



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for September 28, 2020

KY COVID Update from Sunday
456 new cases; Total 66,491
3 more deaths reported; Total 1,157

Press release: <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=384>

Models correctly predicted 200K deaths. Here's what they're warning for the coming months.

(NBC) When the coronavirus pandemic hit the United States this year, scientific models forecasting hundreds of thousands of deaths were met by some people with derision. The models, unfortunately, have been vindicated. And they're providing fresh warnings that a recent uptick in numbers of cases could mean the U.S. death toll could almost double in the next four months.

For coronavirus modelers, the writing has been on the wall. Many have watched with a mixture of horror and frustration as their projections of the pandemic's evolution, and its potential death toll, have come to fruition.

Now, a widely cited model developed by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington suggests that the **U.S. could total more than 378,000 coronavirus deaths by January.**

Read more: <https://www.nbcnews.com/science/science-news/vindicated-covid-19-models-warn-pandemic-far-over-n1240934>

Related - By August, 1 in 5 Covid-19 cases was someone in their 20s

Read more: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/09/24/health/young-people-coronavirus-stats-wellness-trnd/index.html>

Many rural hospitals teeter on a financial cliff as COVID Medicare loans begin to come due

(KY Forward News & Kaiser Health News) The federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has not yet begun trying to recoup its money, with the coronavirus still affecting communities nationwide, but hospital leaders fear it may come calling for repayment any day now.

Hospital leaders across the country said there has been no communication from CMS on whether or when they will adjust the repayment deadline. A CMS spokesperson had not responded to questions by press time.

A full repayment of a hospital's loan is technically due 120 days after it was received. If it is not paid, Medicare will stop reimbursing claims until it recoups the money it is owed — a point spelled out in the program's rules. Medicare reimburses nearly **\$60 billion in payments** to health care providers nationwide under Medicare's Part A program, which makes payments to hospitals.

More than 65% of the nation's small, rural hospitals — many of which were operating at a deficit before the pandemic — jumped at the Medicare loans when the pandemic hit because they were the first funds available, said Maggie Elehwany, former vice president of government affairs for the National Rural Health Association. CMS halted new loan applications to the program at the end of April.

In rural Kentucky, hospital executive Sheila Currans said she "vacillated" for about a week or so trying to decide whether to tap the loan program for her hospital — she knew it would have to be repaid and worried that could prove difficult.

"It was a desperate time," said Currans, chief executive of Harrison Memorial Hospital in Cynthiana. Harrison Memorial was the first hospital in Kentucky to treat a COVID-19 patient in early March, she said.

The hospital immediately quarantined dozens of staff members and shut down elective procedures. And with COVID confirmed in the community, there was a "horrible fear," Currans said, of getting infected that kept people from seeking outpatient care as well.

"Through March and April and most of May, I was in a complete spiral," Currans said. By the end of April, Currans said, her hospital was losing millions of dollars. To cope with the pandemic, she furloughed staff and turned one wing of the hospital into a "cough clinic" to be used exclusively by patients whose symptoms suggested they might be infected with the coronavirus.

Learn more: <https://www.kyforward.com/many-rural-hospitals-teeter-on-a-financial-cliff-as-covid-medicare-loans-begin-to-come-due/>

The childless vaccine

(Axios) It'll likely be a long time before children are vaccinated against COVID-19, even though vaccinating kids could eventually play an integral role in reducing the virus' spread. None of the leading contenders in the U.S. are being tested for their effectiveness in children. Even once one of them gains authorization from the Food and Drug Administration, there will only be a limited number of available doses.

Read more: <https://www.axios.com/the-childless-vaccine-e3fb1772-c36f-4057-b08f-71463f31c514.html>

Related from MedPage: Kids Half as Likely to Catch COVID-19 as Adults

Children were less likely than adults to acquire a COVID-19 infection from an index case, a meta-analysis found. Across 32 contact tracing or population testing studies comparing SARS-CoV-2 prevalence in children and adults, children younger than 14 were less likely to be infected from an index case overall (odds ratio 0.56, 95% CI 0.37-0.85), and specifically in studies examining household transmission (OR 0.41, 95% CI 0.22-0.76), reported Russell M. Viner, PhD, of the UCL Great Ormond Street Institute of Child Health in London, and colleagues.

However, adolescents 14 and older did not have a significantly lower risk of infection compared with adults (OR 1.23, 95% CI 0.64-2.36), they wrote in [JAMA Pediatrics](#).

Learn more: <https://www.medpagetoday.com/infectiousdisease/covid19/88814>

Accuracy of COVID-19 Antibody Tests Varies Widely, Study Finds

(HealthDay News) Wide variation exists in the accuracy of commercial testing kits that check for antibodies against the new coronavirus, researchers say. For the study, the researchers developed their own antibody test. They then used it to compare the performance of 10 commercial antibody test kits on an identical panel of 110 positive blood samples from hospitalized COVID-19 patients, and 50 pre-pandemic coronavirus-negative blood samples. The findings were published online Sept. 24 in the journal *PLOS Pathogens*.

"We found that some of the quick single-use kits are as accurate as our sophisticated laboratory technologies," study co-author Jonathan Edgeworth said in a journal news release. He's with Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust in the United Kingdom.

There was a wide range of accuracy among the tests. Specificity -- the ability to correctly identify those without the disease -- ranged from 82% to 100%. Overall sensitivity -- the ability to correctly identify those with the disease -- ranged from 61% to 87%.

All of the tests gave the best results when used 20 days or more after the start of symptoms, with most tests achieving sensitivity value greater than 95%, the researchers said.

Full story: <https://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=247143>

Redfield voices alarm over influence of Trump's new coronavirus task force adviser

Learn more: <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/redfield-voices-alarm-over-influence-trump-s-new-coronavirus-task-n1241221>

US DHS has a "Master Questions Lists" for COVID-19

(DHS) Based on the response to a similar product generated in 2014 in response to the Ebolavirus outbreak in West Africa, the US DHS Science and Technology Directorate (DHS S&T) developed the following "master question list" that quickly summarizes what is known, what additional information is needed, and who may be working to address fundamental questions. The Master Question List (MQL) is intended to quickly present the current state of available information to government decision makers in the operational response to COVID-19 and allow structured and scientifically guided discussions across the federal government without burdening them with the need to review scientific reports, and to prevent duplication of efforts by highlighting and coordinating research. Reportedly, the MQL is updated weekly.

See the list: https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/mql_sars-cov-2_-_cleared_for_public_release_20200922.pdf

New document reveals scope and structure of Operation Warp Speed and underscores vast military involvement

STAT News EXCLUSIVE: The initiative — to accelerate the development of Covid-19 vaccines and therapeutics — lacks the scale, and the degree of secrecy, of the effort to build the atomic bomb. But Operation Warp Speed is largely an abstraction in Washington, with little known about who works there other than its top leaders, or how it operates. Even pharmaceutical companies hoping to offer help or partnerships have labored to figure out who to contact. An organizational chart for Operation Warp Speed, obtained by STAT, reveals a highly structured initiative in which military personnel vastly outnumber civilian scientists.

See more: <https://www.statnews.com/2020/09/28/operation-warp-speed-vast-military-involvement/>

Covid-19: Heat and humidity can help disinfect N95 masks for reuses, says study

(Business Line) A combination of heat and humidity can help disinfect N95 masks for reuse, according to a recent study. Researchers at the Department of Energy's SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory, Stanford University and the University of Texas Medical Branch are studying a way to use a combination of moderate heat and high relative humidity to disinfect N95 mask materials without affecting their ability to filter out viruses.

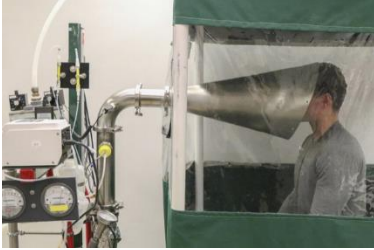
Owing to the shortage of these masks, researchers have been trying to find a way to reuse them including disinfecting the masks using ultraviolet light, hydrogen peroxide vapours, autoclaves and chemical disinfectants.

"The problem is that many of those methods degrade N95 masks' filtering abilities so that at most they could be reused a few times," the report said. As per the new study, heat and humidity may just do the trick.

Article link: <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/science/covid-19-heat-and-humidity-can-help-disinfect-n95-masks-for-reuses-says-study/article32707433.ece>

Related story - Tiny airborne particles may pose a big coronavirus problem

(AP) t a University of Maryland lab, people infected with the new coronavirus take turns sitting in a chair and putting their faces into the big end of a large cone. They recite the alphabet and sing or just sit quietly for a half hour. Sometimes they cough.



The cone sucks up everything that comes out of their mouths and noses. It's part of a device called "Gesundheit II" that is helping scientists study a big question: Just how does the virus that causes COVID-19 spread from one person to another?

It clearly hitchhikes on small liquid particles sprayed out by an infected person. People expel particles while coughing, sneezing, singing, shouting, talking and even breathing. But the drops come in a wide range of sizes, and scientists are trying to pin down how risky the various kinds are.

Full AP story: <https://apnews.com/article/virus-outbreak-43fe5ca3fba1d4ebc05949a11643e03b>

Next NETEC PPE Webinar

[Got Masks? PPE Compliance and Fatigue in First Responder Realms.](#)

Friday, October 2, 2020 | Noon CT / 1:00 PM ET

Are personnel becoming less diligent with PPE? Is there a significant element of PPE fatigue? Do you know what the PPE requirements are when not actively providing patient care? What about PPE requirements in the office, ambulance, and firehouse? Join us for a Town Hall meeting and discuss the importance of PPE in the First Responder Environment and learn techniques to deal with PPE fatigue and improve compliance? Submit your questions for the panel during registration and they will be answered during the Town Hall session.

[REGISTER HERE <<<](#)

Halloween: CDC recommends avoiding trick-or-treating

(USA Today) The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) announced last Monday it advises against traditional trick-or-treating this year amid the novel coronavirus. **The recommendation came as part of a list of Halloween guidelines broken down by level of risk.**



Door-to-door trick-or-treating, trunk-or-treating "where treats are handed out from trunks of cars lined up in large parking lots" and indoor parties or haunted houses are among the riskiest Halloween activities when it comes to preventing the spread of COVID-19, the CDC says. Others to be avoided include hayrides or tractor rides with others, visiting fall festivals in other communities and using alcohol or drugs, "which can cloud judgment and increase risky behaviors."

The CDC cautions that a Halloween mask is not a substitute for a protective mask.

Full story: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2020/09/22/halloween-2020-cdc-says-no-trick-treating-amid-covid-19/5866683002/>

ICU nurse transforms school bus into after-work refuge amid coronavirus pandemic
Curious? <https://www.wbalv.com/article/coronavirus-icu-nurse-melissa-frick-transforms-school-bus-into-after-shift-oasis/34127017>

Wildfires Are A Health Risk.

Smoke from wildfires can...

- ...hurt your eyes
- ...irritate your lungs
- ...and worsen respiratory illness

weather.gov

Fall Weather Safety Campaign

(NWS) This season's theme is "Small Decisions Can Have a Big Impact"

Sometimes the difference between safety and tragedy is a small decision at the most critical time--delaying travel, slowing down, or knowing where your safe place is.

Get more info: <https://www.weather.gov/wrn/fall-safety>

6-year-old boy's death led to investigation that found brain-eating amoeba in Texas city's water supply

Read more: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/brain-eating-amoeba-boy-death-water-supply-lake-jackson-texas/>

FEMA Seeking Input on NIMS Resource Typing Definitions for EMR, EMT, AEMT and Paramedic

FEMA's National Integration Center is seeking public feedback on four National Incident Management System resource typing definitions. Today's release includes [job resource typing definitions](#) under the Emergency Medical Services core capability:

- Emergency Medical Responder
- Emergency Medical Technician
- Advanced EMT
- Paramedic

NIMS is a key component of U.S. incident management efforts and enables organizations from across the country to work together during incidents of all kinds and sizes. Implementing NIMS across the nation is a fundamental part of building our national preparedness. NIMS resource typing definitions define minimum qualifications and capabilities for personnel and their equipment within their assigned teams to manage all threats and hazards, regardless of the incident's cause or size.

Comments are due by 5 pm ET on Thursday, October 15. Download, complete and submit the feedback form by following the instructions [here](#). The final definitions will be available later this year.

A USPS under fire for slowdowns now reveals it has no reliable means of tracking mail theft

Mail theft reports up 600% over last three years!

Read more: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/mail-theft-surgin-u-s-postal-service-inspectors-don-t-n1241179>

KYTC reaches milestone of 50,000 REAL ID-compliant licenses; Pace of applications increasing

Read more: <https://www.kyforward.com/kytc-reaches-milestone-of-50000-real-id-compliant-licenses-pace-of-applications-increasing/>

Demand For Guns Up From Last Year

([IACP News](#)) The [Washington Times](#) (9/27, A1, Sherfinski) reports, "Pistols, revolvers, rifles and shotguns are flying off the shelves this year, with gun shops reporting huge demand for models geared toward self-defense." The Times adds that "nearly 26 million background checks were run through the FBI's national instant check system through August," compared to a record 28.3 million for the full year of 2019. The Times also cites "anecdotal evidence" indicating "there has been an uptick in interest in gun safety classes." August sales were up 58% over last year, and handgun sales were up 66% while long gun sales were up 46.5%.

AP Analysis: Shootings, Other Attacks On Police Up This Year: The [AP](#) (9/27, Babwin) reports that shootings of police officers in Los Angeles and Louisville, Kentucky "are stark reminders of the dangers law enforcement officers face at a time when anger toward them in the wake of police killings of Black Americans...has boiled over," but "it is unclear how many times officers across the country have been shot at or otherwise attacked this year." According to the FBI, "so far this year 37 law enforcement officers in the United States have been 'feloniously killed' in the line of duty compared to 30 such deaths at this point last year." The AP says, "experts and law enforcement officials agree that it is no coincidence" that police "have been shot at, run over, blinded and jeered at." In Chicago, "66 officers have been shot at thus far this year, compared to 17 at this point last year."

FBI Seeking Suspects In Fire Set At Kentucky Courthouse. [WZTV-TV](#) Nashville, TN (9/25, Mojica) reported from Louisville, Kentucky that the FBI "is asking for help identifying the persons responsible for an arson at the Louisville Hall of Justice." WZTV-TV adds, "The agency states on Wednesday around 7:36 p.m., two individuals set fire to the Hall of Justice using an accelerant in a white bottle. One suspect is described as a black male wearing a blue hoodie, dark shorts, dark socks, and red shoes. The second suspect is described as a black male wearing a black hoodie, dark pants, and white shoes."

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.