



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



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Editor's note

This note is produced every Friday by [KPMG](#) 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](#).

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Healthcare regulatory news

President Biden [signed a \\$1.2T spending package](#), averting a federal shutdown, including \$117B for HHS; the funding is approximately a 1% increase from fiscal year 2023.

HHS [released an updated list](#) of Medicare Part B-covered drugs capped by inflation rebates; the additions to the list are estimated to impact approximately 760K Medicare beneficiaries.

CMS released [a final rule](#), which aims to streamline the Medicaid and CHIP enrollment process by expanding the federal continuous eligibility requirement to 12 months; the new rule could [protect over 17M children from coverage disruptions](#).

The FDA [approved](#) Merck's new tab treatment for adults with high blood pressure resulting from constriction of lung arteries.





Healthcare law and policy news

[CMS reported](#) that over 21.4M consumers nationwide signed up for Marketplace coverage during the 2024 Open Enrollment Period (OEP), an approximately 31% increase compared to the 2023 OEP. The number of new consumers selecting Marketplace plans for 2024 grew by 5.2 million, or 41%.

According to a [Brookings Institution analysis of decisions](#) via the independent dispute resolution (IDR) process established by the No Surprises Act (NSA), median payouts across three categories of service (emergency care, imaging and neonatal and pediatric critical care) were 3.7x higher than the Medicare reimbursement rate.

Medicare spending on GLP-1s to treat diabetes increased dramatically over the past several years, from \$57M in 2018 to \$5.7B in 2022, prior to the recent expansion of Part D coverage to cardiovascular disease, according to [a KFF analysis of new Medicare Part D spending data](#).

Novo Nordisk to acquire Cardior (\$1.1B) to strengthen their cardiovascular disease treatment pipeline... [AstraZeneca to acquire Fusion Pharmaceuticals](#) (\$2.4B) to expand their targeted radiation therapies for cancer... UnitedHealth's [Optum Care to acquire physician group](#) Stewardship Health from Steward Health Care.

A [Lown Institute Hospital Index analysis](#) of over 2,400 nonprofit hospitals found 80% spent less on financial assistance and community investment than they received in tax breaks.

An [Annals of Internal Medicine study](#) found that state caps on insulin costs did not improve insulin uptake among privately insured patients with diabetes.

Moderna [secured \\$750M](#) from Blackstone Life Sciences to develop flu vaccines.



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