October 23: The Academy signed on to an APRN Workgroup Letter to HHS Secretary Alex Azar commending the Administration on its Executive Order, Protecting and Improving Medicare for Our Nation's Seniors. Specifically, section 5 of the Executive Order would eliminate burdensome regulatory billing and supervision requirements that directly impact the ability of APRNs to practice to the full extent of their education and training. Read more.

November 5: The Academy signed on to a Friends of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and National WIC Association letter to appropriators requesting $90 million for the WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program in Fiscal Year 2020. Read more.

November 12: The Academy signed on to a letter, along with research organizations and patient groups representing the sleep, circadian, and sleep disorders community, sent to appropriators requesting critical funding increases for federal medical research focused on sleep, circadian, and sleep disorders. Read more.

National Academy of Medicine (NAM)

November 14-15: Educating Health Professionals to Address the Social Determinants of Mental Health: A Workshop
  - This workshop set the stage for discussions on how disparities can affect the mental health and well-being of patients, families, communities, and care providers across the learning continuum.

November 19: Developing Health Literacy Skills in Youth: A Workshop
As children and adolescents become increasingly involved with their own health care, regularly interact with the health system, and access information that informs their actions and behaviors, higher levels of health literacy will be key for positive health outcomes later in life.

- November 20: Future of Nursing 2020-2030 Technical Panel Webinar
  - This webinar will feature a discussion among health care industry leaders about how their organizations or members prioritize efforts to promote health equity into delivery and care models.

**NIH Seeks Director for NINR**

- The National Institutes of Health is seeking applications from exceptional candidates to be the next Director of the National Institute of Nursing Research. Learn more about the position [here](#).

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**Off the President's Desk**

- **Promise to Make Healthcare Prices More Transparent**
  On November 15, the President made remarks on how his Administration has worked to fulfill its promise to make healthcare prices more transparent. This includes two rules within HHS: one to require hospitals to make prices publicly available online and one to require insurance companies and group health plans to provide cost estimates to enrollees in advance of care.

**Around the Administration**

**Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)**

- **Toolkit to Improve Antibiotic Use in Acute Care Hospitals**
  - This newly-released toolkit guides users through a step-by-step approach for clinicians to achieve optimal antibiotic prescribing.
- **$16 Million in Grants to Address Unhealthy Alcohol Use**
  - AHRQ has awarded $16 million in grants to help primary care practices increase efforts to address patients' unhealthy alcohol use. Six grantees will work with more than 700 primary care practices over three years to implement and evaluate strategies.

**Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)**

- **Medicare Open Enrollment**
  - During Open Enrollment, people with Medicare have until December 7 to review their health and drug plan options. Re-enrollment and plan changes will take effect on January 1, 2020.
- **2020 Medicare Parts A & B Premiums and Deductibles**
On November 8, CMS released the 2020 premiums, deductibles, and coinsurance amounts for the Medicare Part A and Part B programs.

Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA)

- HRSA Debuts New Strategic Plan
- November 20, 2019: Virtual Job Fair for Rural Sites
  - HRSA Virtual Job Fairs are free online recruitment events that connect students and clinicians with health care delivery organizations.
- Funding Opportunity: FY 2020 Ending the HIV Epidemic: Primary Care HIV Prevention
  - Applications will be accepted through December 16, 2019.
- Funding Opportunity: Maternal and Child Health Public Health Catalyst Program
  - Applications will be accepted through January 8, 2020.

From the Federal Register

Final Rule

- CMS, HHS: Home Health Prospective Payment System Rate Update
  - This final rule with comment period updates the home health prospective payment system payment rates and wage index for 2020. This final rule also implements a change in payment cycles from a 60-day episodes of care to 30-day periods of care. This rule also modifies rates for various home health treatments for 2020 and 2021.

Congressional Hearings

Based on previous positions taken by the Academy, the following scan is meant for informational purposes and does not directly translate to Academy endorsement. Links provided allow you to watch the recordings and read witness testimony.

House Education & Labor

- October 17: Markup: H.R. 3, Lower Drug Costs Now Act of 2019
- October 22: Long Over Due: Exploring the Pregnant Workers’ Fairness Act (H.R. 2694)

House Energy & Commerce

- October 16: Legislation to Reverse the Youth Tobacco Epidemic
- October 23: Sabotage: The Trump Administration's Attack on Health Care
- November 19: Markup of 18 Bills, including H.R. 2339, H.R. 4995 & H.R. 4996

House Judiciary

- October 29: The Impact of Current Immigration Policies on Service Members and Veterans, and Their Families
House Oversight and Reform

- October 30: The Administration's Decision to Deport Critically Ill Children and Their Families
- November 14: Examining State Efforts to Undermine Access to Reproductive Health Care
- November 19: Toxic, Forever Chemicals: A Call for Immediate Federal Action on PFAS

House Science, Space & Technology

- October 15: Addressing the Lead Crisis Through Innovation and Technology
- November 20: Fighting Flu, Saving Lives: Vaccine Science and Innovation

House Veterans Affairs

- October 16: Broken Promises: Assessing VA's Systems for Protecting Veterans from Clinical Harm
- October 17: Women Veterans' Task Force Roundtable Discussion: Trends and Opportunities in Interdisciplinary Research Regarding Women Veterans
- October 22: Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee Hearing
- October 30: Native Veterans' Access to Healthcare
- November 20: Go-Live March 2020: The Status of EHRM Readiness

House Ways & Means

- October 17: Investing in the U.S. Health System by Lowering Drug Prices, Reducing Out-of-Pocket Costs, and Improving Medicare Benefits

Senate Armed Services

- November 20: Biological Threats to U.S. National Security
- December 4: Servicemember, Family, and Veteran Suicides and Prevention Strategies

Senate Finance

- October 24: Treating Substance Misuse in America: Scams, Shortfalls, and Solutions
- October 30: Medicaid: Compliance with Eligibility Requirements
- November 20: Alzheimer's Awareness: Barriers to Diagnosis, Treatment and Care Coordination

Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions

- October 31: Markup: S. 2619, S. 1399, S. 995, S. 1130, S. 1608, S. 2629 & S. 2740
- November 13: Examining the Response to Lung Illnesses and Rising Youth Electronic Cigarette Use

Senate Indian Affairs

- November 20: Recognizing the Sacrifice: Honoring a Nation's Promise to Native Veterans

Senate Special Committee on Aging

- October 16: Falls Prevention: National, State, and Local Solutions to Better Support Seniors
- November 1: Alzheimer's and Other Cognitive Diseases: An Arizona Perspective
- November 6: Veteran Scams: Protecting Those Who Protected Us
Legislative Schedule

The House is in session until November 21 and resumes session on December 3. The Senate is in session through November 22 and resumes session on December 2. Both chambers will have a District Work Period the week of the Thanksgiving Holiday, November 25-29.