



## 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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### Healthcare regulatory news

CMS Administrator [Seema Verma announced](#) coming Medicaid program changes and defended Medicaid work requirements.... A [Department of Homeland Security proposed rule](#) would require immigrants seeking a change in status to demonstrate they have not received certain public benefits, including Medicaid. OIG [released a toolkit](#) to help State Medicaid Fraud Control Units (MFCUs) design statistical samples for calculating improper payment amounts and [reported that Medicare Advantage plans](#) may be improperly denying patient care.

[CMS projected](#) that MA enrollment will reach 22.6 million (36.7% of Medicare beneficiaries) in 2019 and that average premiums will decrease \$1.81 to \$28.



## Healthcare law and policy news

The House is expected to pass the [opioid epidemic package](#) today... after Senate passage next week, President Trump is expected to sign the bill, along with an [\\$854 billion spending bill](#) that includes FY2019 funding for HHS and [legislation to prevent](#) pharmacist “gag clauses.”

[Kaiser Family Foundation estimated](#) that premiums will increase an average of less than 5% nationally... HHS Secretary [Alex Azar credited Trump administration efforts](#) for benchmark plan premium decreases of 2% nationally... Average [ACA premium in Maryland](#) will decrease 13.2% next year... OPM reported that [premiums for federal employees and retirees](#) will increase an average of 1.5% in 2019.

[AARP reported](#) that brand drug prices increased an average of 8.4% in 2017; meanwhile [AP found](#) that there have been 16.5 drug price increases for every price cut since June following President Trump’s predicted cuts... Gilead [announced plans](#) to manufacture an authorized generic of their hepatitis C drugs, Harvoni and Epclusa.

Health Management Associates [will pay more than \\$260 million](#) to settle criminal healthcare fraud charges... UnitedHealth Group [informed 350 Envision hospitals](#) that they may be dropped from its network... United [purchased Genoa Healthcare](#) for \$2.5 billion... Aetna will [sell its Medicare Part D business](#) to WellCare to clear a path to approval of the CVS-Aetna merger.

CDC estimated that the [flu killed 80,000 Americans](#) last winter... *JAMA* studies found that [health data breaches increased](#) from 199 in 2010 to 344 in 2017 and that the [median cost for major drug trials](#) is \$19 million, less than 1% of the average total cost to develop new drugs.



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