

**EDITION:** January 24, 2017

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

*Your weekly dose of health care policy*

### TRUMP TRANSITION

On Friday, January 20, Donald J. Trump was sworn in as President of the United States. Since his swearing in, two executive actions have been made related to health care. The first, an [executive order](#) to government agencies to exercise their authority under the law to ease the costs and provide flexibility from the Affordable Care Act (ACA) as Congress and the administration work to repeal the law. The order reads that agencies should "minimize the unwarranted economic and regulatory burdens of the Act, and prepare to afford the States more flexibility and control to create a more free and open healthcare

### MACRA HIGHLIGHTS

CMMI Will host a webinar to discuss the Advancing Care Coordination through Episode Payment Models (EPMs); Cardiac Incentive Payment Model; and Changes to the Comprehensive Care for Joint Replacement Model final rule on [Thursday, February 9, 2017, from 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. EST.](#)

market." It remains unclear what direct effect this executive order will have on current programs.

The Second, a [Presidential Memorandum](#), which outlines a freeze of and new regulatory and guidance pending review from the new administration. The memo instructs that any regulations under review but not published by the Office of the Federal Register will be pulled back. Those regulations that have been published but have not yet taken effect will be temporarily postponed for 60 days for review. This is a typical action with the transition to a new administration.

#### **Acting HHS and CMS Administrators**

Until the new Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) are confirmed by the Senate, certain career staff have been assigned to roles in the interim. Norris Cochran will serve as the Acting Secretary of HHS while Congressman Tom Price (R-GA) goes through the confirmation process. Mr. Cochran previously served as HHS' Deputy Assistant Secretary for Budget. Patrick Conway, M.D. will serve as CMS Administrator while Seema Verma's confirmation process begins. Dr. Conway has previously served as Deputy Administrator for Innovation & Quality and as CMS' Chief Medical Officer.

## **CONGRESSIONAL**

#### **First ACA Repeal bill introduced in Senate**

On Monday, Senators Bills Cassidy (R-LA) and Susan Collins (R-ME) introduced the [Patient Freedom Act](#), legislation to repeal the ACA and replaces it with choices

## **UPCOMING HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES**

**No health care hearings for the remainder of the week**

#### **WEEKLY FUN FACT**

Unanimously approved, who was the first confirmed cabinet member in 1789? Find the answer [here!](#)

for states to remain in an ACA marketplace or design its own state marketplace on its own or through federally funded Health Savings Accounts. The legislation retains some policies from the ACA including the prohibiting exclusions for pre-existing conditions, coverage on a parent's plan until age 26 and preserving coverage for mental health and substance abuse disorders. This is the first of a number of expected legislation to repeal and replace the ACA in the coming weeks. They have released a [summary](#) and [section- by -section description](#).

## FEDERAL

### **CMS Announces Next Generation ACO Request for Applications**

On Friday, CMS' Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation Center (CMMI) released a Request for Applications (RFA) and Letter of Intent (LOI) for organizations interested in applying to the Next Generation Accountable Care Organization (ACO) Model for 2018. Letters of Intent must be sent prior to applying and can be submitted until May 4, 2017. Applications will open in March and be due in May. CMMI has announced two webinars on the model on [January 31st](#) and [February 14th](#).

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