Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation
Emergency Preparedness Update
for March 13, 2020

Governor confirms three new cases of COVID-19

(Governor's Office) Today, Gov. Andy Beshear confirmed Kentucky has at least three new coronavirus (COVID-19) cases, with new cases in Montgomery and Jefferson counties, and said all 172 school districts in the state will close to stop the spread of the virus. Gov. Beshear also said his administration issued guidance to state agencies to allow telecommuting where possible to decrease on-site staffing by up to 50 percent to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Full press release: https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=90

CBS Coronavirus updates:
Stocks surge as Trump declares national emergency amid pandemic

On Friday, President Trump declared a national emergency "to unleash the full power of the federal government." [More on this below.]

While more than half of the roughly 137,000 people who've caught the virus worldwide have already recovered, the toll in human lives is staggering. More than 4,700 people have died, including at least 50 people in the United States — and it's expected to get much worse before it gets better.

Other coronavirus news headlines:

- U.S. death toll rises to 50
- Frustrations grow over lack of testing kits
- FDA approves automated testing
  - One version of the device can test more than 4,000 patients a day, while a second can perform nearly 1,500 tests
- U.S. response to "unprecedented" pandemic "being rapidly corrected," NIH official says
- What to do if you have to self-quarantine over coronavirus
- Trump says he'll "most likely" get tested for coronavirus
- ICE suspending all social visitations at detention centers
- Coronavirus bill to aid families

Read full CBS Update: https://www.cbsnews.com/live-updates/coronavirus-updates-cases-fears-deaths-us-latest-2020-03-13/

Here's what Trump's coronavirus emergency declaration does

(CNN) The move frees up billions of dollars in federal funds, Trump said, and sets the Federal Emergency Management Agency in motion.

The President invoked the Stafford Act, which is the statutory authority for "most federal disaster response activities." The Stafford Act gives access to the funds and the national emergency gives access to authorities, according to a person familiar. The declaration makes more federal funds available along with supplies, personnel and other support.

Trump said Friday he was also urging every state to set up emergency operation centers "effective immediately" and asking "every hospital in the country to activate its emergency preparedness plan."

The emergency orders, he said, will also "confer broad new authorities" to Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar.

Azar will be able to "waive provisions of applicable laws and regulations to give doctors, hospitals - all hospitals -- and health care providers maximum flexibility to respond to the virus," he said. That includes waivers of some federal licensing requirements, waivers to critical access limits on numbers of beds and lengths of stays, and waivers to rules to bring additional physicians on board at certain hospitals.

When activated, FEMA might also help with logistics, like the transport of residents if needed, and put up temporary medical facilities. Those resources could come from across federal agencies, from stocked warehouses and through contracts

Full CNN story: https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/13/politics/states-coronavirus-fema/index.html

CMS COVID-19 Emergency Declaration Health Care Providers Fact Sheet

(This came out March 13, 2020) The Trump Administration is taking aggressive actions and exercising regulatory flexibilities to help healthcare providers combat and contain the spread of 2019 Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). In response to COVID-19, CMS is empowered to take proactive steps through 1135 waivers and rapidly expand the Administration's aggressive efforts against COVID-19. As a result, the following blanket waivers are available:

- Skilled Nursing Facilities
- Critical Access Hospitals (Waiving the 25-bed cap &length of stay)
- Housing Acute Care Patients In Excluded Distinct Part Units
- Durable Medical Equipment
- Care for Excluded Inpatient Psychiatric Unit Patients in the Acute Care Unit of a Hospital
- Care for Excluded Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit Patients in the Acute Care Unit of a Hospital
- Supporting Care for Patients in Long-Term Care Acute Hospitals (LTCH)s
- Home Health Agencies
- Provider Locations
- Provider Enrollment
- Medicare appeals in Fee for Service, MA and Part D
- Medicaid and CHIP

The following are examples of flexibilities that states and territories may seek through a Section 1135 waiver request:

- Waive prior authorization requirements in fee-for -service programs

- Permits providers located out of state/territory to provide care to another state's Medicaid enrollees impacted by the emergency

- Temporarily suspend certain provider enrollment and revalidation requirements to increase access to care.

- Temporarily waive requirements that physicians and other health care professionals be licensed in the state in which they are providing services, so long as they have an equivalent licensing in another state, and

- Temporarily suspend requirements for certain pre-admission and annual screenings for nursing home residents

- States and territories are encouraged to assess their needs and request these available flexibilities, which are more completely outlined in the Medicaid and CHIP Disaster Response Toolkit.

For more information and to access the toolkit, visit: https://www.medicaid.gov/state-resource-center/disaster-response-toolkit/index.html

Link to CMS document: https://www.cms.gov/files/document/covid19-emergency-declaration-health-care-providers-fact-sheet.pdf