



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for February 22, 2020

CDC Preparing for Likely Spread of COVID-19 in US

(USA Today) Health experts sounded the alarm Friday over the worldwide threat of the coronavirus, with officials warning of its "likely" community spread in the United States and the World Health Organization cautioning that "the window of opportunity is narrowing" for containing the outbreak worldwide.

The [COVID-19 coronavirus](#), which erupted in China in December, [has killed at least 2,360 people and sickened at least 77,900](#) worldwide, the majority of cases in mainland China.

Dr. Nancy Messonnier, director of the CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, told reporters Friday that U.S. health officials are preparing for the coronavirus to become a pandemic. CDC is working with state and local health departments "to ready our public health workforce to respond to local cases." These measures include collaboration with supply chain partners, hospitals, pharmacies and manufacturers to determine what medical supplies are needed.

35 cases of coronavirus in the US

The CDC reported that at least 35 people in the United States are infected with the virus. Of those, 14 were travelers who fell ill after returning from a trip abroad, while 21 were people "repatriated" by the State Department.

Messonnier, of the CDC, said more infections are expected from among passengers on the Diamond Princess cruise ship and are in quarantine.

She said they are "they are considered at high risk for infection" because they may have come in contact with infected persons on the ship.

Coronavirus on cruise ships: 11 of 13 Diamond Princess evacuees taken to Nebraska test positive

Read a lot more: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2020/02/21/coronavirus-who-contain-outbreak-iran-deaths-south-korea-cases/4829278002/>

More than half of S. Korea's 430 cases are tied to controversial "cult-like" Shincheonji Church of Jesus

(From Newser) More than half of the infected patients there are tied to the Shincheonji Church of Jesus, what the [New York Times](#) calls a "shadowy" group that's been called a cult by mainstream churches. More than 1,250 other Shincheonji church members are said to have coronavirus-like symptoms, and it's worrisome to health officials because the group reportedly forbids its members to wear face masks and expects them to come to church and evangelize even when they're sick. "We were taught not to be afraid of illness," a former member tells the *Times*.

Read more: <https://www.newser.com/story/287289/coronavirus-in-s-korea-swirls-around-cult-church.html>

MIT researchers use artificial intelligence and report a breakthrough A Powerful New Antibiotic Is Found in a Novel Way

(Newser) The [rise of superbugs](#) means the world needs powerful new antibiotics. A team [at MIT](#) says it has just made a major breakthrough using artificial intelligence for the first time. They discovered a compound that looks able to conquer some of the most dangerous bacteria in existence, including some that are resistant to current antibiotics. The scientists named it "halicin," after the computer HAL in *2001: A Space Odyssey*. The discovery came after researchers created a machine-learning algorithm to assess volumes of data about bacteria-killing molecules. Crucially, they looked for compounds that worked but were different from existing antibiotics, notes the [Guardian](#), thus raising the chances that the resulting drugs would fight bugs in novel ways. Essentially, the algorithm thought outside the box in looking for candidates.

Read more: <https://www.newser.com/story/287261/a-powerful-new-antibiotic-is-found-in-a-novel-way.html>

Governor Andy Beshear signs bill requiring Kentucky school resource officers to carry firearms

(KyForward News) Gov. Andy Beshear signed into law Friday the school safety bill that will require school resource officers to be armed.

"Our children deserve to feel safe and be safe in their schools," Beshear said of the bill that passed by the General Assembly earlier this month by overwhelming margins.

Beshear acknowledged some people objected to the bill because of the armed SRO requirement. "I simply cannot ask a school resource officer to stop an armed gunman entering a school without them having the ability to not only achieve this mission but also to protect themselves. "We must be able to stop the worst of the worst."

The school safety efforts intensified because of the 2018 shooting at Marshall County High School in western Kentucky, where two 15-year-old students, Bailey Holt and Preston Cope, were killed and more than a dozen others were injured when another student opened fire.

Full story: <https://www.kyforward.com/governor-andy-beshear-signs-bill-requiring-kentucky-school-resource-officers-to-carry-firearms/>

AHA launches initiative to address gun violence

The American Hospital Association (AHA), through its *Hospitals Against Violence* initiative, has launched a new webpage to support hospitals and health systems' efforts to combat the public health issue of gun violence. [Read more.](#)

Flu Kills Graduate Student Who Tried to Call 911

Read story: <https://www.newser.com/story/287234/flu-kills-graduate-student-who-tried-to-call-911.html>

Kentucky Flu Update is attached as PDF document.

Though flu activity still high, CDC notes decreases in some flu markers

([CIDRAP News](#)) After a month-long rise, US flu levels dropped last week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said today in its weekly FluView report. But most regions are still experiencing elevated influenza activity, and 13 more pediatric deaths were recorded, raising the 2019-20 flu season total to 105.

Some flu markers, including rates of outpatient visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) dropped last week, to 6.1%, compared with the previous week's 6.7%. The percentage of specimens positively identified as influenza also dropped slightly, from 30.8% to 29.6%.

The number of jurisdictions reporting high ILI activity remained the same as noted last week, 46. The number of jurisdictions reporting regional or widespread flu dropped from 51 to 48.

Ky. Grants \$1 Million to Cleanup Illegal Dump

(WFPL) Kentucky's Energy and Environment Cabinet has awarded nearly \$1 million to 21 counties to cleanup 121 illegal dumps across the state. The cabinet has awarded the funds annually through the Illegal Open Dump Grant Program since 2006. Counties need only provide a 25 percent match to receive the grants.



The dumps can be smaller than the size of an average bedroom or spread over several miles, as is the case with the largest illegal dump in Owsley. Most of what's found is typically household waste — any serious chemical contamination is referred to the state's hazardous waste branch.

Counties receiving grants are Breathitt, Butler, Calloway, Estill, Green, Hart, Henderson, Johnson, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Lincoln, Logan, Magoffin,

Marion, Mercer, Metcalfe, Owsley, Pike, Warren and Wolfe.

Full story: <https://wfpl.org/ky-grants-1-million-to-cleanup-illegal-dumps/amp/>

Gov. Beshear calls for 350 more social workers in Kentucky

(WHAS-11) According to the governor, the added workers will allow the state to reduce caseloads per social worker and help retain existing social workers across the state.

During his budget address in January, Gov. Beshear said he intends to increase Department of Community Based Services funding to hire the additional social workers along with other support positions in the Child Protection Branch.

Learn more: <https://www.whas11.com/article/news/politics/gov-beshear-calls-for-350-more-social-workers-in-kentucky/417-53de2e0c-43a9-415f-9397-23520f02f54f>

The KHREF Emergency Preparedness Update is assembled several times a week. When events make it necessary, the Update may be sent out several times a day to keep our hospital and the healthcare community advised on preparedness news and information. Most of this information is compiled from open sources, and where possible reference links will be provided. There is an archive of [Emergency Preparedness Updates available here](#). If you would like to add or delete, or have something you would like to contribute to a future edition of the Emergency Preparedness Update, please contact rbartlett@kyha.com (include your current email address). The preparedness program for the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) and KHREF are supported by US DHHS ASPR HPP funds through a contract with Kentucky Public Health.