Week Ahead: Election Impact Conference; Medicaid Conference, Ebola Response & the Health Impact of Climate Change

The mid-term elections on Tuesday are the primary focus ahead of lawmakers' return next week for a lame duck session. On Thursday, CQ Roll Call is holding a post-election impact conference. Scheduled speakers include notable political insiders and CQ Roll Call reporters and editors.

For those interested in a respite from post-election analysis, the National Association of Medicaid Directors this week hosts a conference on the Medicaid program. The conference begins on Tuesday with an address from Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell. However, the election also impacts the Medicaid program. CQ HealthBeat's (@CQHealthTweet) Rebecca Adams reported (subscription) last week that the election results for state governors’ races could stall or expedite plans for a further Medicaid expansion into states that have not taken advantage of federal funding enticements to expand eligibility for Medicaid program.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science on Tuesday holds a discussion on the work of individuals and governments in West Africa in containing the Ebola virus outbreak. Also on Tuesday, the Center for Global Development hosts a panel discussion on challenges relating to efforts to fight drug-resistant Tuberculosis. Separately, a Society for International Development panel will discuss efforts to engage women as a means to foster stronger health care systems and improved health outcomes.

Meanwhile, a two-day conference begins today at the National Academy of Sciences examines scientific models on the health risks of climate change. The sessions will be webcast and follows the release this weekend of a new UN report on the dire consequences of climate change.

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Economist: Economic Woes of Ebola in West Africa; Drug Manufacturers Expedite Work on Vaccines

The Ebola crisis is ravaging the economies of the Ebola stricken West African countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. The Economist magazine this week reports that the World Bank estimates the cost to the region at $33 billion over the next 18 months. Prices of food and some basic products have doubled but some commodity-based businesses have been able to continue to export products.

The Economist also reports on drug manufacturers redoubling efforts to produce an Ebola vaccine. The World Health Organization has partnered with GlaxoSmithKline and a U.S. firm, NewLink Genetics, to expedite work on a vaccine. The drugs will be ready for testing in Africa by the end of the year. Also, Johnson & Johnson announced announced last week that it will begin human trials in January on a separate vaccine.