

**EDITION:** March 7, 2018

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

*Your weekly dose of health care policy*



### CONGRESSIONAL

#### Ways and Means Sends Opioid RFI to Stakeholders

Last Tuesday, House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady (R-TX), Ranking Member Richard Neal (D-MA), Health Subcommittee Chairman Peter Roskam (R-IL) and Ranking Member Sandy Levin (D-MI) sent a Request for Information (RFI) to [insurers](#) and [providers](#) for ways to prevent and treat opioid abuse and dependence in the Medicare program. The Committee will accept feedback through March 15, in order to make the [next steps](#) toward drafting legislation.

#### Senate Health Care Price Transparency Working

### MACRA HIGHLIGHTS

For the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS), [groups](#) have until March 16, and individual providers until March 31 to submit data for [2017 reporting](#).

### HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES ON THE HILL

[House Veterans Affairs Committee](#)

## Group Accepts Feedback

Last Thursday, a bipartisan group of Senators led by Sen Bill Cassidy, M.D. (R-LA) and Sen Michael Bennet (D-CO) sent a [letter](#) to stakeholders seeking feedback from patients, providers and insurers with the goal of crafting legislation to lower health care costs and provide for greater transparency for consumers. The group is looking for answers on what information consumers currently have, who should be responsible for providing information to consumers, and how to prevent burdensome requirements. Feedback is requested by the work group by March 23.

## ADMINISTRATION

### CMS Announces Measure Development Grant

On Friday, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) [announced](#) it will provide \$30 million in grants to help develop new quality measures for the Quality Payment Program. Funding and technical assistance will be prioritized to initiative metrics that measure patient experience, outcomes, care coordination and the appropriate use of services. CMS will host conference calls on the grants on [March 15](#) and [March 27](#).

### CMS Summary on Recent Updates to Medicare Extender Provisions

On Wednesday, CMS provided an [updated summary](#) of changes to Medicare payment policies included in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. These changes include further extension of payment policies including the Geographic Practice Cost Index (GPCI) floor, Medicare-Dependent Hospital (MDH) Program, Low-Volume Hospital payment, and other policies. The legislation also repeals the Medicare therapy cap, and updates the manual medical review process.

**3/7 at 2:00pm:** Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee [hearing](#) on the Modernization of Medical Records Access for Veterans Act of 2017

### **Senate HELP Committee**

**3/8 at 10:00am:** Full Committee [hearing](#) on "The Opioid Crisis: Leadership and Innovation in the States."

### **House Energy and Commerce Committee**

**3/8 at 10:00am:** Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee [hearing](#) on Examining U.S. Public Health Preparedness for and Response Efforts to Seasonal Influenza

## WEEKLY TRIVIA

Who holds the record for the longest period of nonconsecutive service in House history?

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

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## **Trump Administration Announces MyHealthEData Initiative**

On Tuesday, CMS Administrator Seema Verma [announced](#) a new government-wide initiative, MyHealthEData, to give patients control of their health care information and the ability to send their information to the provider of their choice. This program is being led by the White House Office of American Innovation with participation from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

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