



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

Center for Healthcare Regulatory Insight



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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.



## Special Supplement: COVID-19 News

In light of the continuing daily volume of COVID-19 activity and news, we have summarized [COVID-19 news for the week in this special supplement](#).



## Healthcare regulatory news

HHS released its [Spring Regulatory Agenda](#) and [proposed rescinding](#) the Trump Administration requirement that community health centers pass insulin/epinephrine 340B discounts to patients.

HHS reported ACA special enrollment reached [1.2M enrollees](#) and more than 1M ACA consumers [pay \\$10 or less/month in premiums](#).

ONC [released draft data standards](#) for documenting [patient addresses](#) and announced [\\$80M to strengthen public health IT](#).

FDA established a [Generic Drug Cluster](#) to align global generic drug scientific/regulatory approaches.



## Healthcare law and policy news

The Supreme Court [reversed and remanded \(7-2\) a lower court ruling on the ACA's constitutionality](#)... Senate HELP Committee [advanced nominations](#) for ASPR and SAMHSA Directors.

Colorado [enacted legislation requiring insurers](#) to offer a standard plan that cuts premiums 15% over three years... Arkansas will [submit a revised Medicaid expansion plan](#) to CMS.

MedPAC [recommended](#) Medicare [streamline APMs](#) and eliminate/replace the SNF value-based purchasing program and reported that [Medicare Part D spending increased 26%](#) from 2013-2018.

A federal judge [denied HHS' request to dismiss](#) AstraZeneca's lawsuit over providing 340B discounts to contract pharmacies... The Justice Department [sued Paksn](#) for alleged physician kickbacks for SNF referrals... Mississippi [sued drug manufacturers/PBMs](#) over [insulin costs](#)... Centene will [pay \\$143M to settle allegations](#) of overcharging for Medicaid drugs.

Spectrum and Beaumont [plan to merge](#), creating a \$12B health system... Steward [will acquire five Tenet hospitals](#) (\$1.1B)... Humana [plans to acquire One Homecare Solutions](#)... Cano Health [acquired University Health Care](#) (\$600M)... Oschner [will acquire Rush](#)... Danaher [will acquire Aldebron](#) (\$9.6B)... GlaxoSmithKline will pay iTeos Therapeutics [up to \\$2.1B to co-develop an immune therapy](#)... Aetna, Cleveland Clinic, and HCSC [supported launch](#) of a startup using [blockchain to lower administrative costs](#) and improve interoperability... Anthem and Catalent [joined CivicaScript](#).

AAMC projected a [17,800-48,000 primary care physician shortage](#) by 2034... Johns Hopkins researchers found [26 of the top 100 revenue hospitals](#) filed nearly 39,000 lawsuits against patients over unpaid medical bills between 2018 and mid-2020.

Altarum reported that [April healthcare spending was up 32.4%](#) from last year and estimated that Alzheimer's drug Aduhelm would [constitute more than 1% of all national health spending](#) and raise total prescription drug spending 8% by the mid-2020s.

A study found that [83% of hospitals were noncompliant](#) with price transparency requirements.



Questions or comments, please send to [us-hcinsight@kpmg.com](mailto:us-hcinsight@kpmg.com).

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# COVID-19 News Supplement

Center for Healthcare Regulatory Insight



## COVID-19 by the Numbers

There are now [over 33.5 million confirmed COVID-19 cases](#) in the US, with a death toll of over 600,000.

315 million COVID-19 [vaccine doses have been administered](#) in the US (1.33M/day over the past week)... 176 million Americans ([62% of Americans 12 and older](#) and 87% of Americans 65 and older) have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine; 148 million Americans are fully vaccinated (52% of Americans 12 and older)... In 15 states, at least 70% of adults have received at least one vaccination dose; [four states have vaccinated fewer than 50% of the population](#), far short of President Biden's goal of reaching 70% vaccination rates by July 4... AMA reported that [96% of US physicians are fully vaccinated](#)... KFF projected that 65% of Americans 12 or older will have gotten at least one COVID-19 vaccine by July 4, including 70% of Asian individuals, 66% for White individuals [and just 63% and 51% of Hispanic and Black individuals](#), respectively.

A study found that the delta COVID-19 variant first identified in India [doubles the risk of hospitalization from COVID-19](#), as compared to the Alpha variant first identified in the UK... CDC classified the [delta variant as a "variant of concern."](#)

## Executive and Administrative Action

HHS [revised reporting requirements](#) for providers receiving one or more payments exceeding, in aggregate, \$10,000 in Provider Relief Fund payments, while [extending deadlines for use of the funds](#) depending on when funds were received.

The US government [purchased an additional 200 million doses of Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine](#), targeted for [use in children or as boosters](#)... the US will [donate an additional 1 million](#) Moderna doses to Canada.

HHS awarded [\\$125 million in workforce grants](#) to 14 nonprofit organizations to accelerate COVID-19 vaccinations in underserved communities.

The EU is [easing restrictions on travel to Europe](#) from the United States.

## Healthcare Regulatory News

CDC released [interim guidance on treating COVID-19 long-haulers](#), including recommending that a [broad spectrum of symptoms be considered](#) and that patient-centered care approaches be used to address quality of life and function.

## Healthcare Law, Business, and Policy News

FAIR Health found that [19% of patients with asymptomatic COVID-19 had at least one](#) post-COVID condition... AMA called for [policies to better diagnose and treat long-haul COVID-19](#).

A study found that [organ transplant recipients who received a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine](#) had higher antibody levels than after getting just two standard doses.

KFF reported that [unvaccinated adults are more likely to be uninsured](#) and have lower income... An African American Research Collaborative-Commonwealth Fund [survey found that vaccine hesitancy is roughly similar](#) across White, Black, Native American, and Hispanic individuals (40%); two-thirds of those surveyed reported more than one barrier to getting vaccinated... A Morning Consult survey found that [20% of Americans don't plan to get vaccinated](#), largely unchanged since March.

A Willis Towers Watson [survey found that 72% of businesses won't require COVID-19 vaccines](#) before employees can enter the workplace; of those business that will require vaccines, 56% will require documented proof of vaccination.

Amazon customers can [now purchase its COVID-19 test and access a diagnostic portal](#) previously available only to workers.

## Surveillance, Testing, and Treatment

The FDA ordered Johnson & Johnson to [dispose of 60 million doses of its COVID-19 vaccine](#) made at Emergent BioSolutions' Baltimore facility; FDA [has authorized](#) roughly [25 million doses of the vaccine to be released for use](#) in the United States or exported to other countries ... Emergent BioSolutions [detailed quality improvement steps](#) to prevent future contamination.

Novavax reported that its [COVID-19 vaccine was 90% effective against confirmed, symptomatic COVID-19](#) infection in a phase 3 trial; Novavax plans to apply for emergency use authorization in Q3... CureVac reported that its [COVID-19 vaccine is just 47% effective](#) against COVID-19 of any severity.

Pfizer is examining "breakthrough" [cases of fully vaccinated people contracting COVID-19](#) to determine whether and when a booster vaccine may be necessary.

A University of Oxford study found that [Regeneron's COVID-19 monoclonal antibody \(mAb\) therapy reduced the risk of death by 20% among hospitalized COVID-19 patients](#) who do not generate their own antibody response; the mAb is currently not authorized for use in hospitalized patients, although Regeneron plans to seek expanded use authorization... AstraZeneca reported that its [monoclonal antibody therapy failed to prevent symptomatic COVID-19](#).

The NIH will [spend \\$3B to develop](#) COVID-19 antiviral therapies... Pfizer reported that its [Xeljanz oral rheumatoid arthritis drug reduced death or respiratory failure](#) in hospitalized COVID-19 patients with pneumonia in Brazil.

NIH researchers found additional evidence to [suggest that COVID-19 was circulating in the US as early as December 2019](#).

Group of 7 leaders called for a ["timely, transparent, expert-led, and science-based" investigation](#) by the World Health Organization into the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic.