: Health

[April 24](#).

ADMINISTRATION

CMS Releases 2019 Benefit and Payment Rule

Last Monday, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released their [HHS Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameters for 2019](#) for Federally-facilitated Exchanges (FEEs) and State-based Exchanges (SBEs) on the Federal Platform. The [notice](#) provides flexibility for selecting their essential health benefit benchmark plans and updates the risk adjustment and medical loss ratio policies. It also [extends](#) transitional policies through 2019.

Opioid Mapping Tool Released

Today, CMS released its updated Medicare Part D opioid prescribing [mapping tool](#). The mapping tool presents geographic comparisons of Medicare Part D opioid prescribing rates.

Subcommittee [hearing](#) on H.R. 1506; H.R. 2322; H.R. 3832; H.R. 4334; H.R. 4635; a draft bill to authorize VA to conduct and support research on the efficacy and safety of medicinal cannabis; and, a draft bill to make certain improvements in the Family Caregiver Program

House Appropriations Committee

4/18 at 10:00am: Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies subcommittee oversight [hearing](#) on the Department of Health and Human Services' biodefense activities.

Senate Finance Committee

4/19 at 10:00am: Full Committee [hearing](#) on Tackling Opioid and Substance Use Disorders in Medicare, Medicaid, and Human Services Programs.

Senate Appropriations Committee

4/19 at 10:00am: Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee [hearing](#) to Review the FY 2019 Budget Request for the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services.

House Armed Services Committee

4/19 at 10:30am: Military Personnel Subcommittee [hearing](#) on Military Health System Reform: Pain Management,

WEEKLY TRIVIA

Which state holds the
title of “Cherry
Blossom Capital of
the World”?

Click [here](#) to find the
answer.

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