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GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

Your weekly dose of health care policy



CONGRESSIONAL

Energy and Commerce Advances First Opioid Bills

On Wednesday, the House Energy and Commerce Committee completed its first of two markups on an opioid crisis response legislative package. The Committee passed [25 bills](#) by voice vote which included bills related to patient privacy, medication-assisted treatment and programs to prevent the spread of infectious disease. The Committee will soon markup the remaining bills, including some that have been seen as more controversial.

Rescission Bill Introduced in House

Yesterday, the House of Representatives introduced the

MACRA HIGHLIGHTS

CMS has updated its Quality Payment Program [website tool](#) to allow providers to check group eligibility for the Merit-based Incentive Payment System(MIPS).

HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES ON THE HILL

Senate HELP Committee

5/15 at 10:00am: Full Committee

[Spending Cuts to Expired and Unnecessary Programs Act \(H.R. 3\)](#), a rescission bill aimed at rescinding \$15 billion of unused funds from certain government programs including the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI). The legislation springs from a request by President Trump following passage of the \$1.3 trillion Bipartisan Budget Act passed in March, which many budget hawks had criticized. The bill is expected to go directly to the House floor for a vote rather than through the Appropriations Committee. There is no current schedule for a vote. It is unclear whether or not the Senate would have the votes to pass such a measure.

ADMINISTRATION

Interim Rule Released on 2018 Rates for DME for Rural and Other Communities

On Wednesday, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released an [interim final rule with comment period](#) (IFC) that will increase pay for durable medical equipment (DME) provided in rural and non-contiguous areas of the country not subject to the Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics, and Supplies (DMEPOS) Competitive Bidding Program (CBP) from June 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018. The [IFC](#) comes after the Tuesday announcement from CMS on its new [rural health strategy](#). Comments are due July 9.

CMS Releases Certain FY 2019 Payment Rules

On April 27, CMS released four payment rules for FY 2019 including the [Skilled Nursing Facility \(SNF\) Prospective Payment System \(PPS\)](#), the [Inpatient Rehabilitation Facilities \(IRF\) PPS](#), the [Hospice Wage Index and Payment Rate Update](#), and [Inpatient Psychiatric Facility \(IPF\) PPS Proposed Rules](#). For FY 2019, CMS proposes a 2.4 percent [update for](#)

[hearing](#) on Examining Oversight Reports on the 340B Drug Pricing Program.

WEEKLY TRIVIA

When was the first meeting of Congress in Washington, D.C?

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

[SNFs](#), a .9 percent [update for IRFs](#), a 1.8 percent [update for hospice facilities](#), and a .98 percent [update for inpatient psychiatric facilities](#). The rules also request feedback from stakeholders on advancing CMS' My HealthEData to promote interoperability, a critical initiative to new HHS Secretary Azar. Comments on the proposed rules are due June 26.

In addition, as part of the SNF PPS, the agency is proposing a Patient Driven Payment Model (PDPM), the details of which have been [summarized](#) by HLB.

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