

# CAPITOL STREET

---

April 17, 2026

## Health Policy Peek: Week of April 20-24

### GLP-1 Demo Deadline, HHS Budget & PBM Hearings, IRA Negotiation (2028) Town Hall

#### ICYMI

**Three HHS Hearings Down, Four to Go:** The President's FY27 budget request released April 3 (HHS Budget in Brief [here](#)) focuses on MA fraud and abuse (RADV), speeding first in human trials (FDA), as well as a more modest NIH cut (which is unlikely to happen). House hearings this past week centered on MAHA-focused chronic disease prevention, nutrition policy, FWA enforcement in the ACA exchange and Medicaid, MA overpayments, breakthrough device Medicare coverage (our take [here](#)), and FDA's innovation leadership. While White House budgets are purely aspirational, they provide a glimpse into the administration's priorities. See our analysis of the budget [here](#).

#### ANY DAY NOW

**CVS FTC Agreement/Settlement:** A proposed [settlement](#) with CVS Caremark was reached in March, with formal details TBA imminently. The FTC final 6B report may be delayed to post CVS and UNH announcements, or Spring/Summer 2026.

**OUR TAKE:** We expect CVS and UNH settlements to mirror the CI agreement from [February](#), including transparency requirements, access to TrumpRx, focus on net pricing, and domestic onshoring of GPOs (for UNH), with compliance by Jan 1, 2028. We note that provisions included in the settlement reflect Administration priorities including expansion of TrumpRx, onshoring GPOs and formulary transparency. We expect the FTC to continue to use these settlements to advance broader policy priorities as Trump looks to highlight wins with the upcoming midterms.

#### MON, APRIL 20

**BALANCE GLP-1 Model Part D Plan Participation Deadline ([here](#)):** By April 20, Part D plans must tell CMS whether they will participate in the BALANCE model, coverage of GLP-1s for obesity in Medicare starting Jan 2027. CMS will then notify plans of whether CMS will move forward with implementation by April 30. If health plans covering 80% of all Medicare beneficiaries don't opt in, the government may opt to delay BALANCE to 2028.

**OUR TAKE:** We are likely not to hear anything concrete this week. If the 80% Part D beneficiary threshold is not met, BRIDGE may extend into 2027. Medicare coverage in 2026 via BRIDGE coverage will start July 1 regardless of Part D plan participation as CMS will manage prior auth and claims *outside* of the Part D benefit. However, for BALANCE in 2027, CMS may struggle to meet the Part D participation threshold (by April 20, 2026) as plans have limited visibility into costs and other key details required for bid purposes (our take [here](#)).

## TUES, APRIL 21

**House Hearing on HHS Budget Featuring RFKJ ([here](#)):** The House Energy & Commerce Health Subcommittee (Chair Griffith, R-VA) will hold a 10 a.m. hearing on the FY27 HHS Budget. HHS Secretary RFK Jr. will testify.

**Senate Hearing on HHS Budget Featuring RFKJ ([here](#)):** The Senate Appropriations Labor-HHS Subcommittee (Chair Moore Capito, R-WV) will hold a 2:30 p.m. hearing on the FY27 HHS Budget. HHS Secretary RFK Jr. will testify.

## WED, APRIL 22

**Senate Hearing on HHS Budget Featuring RFKJ ([here](#)):** The Senate Finance Committee (Chair Crapo, R-ID) will hold a 10 a.m. hearing on the FY27 HHS Budget. HHS Secretary RFK Jr. will testify.

**House Hearing on PBMs ([here](#)):** The House Energy & Workforce Health Subcommittee (Chair Allen, R-GA) will hold a 10:15 a.m. hearing on "Profits Over Patients - The PBM Business Model Under Scrutiny."

**OUR TAKE:** We note that vertical integration is the new focus as lawmakers already passed a PBM reform package earlier this year and the FTC settlements are slowly trickling out (our take [here](#)). Bills that seek to break up PBM entities are not expected to gain traction this year, but we expect to see the federal government continue to focus on the financial incentives of vertically integrated entities. PBM reform fits the legislative "affordability" narrative and remains a headline risk, with potential inclusion in reconciliation. The Dept. of Labor PBM disclosure proposed [rule](#) comments were due April 15th, with a final rule expected later this year.

**Senate Hearing on HHS Budget Featuring RFKJ ([here](#)):** The Senate HELP Committee (Chair Cassidy, R-LA) will hold a 2 p.m. hearing on the FY27 HHS Budget. HHS Secretary RFK Jr. will testify.

## APRIL 22-23

**CMS IRA Drug Negotiation (2028) Town Hall ([here](#)):** CMS will hold a public town hall meeting as part of the third round of the Medicare Drug Price Negotiation Program. Drugs up for discussion include Anoro Ellipta, Biktarvy, Botox, Botox Cosmetic, Rexulti, Kisqali, Verzenio, Erleada, Lenvima, Xolair, Cosentyx, Orencia, Xeljanz, Xeljanz XR, Cimzia, Entyvio, Trulicity, and Tradjenta (renegotiation).

**OUR TAKE:** CMS will send an initial offer of a maximum fair price for a selected drug by June 1, 2026. Manufacturers have already submitted product-specific data to CMS for consideration in the negotiation or renegotiation of a maximum fair price. Overall, Trump has signaled he will seek better (i.e., lower) negotiated prices for drugs under IRA. However, CMS will likely remain more flexible on pricing for drugs with few alternatives. MFN and TrumpRx prices could complicate negotiations because they may be considered as a new domestic price reference point. Looking forward, we are also waiting on 2029 negotiation proposed rules which could be released any day now. MFN efforts so far have focused on CMMI demos (GLOBE, GUARD, GENEROUS). CMS could formally propose the inclusion of MFN prices as negotiation factors; however, it will draw significant pushback as it is not included in the law. It is unlikely to be implemented as it leaves the admin open to be sued for overstepping their statutory authority (Loper Bright).

**TUES, APRIL 28**

**House Hearing Featuring Hospital CEOs ([here](#)):** The House Ways and Means Committee will hold a hearing on the role health systems play in rising healthcare costs.

**OUR TAKE:** Hospitals have increasingly come under scrutiny in the healthcare affordability debate (our take [here](#)). In January, the nation's largest insurers pointed to hospitals as a primary driver of high health costs (our take [here](#)). The upcoming hearing will likely focus on consolidation incentives and whether hospital mergers improve care or reduce costs. Site-neutral payment policy is moving along as CMS decided to pilot site-neutral for physician administered drugs in 2026 (our take [here](#)). We could also see site-neutral policy on the table in a 2027 payment rule. Invited CEOs represent **HCA, NY Presbyterian, CommonSpirit** and **ECU Health**, though the final witness list has not been confirmed.

## **ON THE HORIZON**

- NBPP (Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameters) final rule 2027 (**any day now**)
- CMS IRA drug negotiation proposed rule for 2029 (**imminent**)
- CVS & UNH FTC Agreements/Settlements (**1H 2026**)
- FTC PBM 6B study final report (**may not be released for some time due to pending FTC settlements with CVS & UNH**)
- DOL final rule on PBMs (**late Spring/Summer 2026**)
- CMS launch of BALANCE model in Medicaid (**May 2026**)
- ITC Hearing on Chinese state support and pricing practices in biotech (**May 27-28, 2026**)
- Sec. 232 report on medical devices due to White House (**May 30, 2026**)
- Deadline for CMS to send an initial offer for 2028 selected drug (**June 1, 2026**)
- CMS first biannual HCPCS coding meeting (**June 1, 2026**)
- FDA hearing on Commissioner's National Priority Voucher (CNPV) Pilot Program (**June 12, 2026**)
- CDC ACIP meeting (**June 24-26, 2026**)
- CMS proposed CY27 Outpatient Hospital/ASC, PFS, Home Health, & ESRD rules (**Early July 2026**)
- CMS launch of Medicare GLP-1 Bridge in Medicare (**July 1, 2026**)
- USMCA joint review (**July 1, 2026**)
- CMS final FY27 Inpatient Hospital/LTCH, Psych, IRF, SNF, & Hospice rules (**August 2026**)
- Start of FY 2027 (**Oct. 1, 2026**)
- CMS launch of GLOBE model in Medicare Part B (**Oct. 1, 2026**)
- CDC ACIP meeting (**Oct. 21-23, 2026**)
- CMS final CY27 Outpatient Hospital/ASC, PFS, Home Health, & ESRD rules (**Early-Nov, 2026**)
- Deadline for CMS to publish 2028 negotiated maximum fair prices (**Nov. 30, 2026**)
- Mid-term elections (**Nov. 3, 2026**)
- CMS CY2027 Clinical Lab Fee Schedule (**Late-December 2026**)
- CMS launch of BALANCE model in Medicare Part D (**January 2027**)
- CMS launch of GUARD model in Medicare Part D (**Jan. 1, 2027**)
- CMS MFP Effective for 2027 Selected Drugs (**Jan. 1, 2027**)
- FDA PDUFA and MDUFA reauthorization deadline (**Oct. 1, 2027**)

## **CMS Coverage Decisions**

- CMS Final NCD on Biomarker Tests for Colorectal Cancer Screening (**June 8, 2026**)
- CMS Draft NCD on TAVR for Asymptomatic Patients (EW) (**June 15, 2026**)
- CMS Final NCD on TAVR for Asymptomatic Patients (EW) (**Sept. 13, 2026**)

---

**Ipsita Smolinski**  
**Managing Director | Capitol Street**  
ipsita@capitol-street.com

900 19th St NW 6th Fl  
Washington, D.C. 20006

202.250.3741 | www.capitol-street.com

**CAPITOL STREET**

---

**Copyright 2026 Capitol Street.**

*This communication, including this broadcast and any attachments hereto, is intended solely for the original recipient(s) and may not be redistributed without the written consent of Capitol Street. This communication is for informational purposes only and is not intended as an offer or solicitation for the purchase or sale of any financial instruments, nor is it intended as advice to purchase or sell such instruments*