



Healthcare Issues Raised in the 2026 State of the Union

WellLink Health Alliance appreciates the opportunity to reflect on the healthcare priorities outlined by President Donald Trump during his February 24 State of the Union address. While healthcare represented a relatively brief portion of the speech, the issues below raised significant implications for providers and the communities they serve.

Affordability and the Future of Coverage

The President reiterated concerns regarding the Affordable Care Act and the expiration of enhanced premium subsidies. As policymakers consider next steps, coverage stability remains foundational to individual health and community well-being. Any changes to federal healthcare financing structures should prioritize continuity of coverage, affordability for working families, and safeguards against unintended coverage losses. Efforts to increase transparency and address rising out-of-pocket costs are important. However, reforms must ensure that consumers and providers are not exposed to increased financial risk or market instability.

Prescription Drug Pricing

The launch of TrumpRx reflects continued federal focus on prescription drug affordability, including proposals to align certain drug prices with international benchmarks. Drug pricing reforms should be implemented with careful consideration of supply chain stability, patient access, and the long-term sustainability of innovation and clinical research.

Medicaid Program Oversight

The President's remarks on Medicaid fraud underscore the importance of program integrity. Medicaid serves as a critical safety-net program for children, seniors, people with disabilities, and low-income families. Strengthening oversight mechanisms is appropriate and necessary; however, fraud prevention efforts must be balanced to avoid disrupting legitimate services or creating administrative burdens that impede access to care.

Medicare and Retirement Security

The President reaffirmed a commitment to Medicare and Social Security and announced a proposal to expand access to retirement savings plans with employer matching. Economic security and healthcare access are deeply interconnected. Financial stability in retirement directly influences health outcomes, medication adherence, and utilization of preventive services.

Economic Policy, Tariffs, and Healthcare Impact

The administration's newly imposed tariffs and broader economic policies may have downstream effects on healthcare supply chains, medical devices, pharmaceuticals, and hospital operations. Healthcare providers continue to face cost pressures related to labor, supplies, and reimbursement changes. Policymakers should closely monitor how trade and tax policy intersect with healthcare delivery to avoid unintended consequences that could affect patient care.

Federal Tax Policy and Hospital Sustainability

The 2026 Federal Tax Relief and Budget Act (HR 1, OBBBA) and related tax changes are projected to influence both household finances and healthcare revenue streams. Reports projecting significant reductions in hospital revenue tied to coverage and eligibility changes warrant careful consideration. Financial stability among hospitals, particularly rural and safety-net providers, is essential to maintaining access to care across communities.

Conclusion

Healthcare affordability, coverage stability, prescription drug pricing, and program integrity remain bipartisan priorities. WellLink Health Alliance stands ready to work with federal and state leaders to strengthen the healthcare system while ensuring equitable access to care. Sustained collaboration among policymakers, providers, and patients will be critical to translating high-level policy proposals into measurable improvements in health outcomes for the communities we serve.