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GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

Your weekly dose of health care policy

CONGRESSIONAL

House and Senate Assign New Members to Health Care Committees

As the 115th Congress was sworn in on January 3, new assignments have been released for Congressional Committees with jurisdiction in health care. New Members joining the committees are as follows:

House Energy and Commerce Committee

Buddy Carter (R-GA),
Ryan Costello (R-PA),
Tim Walberg (R-MI) and
Mimi Walters (R-CA)

MACRA HIGHLIGHTS

Recently announced [ACO Track 1+](#) provides an opportunity for providers to be subject to less risk than Tracks 2 and 3 of the Medicare Shared Savings Program (MSSP) while still being eligible to qualify for bonuses as an Advanced Alternative Payment Model.

The new model also includes some of the flexibility and advantages of Track 3.

House Ways & Means Committee

David Schweikert (R-AZ),
Jackie Walorski (R-IN) and
Carlos Curbelo (R-FL)

Senate Finance Committee

Bill Cassidy (R-LA)
Claire McCaskill (D-MO)

Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions (HELP) Committee

Todd Young (R-IN)
Tim Kaine (D-VA)
Maggie Hassan (D-NH)

Budget Resolution to Repeal Affordable Care Act in Initial Stages

Yesterday, the Senate voted to begin consideration of a budget resolution ([S. Con Res 3](#)) that would begin the process to repeal parts of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Next week the Senate will begin the amendment process and likely vote on the resolution's passage. Following Senate passage, the House will quickly consider the measure which would provide parameters to Congressional health care committees to prepare legislative text for an ACA repeal package. Negotiations continue on what a repeal package may look like and whether or not a replacement package will be passed along with it, or further detailed in the future.

FEDERAL

340B Final Rule Released

Letters of Intent and applications will be accepted later this year to begin in performance year 2018.

UPCOMING HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES

There are no health care hearings this week

WEEKLY FUN FACT

How many tourists does the White House host each week? Click [here](#) to find out more.

Yesterday, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) released its [final rule](#) on updates to the 340B Drug Discount Program. The final rule includes a new formula for drug manufacturers to use when estimating the 340B price of a new drug, a new "penny pricing" policy to address spikes in drug costs, and details on penalties imposed to drug manufacturers for intentionally charging more for drugs. The final rule is set to be effective April 1, 2017.

CMS Announces Final Rule for New Payment Models

On December 20, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released its [final rule implementing](#) three new Medicare Parts A and B episode payment models (EPMs), a Cardiac Rehabilitation (CR) Incentive Payment model and modifications to the existing Comprehensive Care for Joint Replacement (CJR) model. The rule also includes details on the new Medicare ACO Track 1+ Model which will have less downside risk than Tracks 2 or 3 of the Medicare Shared Savings Program but will qualify as an Advanced Alternative Payment Model (AAPM) under the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act (MACRA). This new ACO model was established in order to encourage more practices, especially small practices, to advance to performance-based risk beginning in 2018.

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