

HLB Weekly Newsletter

[View this email in your browser](#)**EDITION:** August 2, 2018

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

*Your weekly dose of health care policy*

**NOTE:** Over the August Congressional recess, weekly updates will be intermittent.

### CONGRESSIONAL

#### **HELP Committee Passes Legislation on Pharmacy 'Gag Rule'**

Last Wednesday, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee passed the [Patient Right to Know Drug Prices Act \(S. 2554\)](#), legislation that would ban Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) contracts that restrict pharmacists from telling consumers if they could save money by buying a drug directly rather than using their insurance. The legislation will now go to the full Senate.

### MACRA HIGHLIGHTS

CMS will host a webinar on 3 key topics of the Physician Fee Schedule proposed rule, including the Quality Payment Program, on August 22. Register [here](#).

### HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES ON THE HILL

The House of Representatives is in recess through September 4. The Senate is in

## ADMINISTRATION

### 2019 OPPTS/ASC Proposed Rule Released

Last Wednesday, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released the CY 2019 Outpatient Prospective Payment System (OPPS) and Ambulatory Surgical Center (ASC) [proposed rule](#). The [proposal](#) increases rates by 1.25 percent and makes changes to site neutral and 340B payment policies. Comments are due September 24.

### CMS Finalizes SNF, IRF, and IPF Rules

On Tuesday, CMS released the final rules for [skilled nursing facilities](#) (SNFs), [inpatient rehabilitation facilities](#) (IRFs) and [inpatient psychiatric facilities](#) (IPFs) for FY 2019. The [SNF rule](#) finalizes a new payment system with a push towards payment based on value of care provided rather than volume of services. The [IRF rule](#) includes a 1.3 percent increase and the [IPF rule](#) includes a 1.1 percent increase in payment.

### HHS Releases Short-Term Limited Duration Insurance Plan Rule

On Wednesday, the Department of Health and Human Services along with other agencies released the [final rule](#) outlining new policies around Short-Term, Limited-Duration Insurance Plans. The [rule](#) would allow people to enroll in short-term plans for up to a year and renew the coverage for up to 36 months.

### CMS Finalizes Hospice Payment Rule

Yesterday, CMS released its FY 2019 Hospice payment update and wage index [final rule](#). The [rule](#) provides a 1.8 percent increase in payment and updates to Hospice Compare.

recess through August 12.

### WEEKLY TRIVIA

Why does Congress recess in August?

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

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