



## Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for December 6, 2020

### Vigilance Urged as Kentucky Passes 200,000 COVID-19 Cases

(From [Press Release](#)) On Sunday, Gov. Andy Beshear asked all Kentuckians to redouble efforts to fight COVID-19 as Kentucky surpassed 200,000 reported cases of coronavirus in the commonwealth – exactly nine months since the state’s first reported case. “These are difficult numbers, having passed 200,000 cases and earlier this week passing 2,000 deaths. And now this is our highest week to date. However, in the data there is some potentially good news: While this is our highest week ever, the rate of growth does appear to be slowing. As of 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 6, Gov. Beshear reported the following COVID-19 numbers:

- New cases today: 2,567
- New deaths today: 10
- Positivity rate: 9.75%
- Total deaths: 2,072
- Currently hospitalized: 1,673
- Currently in ICU: 401
- Currently on ventilator: 214

### UK HeathCare says test shipment of mock COVID-19 vaccines went smoothly

(WDRB) The CDC and the state selected UK HealthCare as a test site for distributing the Pfizer vaccine. Now the healthcare company is speaking out about what it has learned from a recent test of the vaccine delivery system.

UK Healthcare says it received a mock shipment from Pfizer on Dec. 3, and it had no issues with the test run. The healthcare system says it placed a mock order for doses on Monday and received them on Thursday. There were no actual vaccines.

The trial, which selected one hospital in each state, instead tested the operational and logistical readiness for distribution. That included transferring a shipment that kept real-time temperatures, as well as testing a new software program that tracks a dose from the manufacturing center to the patient.

See video report or read more: [https://www.wdrb.com/news/uk-healthcare-says-test-shipment-of-mock-covid-19-vaccines-went-smoothly/article\\_e6aaa938-364b-11eb-80c7-93e82a207e1e.html](https://www.wdrb.com/news/uk-healthcare-says-test-shipment-of-mock-covid-19-vaccines-went-smoothly/article_e6aaa938-364b-11eb-80c7-93e82a207e1e.html)

### Many Hospitalized COVID Patients Will Need Longer-Term Care at Home

<https://news360.com/article/543954599>

### FDA vaccine adviser says approval decision could come within the week

(The Hill) A top vaccine adviser at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said the decision on whether to approve a coronavirus vaccine candidate from Pfizer could come within the week. James Hildreth, a member of the FDA’s vaccine advisory committee, said that the agency will vote Thursday on whether to provide emergency use authorization (EUA) for the Pfizer vaccine and that distribution of the shot could begin the next day.

“We’ll spend the day on Thursday reviewing the data from Pfizer, and at the end of the day, a vote will be taken. So, by the end of the day next Thursday, there could be a decision made about the vaccine,” he said Saturday on NBC News.

“If the FDA commissioner decides to issue approval, the EUA, on that day when the vote is taken, as early as Friday of next week, we could see vaccinations happening across the country,” he added.

Learn more: <https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/528893-fda-vaccine-adviser-says-approval-decision-could-come-within-the-week>

### First shipments of coronavirus vaccine will fall short

(CNN) State health departments and governors’ offices across the country are finally being told by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Operation Warp Speed how many doses of the coronavirus vaccine they will initially be receiving once the vaccine is authorized, and it’s not enough. Federal officials estimate about 40 million vaccines will be available by the end of the month if both Moderna and Pfizer get US

Food and Drug Administration authorization -- only enough to vaccinate 20 million people, because two doses are needed for each person.

But even that number will fall short. Pfizer is only expected to have 6.4 million doses of vaccine ready by mid-December.

A CNN analysis of 27 states' vaccine data showed that none were getting enough vaccine in the first shipment to vaccinate all their first priority group, including health care workers and long-term care residents. CNN was able to confirm the expected size of the first shipment of vaccine for at least 45 states, and the number of people prioritized in at least 27 states.

Read more: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/12/05/health/first-covid-vaccine-shipments-inadequate/index.html>

-----  
**Why mRNA vaccines like those being made to treat coronavirus are a quantum leap for biotech**

(Salon) If the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines successfully put an end to the COVID-19 pandemic, as they seem poised to do, we will owe our salvation to the development of mRNA vaccines — an unprecedented, novel vaccine technology that may revolutionize how vaccines are made.

Indeed, [an mRNA vaccine has never been mass-produced](#) and licensed to treat an infectious disease. The mRNA vaccines to treat the novel coronavirus would be the first.

Yet understanding the quantum leap that mRNA vaccines represent requires understanding where we are right now. The biotechnology giants [Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech announced last month](#) that they had seen promising results as they near the end of clinical trials for their vaccine candidates. Both vaccines are likely to be produced on a wide scale and distributed en masse to the public. What is particularly striking is that both are mRNA vaccines, mRNA being short for "synthetic messenger RNA."

Learn more: <https://www.salon.com/2020/12/05/mrna-history-vaccines-coronavirus-moderna-immunology-lipid-nanoparticles/>

-----  
**ER visits, long waits climb for kids in mental health crisis**

(AP) When children and teens are overwhelmed with anxiety, depression or thoughts of self-harm, they often wait days in emergency rooms because there aren't enough psychiatric beds. The problem has only grown worse during the pandemic, reports from parents and professionals suggest.

With schools closed, routines disrupted and parents anxious over lost income or uncertain futures, children are shouldering new burdens many are unequipped to bear. And with surging numbers of hospitalized COVID-19 patients, bed space is even scarcer.

While ER visits for many health reasons other than COVID-19 declined early in the pandemic as people avoided hospitals, the share that were for kids' mental health-related visits climbed steadily from mid-April through October, according to a recent federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report. Of the kids who showed up, more were for mental health than in the same period last year, although that might reflect that others stayed away, the authors cautioned.

Full story: <https://apnews.com/article/anxiety-mental-health-boston-coronavirus-pandemic-massachusetts-004adb5ee0ef17ff4b5e2e294e36ff3d>

-----  
**As Covid surges, so does homelessness. Shelters foresee an 'absolute disaster.'**

Right now in the country, there's not one city that has enough shelter space for all the homeless people in their community," one advocate said.

Learn more: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/winter-approaching-homeless-shelters-face-big-challenges-against-coronavirus-n1249906>

-----  
**Sensors In Bandage Can Track Healing of Wound**

<https://news360.com/article/544078330>

-----  
**Why the out-of-control STD epidemic will likely get worse after the coronavirus pandemic**

<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/sexual-health/how-covid-test-supply-shortages-could-cause-public-health-crisis-n1250036>

-----  
**'Sonic attacks' suffered by US diplomats likely caused by microwave energy**

(CNN) The mysterious head injuries suffered by US diplomatic staff in China and Cuba that had been [described as "sonic attacks"](#) are consistent with the use of directed microwave energy, according to a report published Saturday by the [National Academy of Sciences](#).

"Overall, directed pulsed RF (radio frequency) energy, especially in those with the distinct early manifestations, appears to be the most plausible mechanism in explaining these cases among those that the committee considered," the report said.

The report added that it considered possible incidents of persistent postural-perceptual dizziness as a possible secondary issue in some of those affected a contributing factor.

While the report does not conclude that the use of directed microwave energy in these instances was done deliberately, it said such action could be used for nefarious purposes.

"The mere consideration of such a scenario raises grave concerns about a world with disinhibited malevolent actors and new tools for causing harm to others, as if the U.S. government does not have its hands full already with naturally occurring threats," the report said.

The report said that it considered chemical exposures, infectious diseases and psychological issues as potential causes or aggravating factors of the injuries, but the overall analysis appeared to show they were not the likely cause.

A 19-person committee of medical and scientific experts [produced the report](#) at the request of the State Department.

See video report and read more: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/12/05/health/head-injuries-us-diplomats-government-study/index.html>

-----

### **Iffy on Masks? Bill Nye Offers 'Hilarious' Explainer**

(Newser) Anyone still unclear about the importance of face masks may want to check out a new clip from Bill Nye the Science Guy. In Friday's viral TikTok video—which was shared online by comedian [Christopher Titus](#), among others—the 65-year-old scientist offers his insight into how and why masks work, in his own "hilarious" way, per [ET Canada](#). First, Nye addresses the fear some have that the virus can effortlessly make its way through any face covering. "Viruses don't travel by themselves, they travel in little droplets of spit and snot," he says. "When the droplet gets into the fibers of a mask, it gets trapped. This is not that hard to understand, everybody. That's why we have rules about wearing a mask."

To underscore his point on the efficacy of face coverings, Nye pulls out a map of the United States, showing where coronavirus case surges are happening. "The red ink shows where people are wearing masks," he says. "The black ink shows where people are getting sick with coronavirus. I hope you can see the fewer the masks, the more the sick." He then makes a final plea: "Everyone, please wear a mask." [Newsweek](#) notes that also on Friday, the CDC made a big change to its own guidance on masks, recommending people wear their face coverings at all times indoors, unless they're in their own homes. Watch Nye's mask explainer [here](#).

Source: <https://www.newser.com/story/299642/iffy-on-masks-bill-nye-offers-hilarious-explainer.html>

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 [Preparedness@kyha.com](mailto:Preparedness@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.