



Healthcare

What’s ahead for Healthcare: Key Policy Issues

With unified Republican leadership across the White House and Congress, a host of right-leaning healthcare policies could be on the table, with a strong chance of passing. President-elect Donald Trump and GOP allies in Congress seem poised to reduce overall spending on federal healthcare programs, making the cost savings an attractive “pay for” for the Trump administration’s tax ambitions. Republicans may aim to decrease the federal share of Medicaid costs and introduce work requirements. While Trump has walked back earlier promises to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA), he will likely target specific areas of the law for reform, including letting federal subsidies expire and pushing for fewer benefit requirements from participating health plans.

Key Leadership in Congress and the Trump Administration

119th Congress

On the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA) will likely replace Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) as chair, with Sanders shifting to ranking member. The current chair of the House Energy & Commerce Committee’ Health Subcommittee, Rep. Brett Guthrie (R-KY), is vying for chair of the overall committee; if he succeeds, there will be a competitive race for leadership of the Health Subcommittee.

Trump Administration

Trump has nominated activist and former third-party presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy (RFK), Jr. as Secretary of Health and Human Services. Former TV personality Dr. Mehmet Oz has been nominated to be administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), with former Rep. Dave Weldon (R-FL), a physician, nominated for director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and surgeon Dr. Marty Makary named to lead the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The Trump Administration’s Priorities for 2025

Trump and his allies’ healthcare policy priorities focus on addressing the fact that Americans pay more for healthcare than other nations, despite experiencing worse health outcomes. The administration will focus on individual control over healthcare decisions, lowering the Medicare cost burden by expanding Medicare Advantage options, and increasing price transparency across all healthcare sectors.

Spotlight: “Make America Healthy Again”

The "Make America Healthy Again" campaign, led by RFK Jr., blends more mainstream views on policing food additives and expanding health savings accounts with conspiracy-tinged ideas about corruption within the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), fluoride in water and vaccine recommendations. RFK Jr. has two primary goals that are likely to create unpredictability for corporations: 1) shifting the government’s focus from enabling sick care to addressing root causes of chronic disease, and 2) separating food and pharmaceutical corporate interests from the government agencies that regulate them. Increased public debate about the safety of vaccine and pharmaceutical science, could cause more confusion among consumers and patients on what to believe and who to trust when it comes to their healthcare, leading to a continued erosion of confidence in science, research and “expert” opinion.

