

Wynne Health Group Weekly



FRAMING THE WEEK

The House and Senate are both in session this week and the President's fiscal year 2024 will be released on Thursday. The Senate is expected to vote on a GOP-led resolution to block D.C. from implementing its revised criminal code. The House passed the measure last month and President Biden has agreed to sign it, much to the consternation of progressive Democrats. The House will vote on a [slate of bills](#) including several Veterans related bill; a resolution to require the President to remove Armed Forces from Syria; a bill to expand the Hatch Act to prohibit federal employees from censoring lawful speech; and, a bill to require the Director of National Intelligence to declassify information relating to the origin of COVID-19.

FY 2024 President's Budget Request

The President's fiscal year (FY) 2024 budget request will be formally sent to Congress on Thursday, though some supplemental tables and agency justifications may not be released until next Monday, March 13. The budget request is expected to highlight the administration's legislative accomplishments last Congress, including the bipartisan infrastructure law and the Inflation Reduction Act. It will also be the first official move in what is expected to be a months-long negotiation between House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) and the Administration on how to deal with the need to raise the debt ceiling. The budget release will come a day after House lawmakers from both parties are scheduled to hear from Congressional Budget Office Director Phillip Swagel on CBO's budget and economic projections.

Hearings

In addition to kicking off the FY 2024 budget hearings, this week, both chambers will convene hearings on an array of health-related policy priorities, including COVID-19 and health care for older adults. As noted in the calendar below, committees will also hold hearings on housing, artificial intelligence, and environmental health.

- **COVID-19:** The House Oversight and Accountability Committee will convene two hearings on COVID-19. On Wednesday, the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic will [discuss the origins of COVID-19](#). The panel includes Dr. Robert Redfield, who served as the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention during the Trump Administration. On Thursday, the full committee will question inspector generals from the Department of Treasury, Small Business Administration and Department of Labor on ways the federal government can limit improper payments of pandemic relief funds.
- **Health Care for Older Adults:** On Thursday, the Senate Special Committee on Aging will hold a [hearing](#) on ways to support families, workers, and older adults. Last month, Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Aging, and Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR), Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee [encouraged](#) the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to establish minimum staffing residents in nursing homes.

THIS WEEK IN HEALTH POLICY

Mon. (3/6)

- **11:30am – AHRQ Meeting: Health Care Research** – The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) holds a meeting of the National Advisory Council for Healthcare Research and Quality to discuss program updates and patient safety. [Details](#).

Tue. (3/7)

- **9:00am – FDA Meeting: Influenza Vaccine** – The Food and Drug Administration (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 influenza virus vaccines for the 2023-2024 influenza season. [Details](#).
- **10:00am – SAMHSA Meeting: Drug Testing Advisory Board** – The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration holds a meeting of the Drug Testing Advisory Board (DTAB) to discuss departmental updates, including a summary of pulse testing studies for fentanyl in opioids. [Details](#).
- **10:00am – Hearing: Affordable Housing** – The Senate Committee on Finance holds a hearing to examine tax policy's role in increasing affordable housing supply. [Details](#).
- **12:00pm – CMS Webinar: Improving Data to Advance Health Equity Solutions** – The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Office of Minority Health holds a webinar to discuss its recently released white paper, The Path Forward: Improving Data to Advance Health Equity Solutions. [Details](#).
- **2:30pm – Hearing: Debt Limit** – The Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Policy holds a hearing to examine the federal debt limit and its economic and financial consequences. [Details](#).

Wed. (3/8)

- **9:00am – Hearing: Covid-19 Origins** – The House Committee on Oversight and Accountability Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic holds a hearing to investigate the origins of COVID-19. [Details](#).
- **10:00am – Hearing: Artificial Intelligence** – The Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs holds a hearing titled “Artificial Intelligence: Risks and Opportunities.” [Details](#).
- **10:30am – HITAC Meeting: Interoperability Standards** – The Health Information Technology Advisory Committee (HITAC) holds a meeting of the Interoperability Standards Workgroup to discuss program updates. [Details](#).
- **12:00pm – CMS Webinar: How CMS and its Stakeholders Are Addressing Inequities in Healthcare** – CMS holds a webinar to discuss the CMS Health Equity Framework and how key stakeholders are leveraging changes in data science and quality measurements to drive progress towards more equitable care. [Details](#)
- **1:00pm – Health Affairs Discussion: Public Health and COVID-19** – Health Affairs holds a discussion focusing on lessons from COVID-19 for the future of public health. [Details](#).
- **2:00pm – Hearing: Artificial Intelligence** – The House Committee on Oversight and Accountability Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Information Technology, and Government Innovation holds a hearing to explore ways the United States can harness and integrate artificial intelligence (AI) technology to improve the lives of the American people while managing the inherent risk of AI becoming a tool for criminals. [Details](#).
- **2:30pm – Hearing: Homelessness** – The Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development holds a hearing to examine the federal strategic plan on homelessness. [Details](#).
- **2:30pm – Hearing: Native Communities' Priorities** – The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs holds a hearing titled “Native Communities; Priorities for the 118th Congress.” [Details](#).

Thurs. (3/9)

- **9:30am – Hearing: Oversight of the Office of Personnel Management** – The House Committee on Oversight and Accountability holds a hearing to examine the Office of Personnel Management’s (OPM) administration of human capital policy for the federal workforce and OPM’s implementation of health care provisions of the Postal Service Reform Act. [Details.](#)
- **9:30am – Hearing: Artificial Intelligence** – The House Committee on Armed Services holds a hearing to examine the Department of Defense’s priorities for digital modernization and transformation, artificial intelligence, information technology, and cybersecurity. [Details.](#)
- **10:00am – Hearing: Public Health and the Environment** – The Senate Special Committee on Environment and Public Works hold a hearing to discuss public health and environmental impact of the Norfolk Southern Train derailment and chemical release in Ohio. [Details.](#)
- **10:00am – HITAC Meeting: Advisory Committee** – The Health Information Technology Advisory Committee (HITAC) holds a meeting to discuss program updates. [Details.](#)
- **10:30am – Hearing: Communities of Care** – The Senate Special Committee on Aging holds a hearing to examine uplifting families, workers, and older adults, focusing on supporting communities of care. [Details.](#)
- **2:00pm – Hearing: Inflation** – The House Committee on Oversight and Accountability Subcommittee on Health Care and Financial Services holds a hearing to examine the inflationary crisis and policies to prevent future crises. [Details.](#)

Fri. (3/10)

- **1:00pm – NQF Meeting: Scientific Methods** – The National Quality Forum holds an advisory meeting of the Scientific Methods Panel to discuss program updates. [Details.](#)

Additional Multi-Day Events

- **March 7-March 8 – CDC Meeting: ICD-10** – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) holds a meeting of the ICD-10 Coordination and Maintenance (C&M) Committee to discuss proposed modifications to the ICD-10 Clinical Modification (CM) and Procedure Coding system (PCS). [Details.](#)

FEATURED WHG ANALYSIS

- **WHG Tracker of COVID-19 PHE Flexibilities** – In the Policy Hub Insight Bank [here](#)
- **WHG Health Policy Guide to the 118th Congress** – In the Policy Hub Insight Bank [here.](#)
- **WHG Roundup of Surprise Billing and Transparency Updates**– In the Policy Hub Insight Bank [here.](#)
- **WHG Maternal Health Policy Update: November – December 2022** – In the Policy Hub Insight Bank [here.](#)

CONGRESSIONAL LOOKBACK

Fri. (3/3)

- **MedPAC convened** virtually for Day Two of its January 2023 public meeting and held sessions on MA payment policy and site neutral payments. All WHG session summaries are available on Policy Hub [here.](#)

Thurs. (3/2)

- **MedPAC convened** virtually for Day One of its January 2023 public meeting and held sessions on Medicare’s wage index, high prices of Part B drugs, and a design for a PAC PPS. All WHG session summaries are available on Policy Hub [here.](#)
- **MACPAC convened** virtually for Day One of its March 2023 public meeting and held sessions on DSH allotments, pre-release Medicaid services, unwinding PHE continuous enrollment, coordinated care, managed care external quality review, and CMS’s proposed rule on nursing facility ownership. All WHG session summaries are available on Policy Hub [here.](#)

- **The Senate HELP Committee** [released](#) a letter to health care providers and stakeholders requesting information on the root causes of the current health care workforce shortage and potential ways to address it. Comments are due March 20. [Details](#).

Weds. (3/1)

- **House E&C members** [released](#) an RFI seeking feedback and suggestions for the upcoming Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness Act reauthorization. [Details](#).
- **The House Committee on O&A** [announced](#) the launch of an investigation into PBM practices.
- **The House E&C Subcommittee on Innovation, Data, and Commerce** [convened](#) a hearing to consider how to promote innovation through a National Standard for Data Privacy. [Details](#).

REGULATORY LOOKBACK

Fri. (3/3)

- **HHS OIG** [released](#) a report on Medicare Advantage (MA) encounter data. [Details](#).

Thurs. (3/2)

- **CMS** [released](#) the annual update to the Drug Spending Dashboards with 2021 data. [Details](#).
- **CMMI** [issued](#) a set of FAQs regarding its strategic refresh initiative. [Details](#).

Weds. (3/1)

- **The NIH** [announced](#) a number of grants to address health disparities and advance health equity. Applications are due May 1. [Details](#).

Tues. (2/28)

- **CMS** [announced](#) that certified independent dispute resolution (IDR) entities can resume processing payment determinations on February 27, 2023. [Details](#).

Mon. (2/27)

- **The DEA** [published](#) two proposed rules that would scale back the pandemic-era flexibilities around telehealth prescribing of controlled substances. [Details](#).
- **The GAO** [released](#) a report on health care reentry policies and procedures to help inmates apply for federal and state benefits upon release. [Details](#).

COMMENT & APPLICATION DEADLINES

- **March 6:** FNS [announced](#) \$60.58 million in funding for round two Reach and Resiliency grants in The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). [Details](#).
- **March 4:** CMS [announced](#) the CY 2024 Advance Notice for MA and Part D. [Details](#).
- **March 9:** The FDA [issued](#) a proposed rule to establish a new annual reporting requirement for investigational new drug applications. [Details](#).
- **March 9:** The FDA [issued](#) draft guidance on content of human factors information in medical device marketing submissions. [Details](#).
- **March 10:** HHS ODPHP [announced](#) the availability of the draft Physical Activity Guidelines Midcourse Report on Older Adults. [Details](#).
- **March 11:** CMS [released](#) initial guidance for the Medicare Part B and Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Inflation Rebate Program. [Details](#).
- **March 13:** CMS [released](#) a proposed rule to improve the electronic exchange of health care data and streamline prior authorization. [Details](#).
- **March 14:** HHS and other agencies jointly [issued](#) a proposed rule to restore protections against religious discrimination for beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries of federally funded services and programs. [Details](#).
- **March 14:** HHS [issued](#) a SNPRM on the elimination of waiver requirements to prescribe OUD treatments. [Details](#).

- **March 15:** The USPSTF [issued](#) a request for nominations to serve as members of the Task Force. [Details.](#)
- **March 19:** The FDA [issued](#) draft guidance on optimizing the dosage of human prescription drugs and biological products for the treatment of oncologic diseases. [Details.](#)
- **March 20:** The Senate HELP Committee [released](#) a letter to health care providers and stakeholders requesting information on the root causes of the current health care workforce shortage and potential ways to address it. [Details.](#)
- **March 22:** The USPSTF [released](#) a draft research plan on interventions to prevent perinatal depression. [Details.](#)
- **March 31:** The FDA [issued](#) draft guidance on recommendations for evaluating donor eligibility using individual risk-based questions to reduce the risk of HIV by blood and blood products. [Details.](#)
- **April 3:** HHS [proposed new rules](#) to expand access to contraceptive services under the ACA. [Details.](#)
- **April 12:** The OMB [requests](#) comments on initial proposals to improve the quality and usefulness of race and ethnicity data collected and reported across federal agencies. [Details.](#)
- **April 14:** CMS [issued](#) a proposed rule to require the disclosure of certain ownership, managerial, and other information regarding Medicare SNFs and Medicaid nursing facilities. [Details.](#)
- **April 25:** CMS [issued](#) a proposed rule to implement requirements under section 203 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (CAA), which relate to Medicaid shortfall and third-party payments. [Details.](#)
- **April 28:** CMS [issued](#) a proposed rule that seeks to further clarify the treatment of inpatient days associated with Medicaid Section 1115 demonstrations in the calculation of Medicare disproportionate share hospital (DSH) payments. [Details.](#)
- **May 1:** The NIH [announced](#) a number of grants to address health disparities and advance health equity. Applications are due May 1. [Details.](#)
- **May 24:** The FNS [released](#) a proposed rule to support online ordering in WIC. [Details.](#)

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