



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for November 5, 2020

National Rural Health Day is November 19

Gov. Beshear Announces 80 Red Zone Counties, 2,318 New Cases

([From press release](#)) Gov. Andy Beshear announced [80 red zone counties](#), 12 more than were listed last week. Today's new cases report is one of Kentucky's highest ever, second only to the day Gov. Beshear [reported](#) a significant backlog from Fayette County. As of 4 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 5, Gov. Beshear reported the following COVID-19 numbers:

- New cases today: 2,318
- New deaths today: 20
- Positivity rate: 6.50%
- Total deaths: 1,534
- Currently hospitalized: 1,102
- Currently in ICU: 291
- Currently on ventilator: 129

U.S. CDC reports 233,129 deaths from coronavirus

(Reuters) The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Thursday reported 9,463,782 cases of the novel coronavirus, an increase of 106,537 cases from its previous count, and said that the number of deaths had risen by 1,141 to 233,129.

Full story: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-usa-cdc/u-s-cdc-reports-233129-deaths-from-coronavirus-idUSKBN27L2KX>

Related - U.S. coronavirus hospitalizations hit three-month high over 50,000

Reuters story: <https://news360.com/article/541551476>

Pandemic sparks permanent Norton drive-thru location on Breckenridge Lane

(WDRB) The new building has two drive-thru bays that will help get patients through every 15 minutes.

Learn more: https://www.wdrb.com/news/pandemic-sparks-permanent-norton-drive-thru-location-on-breckenridge-lane/article_a3c700da-1eb3-11eb-904d-1f95d9e5f325.html

Related - [Fall in non-COVID in-person visits reveals pandemic care gap](#)

Clots, Strokes and Rashes. Is COVID-19 A Disease Of The Blood Vessels?

(NPR & KHN) COVID-19 can cause symptoms that go well beyond the lungs, from strokes to organ failure. To explain these widespread injuries, researchers are studying how the virus affects the vascular system.

Listen or read more: <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/11/05/917317541/clots-strokes-and-rashes-is-covid-19-a-disease-of-the-blood-vessels>

Pfizer goes solo on U.S. shot distribution, opting out of government channels

Learn more: <https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/pfizer-sidelines-us-government-covid-19-vaccine-distribution-plan-favor-its-own-reports>

CMS Takes Action to Address Potential COVID Vaccine Access at No Cost

With a vaccine expected before the end of the year, CMS, along with the Departments of Labor and the Treasury, is laying the groundwork now to ensure immediate coverage and payment for preventive COVID-19 vaccination for individuals covered by group health plans and health insurance issuers.

In an Interim Final Rule with Comment Period (IFC) issued on October 28, 2020, CMS removes administrative barriers to eliminate potential delays to patient access to a lifesaving vaccine. In addition, the rule:

- Creates flexibilities for states maintaining Medicaid enrollment during the COVID-19 PHE;
- Establishes enhanced Medicare payments for new COVID-19 treatments;
- Takes steps to ensure price transparency for COVID-19 tests, and

- Provides an extension of Performance Year 5 for the Comprehensive Care for Joint Replacement (CJR) model; and
- Creates flexibilities in the public notice requirements and post-award public participation requirements for a State Innovation Waiver under Section 1332 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act during the COVID-19 PHE.

CMS Atlanta wants to make sure stakeholders are aware of the interim final rule and to make sure they have access to resources and information regarding the rule. **The IFC (CMS-9912-IFC) is scheduled to display at the Federal Register as soon as possible with an immediate effective date, and a 30-day comment period.** It can be downloaded from the Federal Register at: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/covid-vax-ifc-4.pdf>. The following IFC resources are also available:

- To see the press release please visit: <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/trump-administration-acts-ensure-coverage-life-saving-covid-19-vaccines-therapeutics>
- Additional information on this IFC can be found in the fact sheet here: <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/fourth-covid-19-interim-final-rule-comment-period-ifc-4>
- The FAQs on billing for therapeutics can be found here: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/03092020-covid-19-faqs-508.pdf>

CMS also released a set of toolkits for providers, states and insurers to help the health care system prepare to swiftly administer the vaccine once it is available. These resources are designed to increase the number of providers that can administer the vaccine, ensure adequate reimbursement for administering the vaccine in Medicare, while making it clear to private insurers and Medicaid programs their responsibility to cover the vaccine at no charge to beneficiaries. The COVID-19 vaccine resources for providers, health plans and State Medicaid programs can be found here: <https://www.cms.gov/covidvax>

**Ambulances forced to queue for hours
 as Poland's hospitals scramble for COVID-19 beds**

Read more: <https://news360.com/article/541718714>

**Johns Hopkins: Health Security Headlines
 Extracts from [November 5](#)**

[Remdesivir for the Treatment of Covid-19 — Final Report](#) (*NEJM*) We conducted a double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled trial of intravenous remdesivir in adults who were hospitalized with Covid-19 and had evidence of lower respiratory tract infection. Our data show that remdesivir was superior to placebo in shortening the time to recovery in adults who were hospitalized with Covid-19 and had evidence of lower respiratory tract infection

[Far More Transparency is Needed for Covid-19 Vaccine Trials](#) (*STAT News*) Although rehabilitating public trust will take time, one step can and should be taken now: enhance research transparency. It is essential to widen public access to information about vaccine clinical trial design, conduct, and data. Research indicates that a majority of Americans may trust scientific research findings more if data and information were publicly shared. Yet vaccine manufacturers' current legal obligations and voluntary commitments often fall short of full transparency.

[The Hidden Public Health Hazard of Rapid Covid-19 Tests](#) (*STAT News*) Laboratories are required to provide extensive data to accompany Covid-19 tests. According to federal guidance published in June, they must collect and report for each test demographic information such as the patient's age, race, ethnicity, sex, and ZIP code. But thousands upon thousands of testing sites nationwide are beginning to operate outside of laboratory facilities and are not equipped to comply with state and federal reporting regulations.

[Face Masks Are Again in Short Supply as Covid-19 Cases Surge](#) (*Wall Street Journal*) A surge of Covid-19 cases and stockpiling of N95 masks in much of the country have put fresh strains on the supply of critical protective gear, manufacturers and health officials say. While the national supply of protective equipment has improved since the first months of the pandemic, levels at some health-care facilities remain well below what regulators recommend.

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.