

HLB Weekly Newsletter

[View this email in your browser](#)**EDITION:** April 27, 2018

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

*Your weekly dose of health care policy*

**\*NOTE: Due to the Congressional Recess, there will not be a weekly update next week.\***

### CONGRESSIONAL

#### **Congress Continues Work on Opioids**

On Wednesday, the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee advanced [56 bills](#) to address the opioid crisis following a number of hearings on the issue. The bills included many updated policies, including: expanding access to substance abuse treatment, broadening the workforce to treat, and encouraging the use of non-opioid treatments. Although Democrats indicated concerns with the Committee moving too fast on this legislation, most of the bills were passed with bipartisan support. These bills will now be sent to the Full

### 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

**The House and Senate will be in Recess next week. Both will return Monday, May 7.**

Committee for a markup which is expected in the coming weeks. Energy and Commerce Chairman Greg Walden (R-OR) has indicated he would like the package voted on by the full House before Memorial Day.

Separately, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee unanimously passed their Opioid Crisis Response Act of 2018 (S.2680). The bipartisan legislation would stop fentanyl at the border, reduce inappropriate prescribing, authorize new and existing grant programs, and accelerate research on non-addictive pain medicines, among other provisions. Other Senate Committees are expected to provide input on this legislative package before it is voted by the entire Senate, but HELP Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) indicated his hopes of passage over the summer. Additionally at Tuesday's markup, the HELP Committee also passed:

- Over-the-Counter Drug Safety, Innovation, and Reform Act (S. 2315)
- Children's Hospital GME Support Reauthorization Act of 2018 (S. 2597)
- Firefighter Cancer Registry Act (S. 382)

## ADMINISTRATION

### **CMS Releases Hospital IPPS Proposed Rule**

On Tuesday, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released their FY 2019 Medicare Hospital Inpatient Prospective Payment System (IPPS) and Long Term Acute Care Hospital (LTCH) Prospective Payment System Proposed Rule. The proposed rule provides a 1.75 percent payment update and an increase in uncompensated care DSH payments. Other proposals include price transparency provisions, reductions in administrative burdens, and updates to quality measures and programs. The proposal also includes

### WEEKLY TRIVIA

Which Senator founded Earth Day in 1970?

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

a Request for Information (RFI) on expanding interoperability between providers to inform future policy. To that end, it is also re-naming the Meaningful Use program “Promoting Interoperability.” CMS will accept comments on the rule through June 25, 2018.

### **CMS Releases RFI on Direct Provider Contracting Model**

On Monday, as part of its follow-up to its RFI on a new direction for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI), CMS posted the information from over [1,000 public comments](#) it received in order to provide transparency and facilitate further discussion on these initiatives and ideas from various stakeholders.

From the feedback CMMI received, it also posted an [RFI](#) on a possible [Direct Provider Contracting model](#) within the Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) program (Medicare Parts A and B), Medicare Advantage program (Medicare Part C), and Medicaid. A potential DPC model would allow CMS to directly contract with providers in order to make them accountable for the cost and quality of a patient population. Comments are due May 25, 2018.

### **CMS Provides Notice on Extension LVH and MDH Programs**

On Tuesday, CMS provided a [notice of its implementation](#) of the section 50204 and 50205 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 passed earlier this year related to the extension of the payment adjustment for low-volume hospitals (LVHs) and the Medicare-Dependent Hospital (MDH) programs. The notice indicates a May 29, 2018 deadline in which a hospital must notify its Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) that it continues to meet the distance and mileage criteria to be eligible for the low volume hospital adjustment for FY 2018.

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