

Wynne Health Group Weekly



FRAMING THE WEEK

This week, the Senate Judiciary Committee will hold four days of [confirmation hearings](#) on President Biden's nomination of [Ketanji Brown Jackson](#) to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States. Last year, three Republican senators (Sens. Susan Collins (R-ME), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), and Lindsey Graham (R-SC)) [voted](#) with Democrats to confirm Judge Jackson to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District Circuit. Like with other big Senate votes, Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV), who has [not yet confirmed](#) his support for Biden's pick, is one to watch. Judge Jackson will need a simple majority to be confirmed (e.g., all 50 Democrats and Vice President Kamala Harris' tie-breaking vote).

As for the stand-alone COVID supplemental package that House leaders had hoped to vote on last week, a major breakthrough on the funding standoff appears unlikely this week, despite warnings from the White House that failing to provide the requested \$22.5 billion would have "severe and immediate consequences." The House is on recess this week, and Republicans will hold their caucus retreat Wednesday through Friday.

"Those consequences are dire: fewer monoclonal antibodies sent to states, an inability to purchase additional treatments, fewer tests available to Americans, less surveillance for future variants, and a risk of running short on vaccines," [said](#) White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki. Last week, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) announced claims for COVID-care for the uninsured will stop being processed beginning this week "due to a lack of sufficient funds." On March 22, the [COVID-19 Uninsured Program](#) will stop accepting claims for testing and treatment. On April 5, the COVID-19 Uninsured Program and [Coverage Assistance Fund](#) will stop accepting vaccination claims.

On Wednesday, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee will convene a [hearing](#) to inform its bipartisan legislation addressing mental health and substance use disorders discuss. Committee members will question agency leaders about opportunities, challenges, and emerging issues for federal programs. The panel features heads of HRSA, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, National Institute of Mental Health, and National Institute on Drug Abuse. At the last hearing on the topic, Democrats and Republicans expressed strong interest in working together to pass bipartisan legislation ([WHG summary](#)). Their priorities include strengthening the workforce, increasing access to mental health services for children and young people, ensuring mental health parity, and improving delivery of care.

The Senate Special Committee on Aging will hold a [hearing](#) on Wednesday on the health care workforce and home and community-based services. The panel features a policy expert from the Bipartisan Policy Center and advocates for home-based care, caregivers, and people with disabilities.

Regulatory Update

The proposed rule to fix the "family glitch" recently [arrived](#) at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review. The proposed rule is pursuant to a 2021 executive order that directed federal agencies to review current policies to ensure they aligned with Administration's goal of strengthening the Affordable Care Act

(ACA) ([WHG summary](#)). The family glitch is based on a 2015 Department of Treasury interpretation of the ACA tax credits such that family members were blocked from accessing tax credits if a worker had an employer offer of affordable self-only coverage and was offered a family plan, even if the family's coverage expenses were to exceed 9.5 percent of income.

THIS WEEK IN HEALTH POLICY

Mon. (3/21)

- **12:00pm – NQF Meeting: EHR Care Coordination** – The National Quality Forum (NQF) holds a meeting of the Electronic Health Record (EHR) Care Coordination Committee to discuss measures related to EHR care coordination. [Details](#).

Tue. (3/22)

- **9:30am – FDA Meeting: Biosimilar User Fee Act** – The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) holds a meeting titled, “Final Assessment of the Program for Enhanced Review Transparency and Communication in the Biosimilar User Fee Act.” [Details](#).
- **10:00am – Hearing: Rural Care Economy** – The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry holds a hearing titled, “Rural Quality of Life: Opportunities and Challenges for the Rural Care Economy.” [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](#).

Wed. (3/23)

- **10:00am – Hearing: Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder** – The Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) holds a hearing titled, “Strengthening Federal Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Programs: Opportunities, Challenges, and Emerging Issues.” [Details](#).
- **10:00am – Hearing; Home-Based Services** – The Senate Special Committee on Aging holds a hearing titled, “An Economy that Cares: The Importance of Home-Based Services.” [Details](#).

Thurs. (3/24)

- **12:00pm – CDC Meeting: Healthcare Infection Control** – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) holds a meeting of the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee to hear updates from the Healthcare Personnel Guidelines Workgroup, the Isolation Precautions Guideline Workgroup, and the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Workgroup. [Details](#).
- **1:00pm – SAMHSA Meeting: SAMHSA Priorities** – The Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) holds a meeting of the Advisory Council to hear updates on SAMHSA priorities and council discussions. [Details](#).
- **1:00pm – CDC Meeting: Health Preparedness** – The CDC Center for Preparedness and Response Board of Scientific Counselors holds a meeting to discuss the Polio Containment Workgroup Update and the Strategic Capacity Building and Innovation Program Review Working Group Update. [Details](#).

Additional Multi-Day Events

- **March 24-March 25 – 10:00am – HRSA meeting: Graduate Medical Education** – The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) holds a meeting of the Council on Graduate Medical Education to discuss Council priorities. [Details](#)

FEATURED WHG ANALYSIS

- **WHG Memo on Possible CMMI Action on Drug Pricing** – In the Policy Hub Insight Bank [here](#).
- **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

Wed. (3/16)

- **The Senate Finance Committee** [convened](#) a hearing to discuss ways to lower drug prices. [Details](#).

Tues. (3/15)

- **The Senate HELP Committee** [convened](#) a markup of [S. 3799](#), the PREVENT Pandemics Act. The Committee favorably reported the bill as amended to the Senate via roll call vote (20-2). [Details](#).
- **MedPAC** [released](#) its March 2022 Report to Congress. [Details](#).
- **MACPAC** [released](#) its March 2022 Report to Congress. [Details](#).

REGULATORY LOOKBACK

Fri. (3/18)

- **FNS** [released](#) a report on the Administration's approach to nutrition security. [Details](#).
- **SAMHSA** [posted](#) a notice of funding opportunity for the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Grant Program. Applications are due May 17. [Details](#).

Thurs. (3/17)

- **The FDA** [issued](#) draft guidance on human gene therapy products incorporating human genome editing. [Details](#).
- **The FDA** [issued](#) draft guidance on considerations for the development of chimeric antigen receptor T cell products. [Details](#).
- **CMMI** [hosted](#) a listening session to discuss ways to better integrate safety net providers in demonstration models. [Details](#).
- **HHS OIG** [released](#) a data brief demonstrating that [telehealth](#) was critical for providing services to Medicare beneficiaries during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. [Details](#).

Tues. (3/15)

- **SAMHSA** [announced](#) \$25.6 million in funding for two grant programs that will expand access to MAT for opioid use disorder and prevent the misuse of prescription drugs. [Details](#).

Mon. (3/14)

- **CMS** released a [notice](#) delineating the final (FYs 2018 and 2019) and preliminary (FYs 2020 and 2021) federal share (FS) Medicaid DSH allotments. [Details](#).
- **SAMHSA** the OMH [announced](#) that the Administration has provided nearly \$35 million in funding opportunities to strengthen and expand community mental health services and suicide for children and young adults. [Details](#).
- **HRSA** released a [fact sheet](#) highlighting how it has used ARP funds to support underserved communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. [Details](#).

COMMENT & APPLICATION DEADLINES

- **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 28:** CMS [released](#) a request for nominations for membership on the Medicare Evidence Development & Coverage Advisory Committee (MEDCAC). [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 1:** HHS Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS Policy [announced](#) that it seeks public comment on the draft Vaccines Federal Implementation Plan 2021-2025.. [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.](#)
- **April 25:** The FTC [issued](#) a request for public comments on the ways that [pharmacy](#) benefit managers (PBMs) affect drug affordability and access. [Details.](#)
- **May 2:** The HHS Office of the Surgeon General is [seeking](#) input on the impact and prevalence of health misinformation in the digital information environment during the COVID-19 pandemic. [Details.](#)
- **May 9:** The NIH [released](#) a notice of proposed rulemaking to update the NIH Loan Repayment Programs (LRP) to reflect changes made by the 21st Century Cures Act. [Details.](#)
- **May 17:** SAMHSA [posted](#) a notice of funding opportunity for the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Grant Program. [Details.](#)
- **May 24:** The FDA [issued](#) a proposed rule to amend the device CGMP requirements. [Details.](#)
- **June 7:** The FDA [issued](#) a request for comments on changes to the agency’s previously proposed quality metrics (QM) reporting program. [Details.](#)

WHG Contacts for Inquiries

Alyssa Llamas: alyssa@wynnehealth.com; (562) 207-8807

Josh LaRosa: josh@wynnehealth.com; (703) 309-4248

Erin Slifer: erin@wynnehealth.com; (410) 984-4552

Billy Wynne: billy@wynnehealth.com; (202) 309-0796

