



## 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 by the KPMG Center for Healthcare Regulatory Insight and is intended to be short and succinct, less than 360 words, to provide a digestible bite of news relevant to our clients and practices. Links are provided to source material (proposed and final regulations, agency guidance and press releases, reports, research, etc.) when available.*

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#### Special Section: New Thought Leadership from the Center

The KPMG Center for Healthcare Regulatory Insight [released a paper on Monday](#) examining the evolution of Medicare alternative payment models (APMs) since passage of MACRA; barriers to more rapid model development; and ways to improve the Physician-focused Payment Model Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC) review process, including to align with CMS' vision for launching new APMs. An accompanying [Health Affairs](#) article raises questions about the current PTAC role in APM development.

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## Healthcare regulatory news

The [FDA requested feedback](#) on regulating premium cigars; Commissioner Scott Gottlieb indicated the agency [may try to regulate electronic cigarettes](#) as over-the-counter drugs...

Gottlieb also [announced efforts](#) to encourage healthy eating through consumer education and better food labeling... FDA [draft guidance](#) details how it will evaluate and list bulk drug substances used in compounding by outsourcing facilities.

The National Diabetes Prevention Program will be [available to all eligible Medicare beneficiaries](#) beginning April 1... HHS [may delay](#), for the fifth time, the effective date of a rule regulating 340B Medicaid drug discount program [ceiling prices and manufacturer civil monetary penalties](#).

CMS CCIIO Director Randy Pate [told state insurance commissioners](#) that CMS is working to revise guidance on ACA 1332 state innovation waivers, and [encouraged states to use \(subscription required\)](#) the enhanced direct enrollment process [detailed by CMS in February](#)... Congressional Democrats [requested that GAO study](#) the administrative costs associated with state 1115 Medicaid waivers that include work requirements.



## Healthcare law and policy news

CDC [reported](#) that the opioid epidemic “continues to worsen” based on analysis of 2016 drug overdose data... President Trump [announced](#) that he will nominate current White House physician, Admiral Ronny Jackson, to [replace David Shulkin](#) as VA Secretary.

Wal-Mart is in [early talks](#) to acquire Humana... Healthcare mergers and acquisition values have [reached more than \\$156 billion](#) this year, the most for a first quarter in over a decade; meanwhile, a [UC Berkeley study](#) found that highly concentrated markets are associated with higher prices for hospital and physician services, and ACA premiums... The [American Antitrust Institute told the Justice Department](#) that the proposed CVS-Aetna merger will “potentially harm competition and consumers” and “trigger a fundamental restructuring” of the healthcare system.

Takeda Pharmaceutical is [considering making a bid](#) to acquire Shire... Aetna [announced it would](#) pass on negotiated prescription drug discounts to about 3 million of its members... A Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee [minority report](#) concluded that the prices for the 20 most commonly prescribed prescription drugs increased 12% every year for the past five years, or ten times faster than inflation... A [JAMA study](#) found that nearly 40% of Americans were obese in 2015 and 2016, up 34% from a decade ago.



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



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