



Around the world of US healthcare in 360 words or less



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Editor's note

This series is produced by KPMG Healthcare and is intended to be short and succinct, less than 360 words, to provide a weekly digestible bite of healthcare regulatory, policy, and industry news relevant to our clients. Links are provided to source material (proposed and final regulations, agency guidance and press releases, reports, research, etc.) when available. Please share this email with colleagues and other interested individuals, and encourage them to [subscribe to our mailing list here](#).

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Healthcare regulatory news

CMS reversed its decision to pause all Medicare payments to providers as the government shutdown continues, noting that it will only hold on processing claims related to programs for which payment provisions expired, including telehealth and certain rural services.

President Donald Trump's recent [executive order](#) adapts the federal hiring authority strategy, including at HHS, shifting decisions to agency leaders and appointees. Agencies must form Strategic Hiring Committees to approve all hires, develop Annual Staffing Plans aligned with administration priorities, and report progress quarterly to ensure accountability and workforce alignment.

FDA [announced](#) the first nine recipients of its new Commissioner's National Priority Voucher (CNPV) pilot program, which offers expedited drug review within 1-2 months for products addressing key national health priorities like unmet medical needs, public health crises, domestic manufacturing, and affordability.

Roche Diagnostics' Elecsys pTau181 blood test [received](#) FDA clearance, developed in partnership with Eli Lilly, to help primary care physicians rule out Alzheimer's disease in adults aged 55 and older showing cognitive symptoms. The test measures a key biomarker linked to Alzheimer's and supports early assessment, enabling more timely, targeted referrals for further evaluation.



Healthcare law and policy news

HHS has begun [rehiring](#) staff that were initially issued reduction-in-force notices during the federal government shutdown, many of which included critical teams involved in disease surveillance and outbreak responses. Former CDC officials and staff [warn](#) that these abrupt cuts, coupled with a lack of transparency, threaten the agency's ability to respond effectively to ongoing public health emergencies and daily health threats.

California Governor Gavin Newsom signed several healthcare reforms targeting system access and accountability. [Senate Bill 306](#) phases out prior authorization for high-approval services starting in 2028, while [Senate Bill 351](#), effective January 1, 2026, limits private equity and hedge fund influence on medical decisions and bans clinician noncompete clauses.

Humana [lost](#) its second legal challenge against CMS regarding the decrease of its 2025 MA star ratings, potentially costing the company billions of dollars in bonus payments tied to the star ratings. Humana [reportedly](#) intends to pursue all available legal options and focus on improving its ratings.



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