



# Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for February 16, 2021

## Federal Government Again Increases KY COVID-19 Vaccine Supply

(From [Press Release](#)) On Tuesday, Gov. Andy Beshear updated Kentuckians on the winter storm that has impacted communities across the commonwealth, as well as the state's COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

"The federal government is once again increasing our vaccine supply. The Biden administration announced today they will send 13.5 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine to states per week, up from 11 million last week," said Gov. Beshear. "The administration will also double the number of doses sent directly to retail pharmacies. Next week, Kentucky is expected to receive 87,860 vaccine doses."

The Kentucky National Guard is assisting emergency efforts by providing debris removal teams to help the Kentucky Division of Forestry clear trees, supporting local officials with transport of citizens to warming centers and shelters and providing crews to transport medical staff.

"Kentuckians are doing what we do best – taking care of each other. Under the continuing state of emergency, we have leveraged assistance from our state agencies in providing response and recovery assets and equipment to assist our many East and Southeastern counties heavily impacted by the recent power outage," said Kentucky Division of Emergency Management Director Michael Dossett. "At the height of the outage, 154,400 homes were without power. Restoration efforts will be ongoing into the coming week." Thirty-two counties and 22 cities in the state have declared states of emergency. Eleven warming centers are open in the commonwealth, with another 18 on standby. Five shelters are open with one on standby.

Director Dossett said a third winter storm in eight days is expected Wednesday evening to Friday morning. Single-digit temperatures are expected. Snow, sleet, freezing rain and cold rain will all be possible across the region. Snow and ice information is available at [snowky.ky.gov](http://snowky.ky.gov) and information on road conditions is available on [goky.ky.gov](http://goky.ky.gov). Governor's press release on the storm response: <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=612>

COVID-19 Cases: As of 4 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 16, Gov. Beshear reported 1,255 new cases, 27 new deaths, and a positivity rate of 6.58%. 935 are currently hospitalized, with 272 in an ICU and 133 on a vent.

To view the [full daily report](#), [incidence rate map](#), information on [testing locations](#), [vaccines](#), [contact tracing](#), [school reports and guidance](#), [guidance for health care providers](#) and the White House Coronavirus Task Force reports for Kentucky and more, visit [kycovid19.ky.gov](http://kycovid19.ky.gov).

## Another storm heading to snow-slammed South

(ABC News, February 16, 2021) Nearly 40 states are on alert for snow, ice and bitter cold as about 70.4% of the U.S. is covered by snow. The South is still digging out from snow and ice that hit earlier this week, closing vaccination sites and bringing roads to a standstill -- but a second storm is closing in. [<Read More >](#)

## Most of KY under Winter Storm Watch Wednesday Night into Early Friday Morning Link to [Watches, Warnings & Advisories](#):

5:30 PM ET NWS Briefing slides: <https://www.weather.gov/media/lmk/BriefingSlides.pdf>

## Texas Power Grid Is Unique, and That's an Issue Right Now

It's currently overwhelmed, and millions are without power in frigid temperatures

(Newser) It's an awful combination: North Texas had its coldest day in 72 years Tuesday—the low was minus 2 degrees—as power shortages left hundreds of thousands in the region without heat, reports the [Dallas News](#). The situation is much the same statewide, as more than 4 million homes and businesses were without power as of Tuesday afternoon, reports the [AP](#). This had people resorting to dangerous, [even deadly, alternatives](#), and it also put the state's power grid in the national spotlight. Coverage:

- Texas is unlike most states in that it operates its own power grid that serves almost all residents, reports [Vox](#). "The Texas power grid is really an island," says expert Daniel Cohan of Rice University. While it has some links to neighboring states, "those power lines aren't adequate to draw the power it would need to cope with such a massive shortfall," writes Unair Irfan. The grid is run by the nonprofit Electric Reliability Council of Texas, or ERCOT.
- Most of the state's power comes from natural gas and wind, explains the [Houston Chronicle](#) in a story whose headline is a question on many state residents' minds: "What went wrong with the Texas power grid?" In this case, the explanation for what the newspaper calls the grid's "catastrophic failure" involves

a double whammy: The historic storm not only increased demand, it reduced supply because the freezing weather crippled power plants and distribution networks.

- It doesn't help that [wind turbines are freezing](#), though that's a relatively small part of the problem, writes Brad Plumer at the [New York Times](#). A bigger issue is that the storm exceeded the worst-case scenarios of grid operators when they were looking ahead to winter. They figured the state would need a maximum of 67 gigawatts of electricity in an emergency, but the demand rose to 69 gigawatts on Sunday and grew worse from there.

"No one's model of the power system envisioned that all 254 Texas counties would come under a winter storm warning at the same time, Joshua Rhodes of University of Texas, Austin, tells the *Times*. "It's putting major strain on both the electricity grid and the gas grid that feeds both electricity and heat." (Plumer's take is that climate change will lead to more and more of these types of extreme weather situations.)

Full story: <https://www.newser.com/story/302628/power-grid-in-texas-is-overwhelmed.html>

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**CDC releases guidance on vaccinating homebound individuals**

([AHA Today](#)) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has released [guidance](#) on COVID-19 vaccination planning, training and administration for health care providers who vaccinate homebound persons. This includes, for example, people who need help or medical equipment to leave their home, typically do not leave their home or whose health could get worse if they do. CDC also has updated its [vaccine storage and handling toolkit](#), which includes information related to home use.

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**Johns Hopkins: Health Security Headlines**  
**[Extracts from February 16, 2021](#)**

**[Covid-Linked Syndrome in Children Is Growing and Cases Are More Severe](#)** (*New York Times*) The condition, which usually emerges several weeks after infection, is still rare, but can be dangerous. "A higher percentage of them are really critically ill," one doctor said.

**[Some Antibodies Can Dampen Antiviral Defences in People with Severe COVID](#)** (*Nature*) Defects in the immune defences induced by the protein interferon are associated with some severe cases of COVID-19. An analysis of patients' blood samples sheds light on how antibodies might contribute to these defects.

**[The FDA's Experience with Covid-19 Antibody Tests](#)** (*NEJM*) To facilitate early access to serology tests for laboratories and health care providers, the FDA published guidance on March 16 that permitted developers to market their tests without an EUA as long as the test was validated, the FDA was notified, and test reports included important information about limitations, including statements indicating that the test had not been reviewed by the FDA and that results could not be used to diagnose or exclude infection. In hindsight, however, we realized that the policy outlined in our March 16 guidance was flawed.

**[WHO Alerts Six African Countries After Ebola Outbreaks](#)** (*Reuters*) The World Health Organization has asked six African countries to be alert for possible Ebola infections, as Guinea on Tuesday reported new cases and Democratic Republic of Congo said its new infections were a resurgence of a previous outbreak

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**Zika vaccine shows promise in early trials**

(UPI) A vaccine against Zika produced immunity to the mosquito-borne virus for up to a year in at least 80% of those who received it, a study published Monday by the [Annals of Internal Medicine](#) found. People given the vaccine as part of the Phase I trial, the first step in the research and development process before U.S. Food and Drug Administration approval, experienced minimal side effects, the researchers said.

A Phase 2 trial of the vaccine is already underway, according to its manufacturer, Johnson & Johnson-Janssen.

Full story: [https://www.upi.com/Health\\_News/2021/02/15/Zika-vaccine-shows-promise-in-early-trials/4561613418623/](https://www.upi.com/Health_News/2021/02/15/Zika-vaccine-shows-promise-in-early-trials/4561613418623/)

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*CDC Public Health Webinar*

**Multidisciplinary Care for Acute Pulmonary Embolism:  
The Pulmonary Embolism Response Team**

**March 11, 2021 • 2:00–3:00 pm ET**

Pulmonary embolism (PE) is a major cause of morbidity and mortality in the United States, accounting for up to 100,000 deaths annually. Although there has been a surge of new therapeutic tools and strategies designed to treat patients with PE, the outcomes for patients who present with massive or high-risk PE remain dismal.

To address this crisis, multidisciplinary rapid response teams focused on PE have developed across the world. These pulmonary embolism response teams (PERTs) aim to expeditiously engage multiple experts simultaneously to generate and implement a thoughtful, coordinated, and comprehensive treatment plan for

each patient with PE. The organization and structure of each PERT will depend on the local clinical demands and resources of each institution.

This webinar will discuss the PERT model and purpose, present the structure and organization, examine the available evidence for efficacy and usefulness, and share the mission of the PERT Consortium. They will also discuss future directions for research that will help evaluate the value of this innovative model and determine if this collaborative approach improves PE outcomes, improves clinical care, is cost effective, enriches patients' quality of life, and advances the science of PE treatment.

This webinar is free and open to public health professionals, clinicians, and researchers who desire more information about pulmonary embolism. Advance registration is required, and the number of attendees is limited.

**Please preregister here:** <https://bit.ly/3pMQuB9>

For more information please contact: Cynthia Sayers: [cay1@cdc.gov](mailto:cay1@cdc.gov)

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### **KHA Town Hall to Discuss Hospital at Home**

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.

On February 18, Dr. **Bruce Leff**, MD, Professor of Medicine and the Director of the Center for Transformative Geriatric Research at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine will discuss the Hospital at Home program and how it can be beneficial to hospitals. This information can help institutions evaluate whether they should pursue the program along with determining requirements for implementation as well as start-up timelines.

Attendees will also hear from **Jennifer Hardin**, Director of Home Care Services, and **Jeff Hughes**, Director of Cardiopulmonary Services, from St. Claire Healthcare on a successful program the hospital implemented to care for COVID-19 patients in their homes to maintain hospital capacity for more critically ill patients. The representatives from St. Claire will also discuss their evaluation and planning of how to implement a Hospital at Home program.

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82412804108?pwd=dVBLy2J0U05DTG5hMmhQL0pNjlSUT09>

Meeting ID: 824 1280 4108

Passcode: 2501

#### **One tap mobile**

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Passcode: 2501

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82412804108>

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.