

Senate Votes to Approve RFK Nomination for HHS Secretary. The full Senate voted 52-48 primarily along party lines to advance President Trump's nominee for Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. Mitch McConnell (R-KY) was the lone Republican to vote no.

CAQH Releases 2024 Index Report. CAQH has released its 2024 Index Report tracking health plan and provider adoption of electronic administrative transactions. The CAQH Index is representative of the medical and dental industry as well as pharmacy services. Key findings from the 2024 CAQH Index include:

- **\$90 billion:** The annual cost of routine administrative tasks like checking insurance.
- **\$20 billion:** The savings opportunity if the industry transitions from manual to electronic workflows—reducing waste and allowing providers to focus on patient care.
- **70 minutes:** The average time saved per patient visit when healthcare providers use fully automated administrative workflows, improving both efficiency and the patient experience.

Go [here](#) to download the Report.

Trump Administration Publishes RFI on AI Action Plan. The Administration has [published](#) a Request for Information (RFI) in the *Federal Register* entitled “Request for Information on the Development of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Action Plan.” The RFI was released through the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development (NITRD) National Coordination Office (NCO), National Science Foundation, on behalf of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). The AI Action Plan seeks to “define the priority policy actions needed to sustain and enhance America’s AI dominance, and to ensure that unnecessarily burdensome requirements do not hamper private sector AI innovation.” OSTP is further seeking “input on the highest priority policy actions that should be in the new AI Action Plan.” The public can submit comments until March 15.

Bill Introduced to Permit AI to Prescribe Drugs. Rep. David Schweikert (R-Ariz.) has introduced [legislation](#) in the U.S. House of Representatives entitled Healthy Technology Act of 2025 (H.R. 238). The bill seeks to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to clarify that Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning technologies can qualify as a practitioner eligible to prescribe drugs if authorized by the state involved and approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Rep. Schweikert's bill has been referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, although it remains to be seen how far the legislation will advance through the legislative process.

CISA and Partners Publish Edge Device Guidance. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), in partnership with US and international organizations – has published [guidance](#) to assist organizations protect their network edge devices and appliances. These include firewalls, routers, virtual private networks

(VPN) gateways, Internet of Things (IoT) devices, internet-facing servers, and internet-facing operational technology (OT) systems. The published guidance includes: (i) [Security Considerations for Edge Devices](#); (ii) [Digital Forensics Monitoring Specifications for Products of Network Devices and Applications](#); and (iii) [Mitigation Strategies for Edge Devices: Executive Guidance](#)” and “[Mitigation Strategies for Edge Devices: Practitioner Guidance](#). These guidance documents outline considerations and strategies that allow organizations to develop a more secure and resilient network both before and after a compromise.

KLAS Research Announces 2025 Software Award Winners. KLAS Research, [announced](#) that Epic, athenahealth, Chartis and Evergreen Healthcare Partners have won the 2025 Overall Best in KLAS® awards. The 2025 Best in KLAS Software & Services awards recognize the leading vendors for solutions, services and management consulting offered to providers and payers in the United States in 2024. The [2025 Best in KLAS– Global Software report](#), released concurrently in a separate report, recognize the leading software and services organizations that served the global healthcare market in 2024 outside the United States.

New Administration Suspends HITAC Meetings. The Trump administration has indefinitely canceled meetings of the Health Information Technology Advisory Committee (HITAC), an advisory panel that helps the federal government establish rules and standards for the use of healthcare data and technologies.

The HITAC was established by the 21st Century Cures Act, was enacted in 2016 and began having its first public meetings in 2018.

A memo sent out to HITAC members last Wednesday on behalf of Seth Pazinski, director of the Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Analysis for the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC), announced that all HITAC meetings, including full committee meetings and task force and work group meetings, are canceled "until further notice." Fierce Healthcare reviewed a copy of the memo.

Study Examines Health Plan Collection of SDOH Data. In a study [published](#) in *Health Affairs Scholar*, researchers examined the issue of health plan collection and reporting of Social Determinants of Health (SDOH).data. In 2023, a convenience sample of HEDIS-reporting health plans were recruited by email to participate in 2 qualitative studies to assess the feasibility of collecting and reporting SDOH quality measures. Eight health plans serving Medicare, Medicaid, and commercial populations in the South, Midwest, and Mid-Atlantic regions participated in the 2 studies. The results suggest that although plans reported that collecting SDOH data was feasible, they identified barriers associated with multiple data systems, coding, as well as data formatting, storage, extraction, and mapping.