



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update #1 for February 15, 2021

KY COVID Update

As of 4 PM today, the Governor announced that for the fifth week the number of new cases and positivity rates are down. There were 73 new cases, which is the lowest since October 12th. The positivity rate is 6.57%, which is the lowest since November 5th. There were only 9 new deaths reported.

With regards to vaccinations, Child Care Workers have been moved up to the Priority 1b group, and they can start signing up for vaccinations. Most sites are rescheduling appointments from today and tomorrow due to the weather. At least 12% of Kentuckians have now gotten at least their first vaccination.

The Governor, KY Emergency Management Director Mike Dossett, and KY Transportation Cabinet Secretary Jim Gray, all commented on the current round of winter storms, and what is coming. Everyone urged people to stay off the roads which are extremely dangerous at this time, and likely to deteriorate overnight.

Full press release: <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prld=610>

Watch YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mngEu0YJRBE>

See more COVID data: <https://govstatus.egov.com/kycovid19>

KY DOT Snow Info: <https://transportation.ky.gov/sites/snowky>

Mid-day NWS Briefing Slides: <https://www.weather.gov/media/lmk/BriefingSlides.pdf>

Psychosocial Support for Healthcare and Behavior Healthcare Providers during COVID-19

Well@Work Podcast- Episode 14- Integrating Work and Family

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kFCHXRkAiQ>

KHA Town Hall to Discuss Hospital at Home

(KHA) To help hospitals respond to COVID-19, on November 25, 2020, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced the Hospital at Home program to allow eligible hospitals to provide hospital services to eligible patients in their homes. Hospitals must obtain a waiver from CMS and, currently, the waiver is only in effect for the duration of the COVID-19 public health emergency. CMS reimburses hospitals the same as if the patient were treated in the hospital.

Join Zoom Meeting on February 18 at 3:00 p.m. (ET)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82412804108?pwd=dVBLY2JOU05DTG5hMmhQL0pNjlSUT09>

Report Says 16 Rural Kentucky Hospitals Are at Risk of Closing

According to [an analysis](#) by the Center for Healthcare Quality and Payment Reform, more than 130 rural hospitals have closed over the past decade, and more than 800 additional rural hospitals — 40% of all rural hospitals in the country — are at risk of closing in the near future. Although not listed by name, the report states that 16 of those hospitals are in Kentucky and provides financial and payer-mix information for hospitals in rural areas.

How Deadly Is the U.K. Variant?

Learn more: <https://www.medpagetoday.com/infectiousdisease/covid19/91202>

Pentagon approves 20 more COVID-19 vaccination teams

(AP) The Pentagon has approved the deployment of 20 more military vaccination teams that will be prepared to go out to communities around the country, putting the department on pace to deploy as many as 19,000 troops if the 100 planned teams are realized. The troop number is almost double what federal authorities initially thought would be needed.

The Pentagon first received the original request from FEMA in late January, for 100 vaccination teams with a total of 10,000 troops. Kirby said only one team has been deployed so far because it is a complicated process that requires coordination with local and state authorities to identify the right locations and determine the infrastructure and support that is needed. He said it takes time to set each site up correctly.

Full story: <https://fox40.com/news/coronavirus/pentagon-approves-20-more-covid-19-vaccination-teams/>

[AstraZeneca COVID-19 Vaccine is Tough Sell in Europe](#)

WHO says vaccine is about 63% effective after two doses

Related - [WHO green-lights AstraZeneca COVID vaccine for urgent use](#)

Related #2 - Sanofi's mRNA COVID-19 vaccine candidate not ready this year

(Reuters) A COVID-19 vaccine candidate developed by Sanofi and U.S. group Translate Bio "will not be ready this year," the French drugmaker's chief executive told Le Journal du Dimanche newspaper. Clinical trials of this vaccine, which will be based on a technology known as mRNA -- on which lean approved vaccines of Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna --, are expected to start this quarter.

In December last year, Sanofi had said it was targeting "earliest potential approval" of the shot in the second half of 2021, following positive preclinical data.

Full story: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-sanofi-vaccines-idUSKBN2AD0PR>

Four people in Oregon who received both doses of vaccine test positive for coronavirus

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/four-people-oregon-who-received-both-doses-vaccine-test-positive-n1257886>

Related - 78-year-old woman dies at California vaccination site after being inoculated

"Her death does not appear to be related to the vaccine," said Los Angeles Co DPH

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/78-year-old-woman-dies-california-vaccination-site-after-being-n1257885>

Masks remain a must, CDC chief says, as some states lift their mandates

(Reuters) The head of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said on Sunday it is "absolutely" too soon to lift mask mandates, citing daily COVID-19 case numbers that despite recent declines remain more than double the levels seen last summer.

Dr. Rochelle Walensky's warning that face-covering requirements are still critical came just days after governors in Iowa and Montana lifted long-standing mask mandates in their states.

Appearing on NBC's "Meet the Press," Walensky said preventing further surges of infection is key to safely reopening schools and regaining some level of social normalcy until collective COVID-19 immunity can be achieved through mass vaccinations.

Whether Americans can look forward to walking down the street without wearing a mask by the end of the year "very much depends on how we behave right now," she said.

Full story: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-usa/cdc-chief-warns-its-too-soon-in-u-s-to-lift-covid-19-mask-mandates-idUSKBN2AE0SL>

Government investigating massive counterfeit N95 mask scam

Federal authorities are investigating a massive counterfeit N95 mask operation in which fake 3M masks were sold in at least five states to hospitals, medical facilities and government agencies. The foreign-made knockoffs are becoming increasingly difficult to spot and could put health care workers at grave risk for the coronavirus.

These masks are giving first responders "a false sense of security," said Steve Francis, assistant director for global trade investigations with the Homeland Security Department's principal investigative arm. He added, "We've seen a lot of fraud and other illegal activity." Officials could not name the states or the company involved because of the active investigation.

Nearly a year into the pandemic, fraud remains a major problem as scammers seek to exploit hospitals and desperate and weary Americans. Federal investigators say they have seen an increase in phony websites purporting to sell vaccines as well as fake medicine produced overseas and scams involving personal protective equipment. The schemes deliver phony products, unlike fraud earlier in the pandemic that focused more on fleecing customers. Read more: <https://news360.com/article/548610058>

Study Indicates COVID-19 Vaccines Are Safe for Organ Transplant Patients

Learn more: <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/newsroom/news-releases/covid-19-story-tip-study-indicates-covid-19-vaccines-are-safe-for-organ-transplant-patients>

**After record COVID cases and deaths,
how did North Dakota and South Dakota turn the tide?**

Explore more: <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/north-dakota-south-dakota-set-global-covid-records-how-did-n1257004>

**You Think The U.S. Has Vaccine Issues?
130 Countries Haven't Even Started Vaccinating**

NPR story: <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2021/02/14/966418960/you-think-the-u-s-has-vaccine-issues-130-countries-havent-even-started-vaccinati>

Doctors who say no to opioid use face threats from patients

One patient threatened to shoot Dr. Terry Hunt if physical therapy didn't relieve his pain as effectively as opioids did. Another harassed his staff, then roamed a hospital searching for Hunt after being told he would be weaned off painkillers he had used inappropriately. Hunt was unharmed, but shaken enough to ask the central Illinois hospital system where he worked to dismiss both patients.

So when he heard about Tuesday's attack at a medical clinic in Buffalo, Minnesota, that left one person dead and four injured, "the first thing I assumed is that it was something to do with pain medication," said Hunt, who now works for the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, and a Mayo Clinic Health System facility in Red Wing, Minnesota. "It makes us ask about our own workplace: How secure are we?"

Authorities said Gregory Paul Ulrich, 67, was angry about his medical treatment before he shot five workers and detonated three apparent pipe bombs at an Allina Health clinic.

Doctors who treat pain say threats of violence escalated markedly in recent years as mounting legal and regulatory pressure stemming from the deadly opioid epidemic led many to prescribe alternatives and taper their patients off addictive painkillers. While some patients benefit from careful use of opioids, and doctors don't want to stigmatize them, many would be better off treating pain with other therapies, experts say. But many become addicted to the drugs that are often intended for short-term use following surgeries.

Full story: <https://www.seattlepi.com/news/article/Doctors-who-say-no-to-opioid-use-face-threats-15950318.php>

Guinea Faces First Ebola Outbreak in Years

Learn more: <https://www.npr.org/2021/02/14/967924487/guinea-faces-first-ebola-outbreak-in-years>

Postmaster general's new plan could include slower mail and postage hike

(NBC) U.S. Postmaster General [Louis DeJoy](#) is set to implement a new strategic plan that includes higher postage rates and the elimination of first-class tier of mail, two sources familiar with the move told NBC News on Friday. The plan to eliminate first-class mail, which includes letters, magazines, catalogs, among others, would slow down mail that typically arrives within two days and make it more costly to deliver for both consumers and businesses.

The Washington Post [first reported](#) that all first-class mail would be lumped into the same three- to five-day window as non-local mail. This comes as the postal service under DeJoy, a top donor for former President Donald Trump, [has already seen serious delays](#) in mail delivery over the past several months.

Full story: <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/postmaster-general-s-new-plan-could-include-slower-mail-postage-n1257784>

On the Anniversary of Parkland President wants to ban assault rifles

(CBS) On the third anniversary of the [Parkland school shooting](#), President Joe Biden called on Congress to [pass stricter gun laws](#), including banning assault weapons. In a statement from the White House, Mr. Biden on Sunday asked Congress to pass laws requiring background checks on all gun sales, banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, and eliminating immunity for gun manufacturers. The White House didn't provide more details about Mr. Biden's plan.

On February 14, 2018, a gunman opened fire at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, killing 17. Since then, many of the students and community members have become passionate crusaders for stricter gun laws. The gunman is still awaiting trial.

Their organization, March for Our Lives, has been pushing Mr. Biden to appoint a gun czar who would serve in a Cabinet-adjacent position. According to a [statement sent to CNN](#) in December, the group asked that a National Director of Gun Violence Prevention "reflect the understanding that gun violence is a public health crisis, and disproportionately affects our most vulnerable populations."

Read more: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/biden-gun-control-parkland-school-shooting-anniversary/>

Fukushima Earthquake Called Aftershock of One From a Decade Ago

(Newser) Just how powerful was the 2011 earthquake that [triggered a nuclear disaster](#) in Japan? The aftershocks are still coming a decade later, reports the [Japan Times](#).

Read more: <https://www.newser.com/story/302555/earthquake-called-aftershock-of-one-from-a-decade-ago.html>

The KHEREF 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 (include your current email address). The preparedness program for the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) and KHEREF are supported by US DHHS ASPR HPP funds through a contract with Kentucky Public Health.