



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

Second highest number of daily cases, deaths reported in Kentucky

(WLEX) During his Wednesday press conference, Gov. Andy Beshear announced that 1,487 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Kentucky, making it the second daily highest number of new cases reported in Kentucky. After the removal of duplicates, the 1,487 new cases brings Kentucky's COVID-19 case total to 90,996. The report comes just one day after [1,312 new cases were reported](#), which was previously the fourth highest daily report of new cases.

"The third escalation is very real and it is very concerning," Gov. Beshear said. "It is already more concerning than the one we had in July."

Wednesday's positivity rate was 4.99 percent. Gov. Beshear also announced 21 new coronavirus-related deaths, bringing Kentucky's coronavirus-related death total to 1,363. As of Wednesday, 794 Kentuckians are hospitalized for coronavirus-related reasons, 203 of which are in the ICU and 94 of which are on ventilators. At least 17,534 Kentuckians have recovered from COVID-19.

Video & story: <https://www.lex18.com/news/coronavirus/second-highest-number-of-daily-cases-deaths-reported-in-kentucky-wednesday>

Related – Governor says public, private gatherings ideally should not extend beyond immediate family

Press release: <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&priid=426>

CDC notes 'distressing trend' of rising COVID cases

(CIDRAP) In their first press briefing in more than 2 months, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) officials warned that the country is approaching a "critical phase" in the COVID-19 pandemic, while also expressing optimism that one or more vaccines will be available for distribution before the end of the year.

"Unfortunately, we're seeing a distressing trend here with COVID-19 in the United States, with COVID-19 cases increasing in nearly 75% of the country," CDC Deputy Director Jay Butler, MD, told reporters in Atlanta. "The past week, we've seen nearly 60,000 cases a day on average, as well as 700 deaths."

Butler attributed the nationwide increase in cases to more people moving indoors as the weather gets colder, as well as smaller, intimate gatherings of families and neighbors that are taking place indoors. Butler emphasized four general rules that translate into higher risk of COVID-19 spread—the more closely people interact with others, the longer the interaction lasts, interactions taking place indoors, and interactions involving a lot of people.

Read more: <https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/10/cdc-notes-distressing-trend-rising-covid-cases>

HHS Funds Development of Needle-Free Vaccine Administration Technology

([Dom Prep Journal](#)) Under an agreement between the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) and Vaxxas, the company will undertake Phase 1 clinical trials to evaluate the safety and efficacy of an easy-to-use, high-density micro-array patch (HD-MAP) and other development activities for the patch.

Micro-array patch technology has the potential to reduce the amount of vaccine required, which would help healthcare professionals provide vaccine to more people, an important consideration in a public health emergency. Patch technology also has the potential to offer a room-temperature-stable alternative to the cold chain required for some traditional vaccines, reducing the need for refrigeration in transport and storage.

A room-temperature product that does not use traditional needles and syringes could possibly be provided directly to consumers who could administer the vaccine patch themselves. This technology could reduce the need for needles and syringes used for the majority of immunizations which may reduce the cost of vaccinations, and would simplify vaccine administration.

Learn more: <https://www.domesticpreparedness.com/updates/hhs-funds-development-of-needle-free-vaccine-administration-technology/>

BARDA Press Release: <https://www.medicalcountermeasures.gov/newsroom/2020/vaxxas/>

Lexington hospitals prepare for potential surge of COVID-19 cases

(WKYT) - During his Tuesday briefing, Governor Andy Beshear talked about another surge in COVID patients and the potential need for increased hospital capacity.

Dr. James Borders, chief medical officer at Baptist Health Lexington, told us their COVID numbers haven't changed much in recent weeks, but they are prepared should there be a surge. They've ramped back up to normal operations following some furloughs when the pandemic first started. Borders said not only did they

have capacity if needed, but he's also seen smaller hospitals learn to manage patients who previously would have been sent elsewhere.

A spokesperson for UK Hospital told us their COVID numbers have been steady. They also said they are much better prepared now for a surge than they were in April or March.

Story link: <https://www.wkyt.com/app/2020/10/21/lexington-hospitals-prepare-for-potential-surge-of-covid-19-cases/>

**Gov. Beshear Announces More than \$780,000 in Funding
for Public Safety Agencies in Fight against COVID-19**

Learn more: <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=424>

Report details COVID-19 drug shortages—and solutions

(CIDRAP) In the newest "COVID-19: The CIDRAP Viewpoint" report from the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy (CIDRAP), researchers lay out not only how the US drug supply chain has been vulnerable for years, but how those vulnerabilities are exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

To transform what the authors call a "fail and fix" approach to a "predict and prevent" paradigm, they offer nine specific recommendations that involve a more coordinated national policy framework to track, identify, mitigate, and prevent drug shortages using a transparent database of drug supply chains. This public database would encompass all prescription drug products in the US market, and analysis of the data would focus on the most critical drugs and the consequences that would likely be experienced if there is a shortage.

Titled "[Part 6: Ensuring a Resilient US Prescription Drug Supply](#)," the report points out that 29 (72.5%) of the 40 critical drugs for COVID-19 patients are experiencing shortages, according to the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP). When these drugs are not available, healthcare providers have to consider rationing existing drug supplies, if any, finding therapeutic substitutes, or even having the patient go without treatment.

A crucial drug cited in the report, propofol—a sedative to calm patients while they are intubated—has no close substitute, in part because of how quickly it can be adjusted to suit changes in the patient's status. It, too, has been plagued by shortages.

Another affected drug product has been albuterol inhalers. Their use for COVID-19 patients has created supply issues for patients using these inhalers for asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Also, antibiotics such as azithromycin or the combination drug piperacillin-tazobactam have experienced shortages in the past few months. Whether local or nationwide, drug shortages relating to intubation, sedation, paralytics, pain, antivirals, antibiotics, and more affect not only COVID-19 patients but also those who need the same drugs for elective surgery or other reasons.

Full story: <https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/10/report-details-covid-19-drug-shortages-and-solutions>

**Johns Hopkins: Health Security Headlines
Extracts from [October 21, 2020](#)**

[Understanding Viral Shedding of SARS-CoV-2: Review of Current Literature](#) (*Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology*) SARS-COV-2 RNA shedding can be prolonged, yet high heterogeneity exists. Detection of viral RNA may not correlate with infectivity since available viral culture data suggests shorter durations of shedding of viable virus. Additional data is needed to determine the duration of shedding of viable virus and the implications for risk of transmission.

[Do Masks On Plane Flights Really Cut Your Risk Of Catching COVID-19?](#) (*NPR*) How well do the masks work? Do they make it safe to fly across the country for a family visit? Scientists are just beginning to answer that question. And their findings offer a glimmer of hope as well as fresh ideas about what's most important for protecting yourself on a plane.

[Studies Offer Little Hope for Tocilizumab in Treating COVID](#) (*CIDRAP*) JAMA Internal Medicine today published a trio of studies on use of the immunosuppressive drug tocilizumab in COVID-19 patients with pneumonia, one of them a large US observational study that suggested some promise and two randomized clinical trials from Italy and France that found no benefit.

[Experts: Don't Count on Mild Flu Season Amid COVID-19](#) (*CIDRAP*) The Southern Hemisphere had a very light flu season in 2020, with Australia seeing only 315 cases over its winter, down 99.8% from the 130,000 cases seen in most years. But flu experts say that, while the low numbers could portend a similar scenario in the Northern Hemisphere, it would be a foolhardy not to prepare for high caseloads this winter.

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US Retailers Secure Stores Amid Worries Of Election Unrest

([IACP News](#)) [Reuters](#) (10/21) "This time last year, shoppers on Chicago's Magnificent Mile were waiting for Louis Vuitton to debut its whimsical holiday window decorations. Now those same windows are hidden behind a wall of wood panels painted bright orange. While still open for shoppers, stores like Gucci and Nordstrom are also boarded up after looters targeted the city's famed retail district in the spring and summer, when protests gripped more than 100 U.S. cities." Reuters adds, "As security experts warn that the U.S. presidential election could spark renewed civil unrest, those stores remain clad in plywood as retailers seek to keep property and employees safe in the event street violence flares anew." Retailers "are on edge after raiders earlier this year smashed windows, stole merchandise and, at times, set stores ablaze in Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Portland and other U.S. cities."

Iran and Russia deny FBI accusation they are behind threatening emails sent to Florida Democrats

National Intel: Iran and Russia had obtained some Americans' voter information

Learn more: <https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/fbi-says-iran-behind-threatening-emails-sent-florida-democrats-n1244228>

InfraGardNCR webinar

**"Cyber Conversations with InfraGardNCR:
Drovorub malware - the Russian 'woodcutter'"**
Thursday, 10/29/20 @ 1:00 PM ET

Register in advance at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5436452090947124240>

CDC Clinician's Zoom Call

***Leveraging Existing Resources to Meet the Challenges Faced by
People Who Use Drugs or Who Have Substance Use Disorders
During the COVID-19 Pandemic***

TODAY, October 22, 2020 @ 2 PM ET

Zoom: <https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1609288166>

The slide set & more info is available under "Call Materials" on the [COCA Call webpage](#).

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.