



## Around the world of U.S. healthcare in 360 words or less

Center for Healthcare Regulatory Insight



December 16, 2022 | Issue 251

Editor's note

*This note is produced every Friday by the [KPMG Center for Healthcare Regulatory Insight](#) and is intended to be short and succinct, no more than 360 words, to provide a digestible bite of healthcare and life sciences news from the past week. Please share this email with colleagues and other interested individuals, and encourage them to [subscribe to our mailing list here](#).*

We welcome your feedback. Let us know if KPMG can help. Please [reply here to me](#), **Larry Kocot**, principal and national leader, KPMG Center for Healthcare Regulatory Insight or simply reply to this email with any comments or requests.

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### Healthcare regulatory news

CMS [proposed 2024 MA and Part D changes](#), including [revised marketing and prior authorization requirements](#), a health equity index star-ratings' reward, and improved behavioral health access.

CMS [proposed 2024 ACA marketplace changes](#), including stricter network adequacy standards, limiting non-standard plans, and an SEP for Medicaid/CHIP coverage loss ... IRS [extended](#) the time for employers to provide individual annual statements regarding ACA minimum essential coverage.

CMS [approved Washington's 1332 waiver](#) allowing undocumented residents to purchase 2024 ACA exchange plans.

CMS [delayed an updated draft coverage determination](#) for amyloid PET scans for Alzheimer's detection.

SAMHSA [proposed permanently loosening restrictions](#) on take-home opioid addiction treatments, including allowing prescribing via telehealth.

AHRQ is seeking comment on [advancing patient and healthcare workforce safety](#) and evidence/data on health-system-level strategies to [address racial/ethnic/socioeconomic health disparities](#).

FDA [granted accelerated approval](#) to a KRAS-blocking treatment for an advanced form of lung cancer.

OSTP [announced \\$1.2B in work/investment](#) to promote involvement of women, people of color, and other underrepresented groups in STEMM.

HHS OIG and DOJ [will partner on addressing](#) anticompetitive behaviors in healthcare.

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## Healthcare law and policy news

CMS' Actuaries reported [US healthcare spending increased 2.7% to \\$4.3B in 2021](#), down from 10.3% in 2021... SSR Health data show [brand-name drug wholesale prices increased 4.8% in Q3](#); net prices fell 0.3%.

University of Michigan Health [plans to acquire Sparrow Health](#)... Amgen [agreed to acquire Horizon Therapeutics](#) (\$27.8B)... SCAN and CareOregon [plan to merge](#) into a \$6.8B company... Takeda will [pay Nimbus Therapeutics \(\\$6B\)](#) for an experimental autoimmune disease... Clovis Oncology [filed for bankruptcy](#)... An Illinois review board [approved Deaconess' acquisition of four Quorum hospitals](#)... BCBSMA [announced four value-based contracts](#) incentivizing health equity improvements.

CVS and Walgreens [will pay \\$10.7B to settle multistate opioid epidemic-related lawsuits](#)... Labor unions [sued Elevance](#) for [restricting access to claims data](#) and failing to pass through discounts.

Abbvie is [leaving PhRMA and BIO](#).

A [STAT-The Markup investigation](#) found dozens of direct-to-consumer telehealth companies shared sensitive health data with big tech companies... Epic will [shut down its app market](#), replacing it with a [vendor directory](#) to self-report interoperability with Epic's API.

Moody's [reported healthcare company credit downgrades](#) are increasing; STAT reported [90% of financially stressed companies](#) are owned by private equity.

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## Special Section: COVID-19, Respiratory Illnesses, and Monkeypox News

CDC [formally recommended bivalent COVID-19 vaccines](#) for children as young as 6 months.

HHS Secretary [Xavier Becerra told state governors](#) that waivers intended for the COVID-19 PHE (e.g., expanded telehealth, patient screening/triage off-site, etc.) can be used to address surges in RSV and influenza, as long as COVID-19 continues to contribute to challenges in responding to other respiratory illnesses.

The federal government [reopened its program for free at-home COVID-19 tests](#) for all households.

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The Biden Administration will [pay Pfizer \\$2B](#) for [3.7M additional courses](#) of Paxlovid.

FDA [granted fast track designation](#) to Pfizer-BioNTech's single-dose combination mRNA vaccine for COVID-19 and influenza.

A [CDC analysis found 3,544 Americans died](#), at least in part, due to long COVID from January 2020 through June 2022... Commonwealth Fund [estimated COVID-19 vaccinations from December 2020 to November 2022](#) prevented at least 18.5M additional hospitalizations and 3.2 million additional deaths in the US... A [KFF analysis found](#) just 45% of all nursing home residents and 22% of nursing home staff are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations.

The House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis [released its final report](#), which concluded “pre-existing vulnerabilities, failures in leadership and program implementation, and predatory actions by private actors” contributed to a poor initial response to the pandemic; the committee [issued 30 recommendations](#) to “strengthen the nation’s ability to prevent and respond to public health and economic emergencies”... House Intelligence Committee [Democrats](#) and [Republicans](#) issued separate reports on the US intelligence community’s response to COVID-19.



Questions or comments, please send to

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