

Wynne Health Group Weekly



FRAMING THE WEEK

This week's main event is President Biden's first State of the Union address tomorrow evening. While the President's remarks will have a significant focus on national security, we anticipate his speech will also touch on the Biden Administration's COVID-19 response and health care priorities. Biden may provide some direction to lawmakers on which health policies of the Build Back Better Act to advance in a narrower package (e.g., extending enhancement of premium tax credits, lowering prescription drug prices). Whether a bill will pass this year is an open question, given the time constraints and multiple priorities – e.g., FY 2022 omnibus appropriations by March 11, bipartisan interest to advance mental health and pandemic preparedness bills, and November elections.

Other events this week include a Senate vote on the Women's Health Protection Act; House committee hearings on [COVID-19's impact on health care](#) and [substance use and suicide](#); and MedPAC and MACPAC meetings.

Women's Health Protection Act

The Senate is scheduled to vote today on the Women's Health Protection Act (WHPA, [H.R. 3755](#)), which would codify the right for health care providers to provide, and their patients to receive, abortion services. WHPA, which passed the House mostly along party lines (218-211), is not expected to clear the Senate due to the 60-vote filibuster threshold. Instead, the vote is intended to get all senators on the record on *Roe v. Wade* before the midterm elections.

The Supreme Court, with a 6-3 conservative majority, is expected to issue a decision in the spring on *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, which involves a Mississippi law that prohibits nearly all abortions after the 15th week of pregnancy. Allowing the Mississippi law to stand would effectively overturn *Roe v. Wade*, which protects the right to abortion prior to fetal viability (around 24 weeks). Biden's nominee to replace liberal Justice Stephen Breyer – Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson – will not alter the Supreme Court's ideological balance. However, if confirmed, Judge Jackson, who has been praised [Planned Parenthood](#) and [NARAL Pro-Choice](#), will play a critical role in shaping reproductive rights in the future.

MedPAC

Later this week, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) will [convene](#) to discuss a range of issues, including beneficiary experience, workforce, and payment reform. Specific topics include:

- Findings from MedPAC's annual beneficiary and clinician focus groups;
- Guidance on future work to better support safety-net providers;
- Policy options to strengthen the geriatric workforce;
- Proposed approaches for integrating episode-based payment with population-based payment (a focus for the ongoing work at the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation); and
- Revised approach to Medicare Advantage risk adjustment.

MACPAC

The Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC) will hold sessions on policy levers to promote health equity, considerations in redesigning the home- and community-based services benefit, and rate setting. Additionally, MACPAC will discuss recommendations for the June Report to Congress related to:

- Directed payments in managed care;
- Improving the uptake of electronic health records by behavioral health providers;
- Requiring states to develop an integrated care strategy for dually eligible beneficiaries; and
- Access to vaccines for adults enrolled in Medicaid.

THIS WEEK IN HEALTH POLICY

Mon. (2/28)

- **12:00pm – NIH Meeting: Biosecurity** – The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of the Director holds a meeting of the National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity to review the charge of the committee and discuss next steps. [Details.](#)
- **2:00pm – NQF Meeting: PRO/PM Measures** – The National Quality Forum (NQF) Technical Expert Panel holds a meeting to discuss patient report outcome performance measures (PRO/PM). [Details.](#)

Tue. (3/1)

- **10:15am – Hearing: Retirement and Mental Health** – The House Education and Labor Committee Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Subcommittee holds a hearing titled, “Improving Retirement Security and Access to Mental Health Benefits.” [Details.](#)
- **10:30am – ONC Meeting: Interoperability** – The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) holds a meeting of the Interoperability Standards Workgroup to discuss how to improve interoperability. [Details.](#)
- **1:00pm – CMS Webinar: Quality and Cost Measures** – The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) holds a webinar to provide an overview of the development, criteria, and evaluation of Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) measures that align with CMS priorities. [Details.](#)

Wed. (3/2)

- **9:00am – FDA Meeting: Device Manufacturing** – The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) holds a meeting of the Device Good Manufacturing Practice Advisory Committee to give presentations on current good manufacturing practice requirements for medical devices. [Details.](#)
- **10:00am – Hearing: Substance Use and Suicide** – The House Ways and Means Committee holds a hearing titled, “Substance Use, Suicide Risk, and the American Health System.” [Details.](#)
- **10:00am – HHS Meeting: Anti-Biotic Resistant Bacteria** – The Department of Health and Human Service (HHS) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health holds a meeting of the President’s Advisory Council on Combatting Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria to provide recommendations on programs and policies related to antibiotic-resistant bacteria. [Details.](#)
- **10:30am – Hearing: COVID-19** – The House Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations holds a hearing titled, “Lessons from the Frontline: COVID-19’s Impact on American Health Care.” [Details.](#)
- **3:00pm – CMMI Webinar: Kidney Models** – The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Innovation Center (CMMI) holds a webinar to provide updates on the Comprehensive End Stage Renal Disease Care Model, the Kidney Care Choices Model, and the End-Stage Renal Disease Treatment Choices Model. [Details.](#)

Thurs. (3/3)

- **9:00am – FDA Meeting: Vaccines** – The FDA holds a meeting of the Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee to discuss and make recommendations on the selection of strains to be included in the 2022-2023 influenza vaccine. [Details](#).
- **10:00am – ONC Meeting: Prior Authorization RFI** – The ONC Health Information Technology Advisory Committee (HITAC) holds a meeting of the e-Prior Authorization Request for Information (RFI) Task Force 2022 to discuss the recent RFI and next steps. [Details](#).
- **10:00am – HRSA Meeting: Childhood Vaccines** – The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) holds a meeting of the Advisory Commission on Childhood Vaccines to discuss recommendations for childhood vaccines. [Details](#).

Additional Multi-Day Events

- **March 2-March 3 – DOT Meeting: Emergency Medical Transport** – The Department of Transportation (DOT National Highway Traffic Safety Administration National Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council to discuss committee reports and initiatives. [Details](#).
- **March 3-March 4 – Meeting: MACPAC** – The Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC) holds a public meeting to discuss Medicaid and CHIP payment and policy issues. [Details](#).
- **December 9-December 10 – Meeting: MedPAC** – The Medicare Payment Advisory Commission meets to discuss Medicare issues and policy questions. [Details](#).

FEATURED WHG ANALYSIS

- **WHG Roundup of Recent Telehealth Policy** – In the Policy Hub Insight Bank [here](#).
- **WHG 2022 Legislative and Regulatory Outlook** – In the Policy Hub Insight Bank [here](#).
- **WHG Issue Brief on Health Equity Implications of Potential Telehealth Reform Under Medicare** – In the Policy Hub Insight Bank [here](#).

CONGRESSIONAL LOOKBACK

REGULATORY LOOKBACK

Fri. (2/25)

- **HRSA** recently [announced](#) that more than \$560 million in Provider Relief Fund (PRF) Phase 4 General Distribution payments is being distributed. [Details](#).
- **ASPE** [published](#) an issue brief examining trends and challenges in health care coverage and access among Black Americans. [Details](#).
- **The FDA** [issued](#) final guidance entitled Patient-Focused Drug Development: Methods to Identify What is Important to Patients. [Details](#).

Thurs. (2/24)

- **CMS** [announced](#) it has redesigned the Global and Professional Direct Contracting (GPDC) model. [Details](#).

Tues. (2/22)

- **The USPSTF** [issued](#) a draft recommendation statement in favor of statin use for the primary prevention of cardiovascular disease (CVD) in adults. Comments are due March 21. [Details](#).
- **The FDA** [issued](#) a proposed rule to amend the device CGMP requirements. Comments are due May 24. [Details](#).

COMMENT & APPLICATION DEADLINES

- **February 28:** The CDC [announced](#) it is seeking nominations for individuals to serve as members of the Advisory Committee on Breast Cancer in Young Women. [Details.](#)
- **March 4:** CMS [announced](#) the Calendar Year 2023 Advance Notice for Medicare Advantage and Part D. [Details.](#)
- **March 6:** The FDA [issued](#) a proposed rule to establish national standards for the licensing of prescription drug wholesale distributors. [Details.](#)
- **March 6:** HHS [released](#) an RFI regarding a proposed revision to the 2020 PHS Guideline on organ donors and transplant recipients for HIV, HBV, and HCV infection. [Details.](#)
- **March 7:** CMS [released](#) the Contract Year (CY) 2023 Policy and Technical Changes to Medicare Advantage (MA) and Part D proposed rule. [Details.](#)
- **March 10:** The ACL released two Innovations in Nutrition Programs and Services funding opportunities ([here](#) and [here](#)) to support research and programs improving nutrition services programs for aging adults. [Details.](#)
- **March 11:** The FDA [issued](#) draft guidance on notifying the agency of a permanent discontinuance or interruption in manufacturing of a device. [Details.](#)
- **March 11:** ASPR [issued](#) a request for comments to help inform the development of the 2023-2026 National Health Security Strategy. [Details.](#)
- **March 14:** The FDA [issued](#) a request for nominations for voting and nonvoting consumer representatives to serve on advisory committees and panels. [Details.](#)
- **March 14:** The USDA FNS [released](#) a notice of funding opportunity for Team Nutrition Training Grants. [Details](#)
- **March 15:** AHRQ [released](#) a solicitation for nominations for members of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF). [Details.](#)
- **March 18:** HRSA [released](#) a notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for the Rural Public Health Workforce Training Network (RPHWTN) Program. [Details.](#)
- **March 21:** The USPSTF [issued](#) a draft recommendation statement in favor of statin use for the primary prevention of cardiovascular disease (CVD) in adults. [Details.](#)
- **March 23:** The **ONC** [issued](#) an RFI seeking stakeholder input on whether to adopt additional standards, implementation specifications, and certification criteria regarding electronic prior authorization. [Details.](#)
- **March 31:** HRSA [announced](#) the availability of \$19.2 million in ARP funding to support primary care and dental resident training in rural and underserved communities. [Details.](#)
- **April 4:** SAMHSA released a NOFO that will make \$10 million available for the Services Grant Program for Residential Treatment for Pregnant and Postpartum Women. [Details](#)
- **April 11:** The CDC [announced](#) it is requesting comments on the proposed clinical practice guideline, "CDC Clinical Practice Guideline for Prescribing Opioids." [Details.](#)
- **April 12:** The NIH [issued](#) an RFI to gather public input on developing the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA). Comments are due April 12. [Details.](#)
- **April 16:** HRSA released a NOFO to support long term improvements in early developmental health through the Transforming Pediatrics for Early Childhood program. [Details.](#)
- **April 18:** CMS [released](#) an RFI on access to care and coverage for Medicaid and CHIP enrollees. Comments are due April 18. [Details.](#)
- **April 19:** HHS [announced](#) the availability of \$13 million to support increased access to behavioral health care services, including treatment for substance use disorder, in rural communities. [Details.](#)
- **April 19:** AHRQ [released](#) an RFI from the public on its proposed strategic framework for its Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Trust Fund ([PCORTE](#)) investments. [Details.](#)
- **April 22:** The NIH [announced](#) a \$1 million prize competition for innovative diagnostics technologies to help improve maternal health. [Details.](#)
- **May 24:** The FDA [issued](#) a proposed rule to amend the device CGMP requirements. [Details.](#)

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