

## Viewpoints

### ML Strategies Health Care Preview

WEEK OF MARCH 4, 2019

This week, Congressional oversight of prescription drug prices will continue with two hearings in the Senate Special Committee on Aging, which is led by Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) and Bob Casey (D-PA). The hearings will offer a patient perspective as well as the perspective of experts in the field. The Aging Committee does not typically headline major drug pricing hearings, but they have played a key role in this issue before, namely the 2015-2016 bipartisan investigation into [dramatic price increases](#) of several pharmaceutical companies.

Meanwhile, Senator Wyden, Ranking Member of the Finance Committee, is expected to send formal letters to pharmaceutical executives following last week's hearing asking whether [they would support](#) legislation mandating lower list prices equal to the amount of rebates provided today. As oversight intensifies, the question remains what kind of legislation beyond the CREATES Act will receive strong bipartisan support.

The Senate Finance Committee, led by Chairman Grassley, will examine this week the treatment of aging Americans at nursing homes. This comes on the heels of an [explosive report](#) out of an Arizona nursing home alleging abuse. Questions will also be raised about the access to nursing home care [in rural America](#), and how to balance the growing trend of receiving care in the community when nursing home treatment is still necessary for many. With the Older Americans Act up for reauthorization, insight into these issue could inform new legislative efforts.

#### **SURPRISE BILLING**

An issue receiving bipartisan interest deals with [surprise billing](#), which often occurs during emergency care when patients are taken to out-of-network hospitals or see out-of-network specialists. The Senate working group, which consists of Senators Bill Cassidy (R-LA), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Tom Carper (D-DE), and others, sought information from stakeholders and expect a bill to be released sometime this month.

We will continue following this issue as it could receive a hearing in the Senate HELP Committee.

#### **HOUSE HEARINGS**

E&C – Legislation to Lower Consumer Costs and Expand Access.” ([Wed @ 10am](#))

W&M – Promoting Competition to Lower Medicare Drug Prices ([Thurs @ 10am](#))

#### **SENATE HEARINGS**

HELP – “What is Driving Preventable Disease Outbreaks?” ([Tues @ 10am](#))

Aging – Patients Struggling with Rising Costs ([Wed @ 9:30am](#))

Aging – Untangling the Web and Paths Forward, Pt 2 ([Thurs @ 10am](#))

Finance – Protecting Americans from Abuse and Neglect in Nursing Homes ([Wed @ 10:15am](#))

[MEDPAC](#) & [MACPAC](#)  
PUBLIC MEETINGS THIS WEEK

#### **SIGN UP**

[MLSDCHealth@mintz.com](mailto:MLSDCHealth@mintz.com)

#### **TEAM**

Alex Hecht  
Rep. Frank Guinta  
Connie Garner  
Aaron Josephson  
Kate Josephson  
Eli Greenspan