



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for April 30, 2020

Defeating COVID-19 on First Try Requires Careful Reopening

On Thursday, Gov. Andy Beshear reminded Kentuckians that we need to be the smartest, not the fastest, in reopening our economy in order to defeat the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) without causing a spike of cases in the commonwealth. As of 5 p.m. April 30, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 4,708 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 174 of which were newly confirmed.

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear also reported five new deaths Thursday, raising the state's toll to 240 deaths related to the virus. Today's totals for cases and deaths include one that is being listed as a "probable case."

Dr. Steven Stack, Kentucky's public health commissioner, announced that Kentucky hospitals will now be using the Battelle Critical Care Decontamination System™ that uses vapor phase hydrogen peroxide (VPH) to decontaminate N95 respirator masks for up to 20 reuses without degrading filter performance.

Full press release: <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=149>

----- CDC What's News?

As of April 30, [CDC reports](#) 1,031,659 cases and 60,057 deaths in the U.S. The map [below](#) shows confirmed and probable COVID-19 cases reported by U.S. states and territories, and the District of Columbia. *To access the map in interactive form with additional information on each state, visit [CDC Cases in U.S.](#) or [CDC Coronavirus Interactive](#)*

From CDC today

- [Operational Considerations for Personal Protective Equipment in the Context of Global Supply Shortages for Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Pandemic: non-US Healthcare Settings](#) Thursday, April 30, 2020
- [Communication Resources for Travelers](#) Thursday, April 30, 2020
- [Communication Resources](#) Thursday, April 30, 2020
- [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) Thursday, April 30, 2020
- [Contact Tracing](#) Thursday, April 30, 2020
- [Cases & Latest Updates](#) Thursday, April 30, 2020
- [Staffing Resources](#) Thursday, April 30, 2020
- [SPHERES](#) Thursday, April 30, 2020
- [Testing in the U.S.](#) Thursday, April 30, 2020
- [COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Country](#) Thursday, April 30, 2020
- [Clinical Care Guidance for Healthcare Professionals about Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) Thursday, April 30, 2020
- [Mitigate Healthcare Personnel Staffing Shortages](#) Thursday, April 30, 2020
- [Criteria for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 \(Interim Guidance\)](#) Thursday, April 30, 2020
- [Social Media Toolkit](#) Thursday, April 30, 2020

----- New Frequently Asked Questions on EMTALA

(KHA Daily COVID-19 Update) The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) clarifying requirements and considerations for hospitals and other providers related to the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA) during the COVID-19 pandemic. The FAQs address questions around patient presentation to the emergency department, EMTALA applicability across facility types, qualified medical professionals, medical screening exams, patient transfer and stabilization, telehealth and other topics.

----- Doctors Link COVID-19 to Potentially Deadly Blood Clots and Strokes

(NPR) COVID-19 appears to thicken the blood of many patients, making them vulnerable to clots that can damage the lungs, kidneys and brain.

Read full story: <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/04/29/847917017/doctors-link-covid-19-to-potentially-deadly-blood-clots-and-strokes>

[*On a related side note close to home* - A former Louisville EMS staff member, [David Reisinger](#), who has been serving in the Chicago area as a firefighter/Paramedic responder and hospital EMS system coordinator, tested positive for COVID-19, and appeared to be recovering, but died early Wednesday from a stroke. He had been scheduled to return to work on Wednesday but suffered a stroke on Monday.]

Next-Generation Coronavirus Test Raises Hopes and Concerns

(NPR) An antigen test could be quick, and much simpler and cheaper than the PCR tests now used to spot people infected with the novel coronavirus. But some scientists worry about an antigen test's accuracy.

Full story: <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/04/30/847416695/a-next-generation-coronavirus-test-raises-hopes-and-concerns>

----- CMS announces additional COVID-19 waivers and rule changes, including modifications for teaching hospitals and certain provider-based hospital outpatient departments.

(From AHA Today for April 30) The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services today [announced](#) additional regulatory waivers and rule changes to expand diagnostic testing for Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries, telehealth in Medicare, hospital capacity and the health care workforce during the COVID-19 emergency.

Among other items, as urged by the AHA, the changes allow teaching hospitals to increase their number of temporary beds without facing reduced payments for indirect medical education; and certain provider-based hospital outpatient departments that relocate off-campus to obtain a temporary exception and continue to be paid at the full outpatient prospective payment system rate, rather than the reduced site-neutral rate.

In addition, the telehealth changes allow hospital outpatient departments to bill for certain Medicare telehealth services, expand the types of providers that can furnish Medicare telehealth services to physical and occupational therapists, speech language pathologists and others, and allow more telehealth services to be provided by audio-only connection.

CMS also issued [additional FAQs](#) clarifying Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act requirements, flexibilities and considerations for hospitals and other providers during the pandemic.

----- Using the Critical Care Decontamination System^(TM)

(FEMA) The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued several [Emergency Use Authorizations](#) for vaporized hydrogen peroxide sterilizer systems to be used to decontaminate N95 respirators.

[The COVID-19 National Preservation Strategy for Addressing Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) Shortages](#) seeks to improve PPE availability to protect healthcare workers, first responders, and patients from COVID-19, by implementing three pillars of practice: reduce – reuse – repurpose. Decontamination of N95 respirators is in line with the reuse pillar and can help communities meet critical PPE needs.

The Critical Care Decontamination System (CCDS)TM is one solution for the decontamination and reuse of N95 respirators as needed during times of critical shortage. Other systems currently authorized by the FDA to decontaminate N95 respirators include (1) STERIS V-PRO 1 Plus, V-Pro maX, and V-Pro maX2; (2) Sterizone VP4 Sterilizer; (3) STERRAD 100S, NX, and 100NX Sterilization Systems; and (4) Sterilucant HC 80TT Hydrogen Peroxide Sterilizer. The other authorized sterilizer systems exist already in many healthcare facilities providing opportunities to also decontaminate N95 respirators in accordance with the FDA [Emergency Use Authorization \(EUA\)](#).

See FEMA FACT SHEET on Battelle CDDM^(TM): <https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus/fact-sheets>

[NOTE: If you watch Governor Beshear's [Press Conference](#), there is a discussion about the Battelle processing capability here in Kentucky at the KY Fair & Expo Center, which is available to Kentucky Health Care facilities. Facilities already using this system can change their registration and use the KY operation for faster turn-around.]

----- FEMA sending PPE *direct* to nursing homes

(FEMA) [Gracia B. Szczech](#), the Regional Administrator for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region IV, announced over the weekend that under the direction of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, FEMA has been tasked to coordinate shipments of a seven day supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) to more than 15,000 nursing homes across the Nation. This mission will supplement existing efforts to ensure nursing homes across the country have PPE during the COVID-19 pandemic. The first shipments will focus on facilities within prioritized hotspots and expand to facilities across all 50 states and Puerto Rico. Shipments begin in early May and are expected to be completed in mid-June.

- Shipments are expected to begin the **first week of May and be completed in mid-June.**
- The PPE is being shipped **only to Medicaid and Medicare-certified nursing homes based on input from the American Health Care Association.**
- Each facility will receive an allotment of four items (gloves, gowns, eye protection and surgical masks) based on the staffing size of the facility, which ranges from less than 10 employees to nearly 500.
- The gowns included in these shipments are level 1 medical gowns, which are used in basic care settings for minimal risk situations.

- Due to the large number of nursing homes, facilities are not likely to receive notification prior to their shipment arriving. However, as possible, FEMA will provide notification to a state prior to shipments arriving at their Medicaid/ Medicare-certified facilities.

Who is not included:

- Some nursing homes that are state licensed and only accept private pay (estimated to be a very small number of less than 200 nationally).
- Veterans Affairs CLCs because they are federally licensed through the VA (about 113 nationally)
- Assisted living facilities (about 28,000 nationally)
- Intermediate care facilities (about 5,795 which CMS has a list that can be provided if needed)

U.S. cracks down on ethanol-based hand sanitizer, hitting supply as demand soars

(Reuters) - The Trump administration has tightened restrictions on the use of ethanol in hand sanitizer, forcing suppliers of the corn-based alcohol to halt their sales at a time of soaring demand, according to sources and documents seen by Reuters.

The crackdown is meant to protect consumers from potentially dangerous impurities in hand sanitizer but will likely worsen shortages of the product at a time households, hospitals and nursing homes need it to fight the coronavirus outbreak.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on April 15 issued limits on certain chemicals permitted in alcohol-based hand sanitizer, updating a temporary guidance it adopted last month as the health crisis deepened and more manufacturers registered to produce hand sanitizer.

Since then, the FDA has notified several ethanol companies saying their product does not meet safety standards, forcing them to halt production and cancel supply agreements, according to a source familiar with the matter.

Full story: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-ethanol-sanitizer/u-s-cracks-down-on-ethanol-based-hand-sanitizer-hitting-supply-as-demand-soars-idUSKBN22COLG>

President will not extend US social distancing guidelines

(TIME) - President Donald Trump said Wednesday the federal government's coronavirus social distancing guidelines will be "fading out" when they expire Thursday, counting on states taking charge as they pivot to reopening. The administration says its cautionary guidance issued 45 days ago has been incorporated into recommendations given to the states on how they can begin gradually easing restrictions and reopening their economies. Read more: <https://time.com/5829434/trump-federal-social-distancing/>

CIDRAP from April 30, 2020

[Federal COVID-19 physical distancing measures expire, more states reopen](#)

NYC police called after funeral home puts bodies in unrefrigerated trucks

(AP) Police were called to a Brooklyn neighborhood Wednesday after a funeral home overwhelmed by the coronavirus resorted to storing dozens of bodies on ice in rented trucks, and a passerby complained about the smell, officials said. Investigators who responded to a 911 call found that the home had rented four trucks to hold about 50 corpses, according to a law enforcement official. Workers suited up in protective gear could be seen in the afternoon transferring bodies into the refrigerated truck.

Learn more: <https://www.wkyt.com/content/news/Police-called-after-NYC-funeral-home-puts-bodies-in-unrefrigerated-trucks-570067191.html>

"Scores" Of US Prisoners Released Amid COVID-19 Pandemic

(IACP) The [Boston Herald](#) (4/29, Dwinell, Carr) reports, "The coronavirus pandemic has handed get-out-of-jail-free cards to scores of Latin King gang members, fentanyl dealers, kidnappers, embezzlers and parents jailed in the college admissions scam case." The Herald adds that Boston US Attorney Andrew Lelling "posted Wednesday, without comment, the entire list of those who have won, lost or have pending hearings linked to coronavirus early dismissals. Lawrence Police Chief Roy Vasque blasted the early releases, saying public safety needs to be 'priority number one' – especially during a pandemic. 'They're in jail for a reason,' Vasque told the Herald. 'They're almost using the virus as an excuse. I know it's a new age, but I'm not happy this is happening. It's frustrating and we'll be dealing with these people again, I'm sure.'"

German Police Face Mask Dilemma As May Day Activists Cover Up

(IACP) [The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (4/29, Oltermann) reports, "May Day demonstrations planned in German cities this Friday pose a dilemma for police as officers face conflicting advice on whether they should ask protesters to put

on face masks or pull them off.” The Guardian adds, “Wearing masks in shops and on public transport was made mandatory in most German states this week, as the country relaxed some of the lockdown measures introduced to curb the spread of Covid-19,” but “German law also makes it illegal to cover your face while participating in a public gathering, such as a strike or a political demonstration, so as to prevent identification by the police.” In Berlin, “a paragraph was hastily added to right-of-assembly regulations this month to clarify that anti-mask laws should not prevent the wearing of mouth-nose masks designed to protect wearers from coronavirus,” but “a spokesperson for Berlin police told the Guardian that officers would have to use their personal judgement regarding which kind of masks were recommended and which were unacceptable.”

Upcoming PSAs from KHA

To celebrate Nurses week, KHA has developed a PSA to be broadcast on Kentucky News Network (KNN) on radio stations across the state. The PSAs will thank nurses for their dedication to health care during the COVID-19 crisis and every day. A recording of the radio spot will be shared with members as soon as it is available.

Additionally, KHA is partnering with the Kentucky Medical Association to create PSAs, which will be shared with TV stations across Kentucky, to allay fears the public may have regarding returning to hospitals and physician offices. When the video is available, it will be shared with members as well.

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.