



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for February 25, 2021

Governor Announces 119 More Vaccination Sites, 410 Total Locations

(From [press release](#)) On Thursday, Gov. Andy Beshear announced 119 new vaccination sites, bringing the state's total number of vaccine providers to 410. Six of the new locations are regional sites; three are federally qualified health centers; 10 are Walmart stores; 10 are Kroger stores; and 90 are Walgreens stores. New locations will be added to the "Where Can I Get Vaccinated?" map on the vaccine.ky.gov website, also found [here](#).

As of 4 PM today, there were 1,447 new cases, with a positivity rate of 5.67%. There are 843 currently hospitalized, with 220 in the ICU and 122 on vents. There are 43 new deaths recorded. For more visit kycovid19.ky.gov.

New COVID-19 variants found in New York, California

(CIDRAP) As the country races to vaccinate as many Americans as possible against COVID-19, both New York and California are reporting new virus variants that might be more contagious than the original strain. In New York, a new variant that carries a mutation that may weaken the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines has been [identified as the B.1.526 variant](#). It was first discovered in November, and now accounts for about one in four viral sequences in a database shared by scientists, according to the *New York Times*.

Learn more: <https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/02/new-covid-19-variants-found-new-york-california>

Moderna Ready to Test Version of Covid-19 Vaccine Aimed at Worrisome Variant

(STAT News) Moderna is pressing forward with a modified version of its Covid-19 vaccine meant to protect against an emerging strain of the virus, the company said Wednesday, planning to start a clinical trial as soon as regulators give the green light. Moderna said it is seeking to test the novel vaccine on its own and as a combined shot with its current vaccine. It also plans to test whether giving a booster of the current vaccine on its own will give enhanced protection against new variants of the virus that causes Covid-19.

Related story - Is more simply better?

Why Pfizer thinks a booster of its COVID vaccine might work against new variants

(STAT) Could the solution to emerging variants of the coronavirus that causes Covid-19, some of which seem to make current vaccines less effective, be more of the current vaccines? While Moderna and Pfizer, along with its partner BioNTech, have announced plans to test vaccines specifically targeted at variants of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, they are also planning to test the idea of simply giving people three doses instead of two of their vaccines that have already been authorized. Experts say it's at least conceivable it could work. [<Read More >](#)

Related story #2 - Have a Case of a COVID Variant? No One Is Going to Tell You

(KHN) Covid-19 infections from variant strains are quickly spreading across the U.S., but there's one big problem: Lab officials say they can't tell patients or their doctors whether someone has been infected by a variant. Federal rules around who can be told about the variant cases are so confusing that public health officials may merely know the county where a case has emerged but can't do the kind of investigation and deliver the notifications needed to slow the spread, according to Janet Hamilton, executive director of the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists. [<Read More >](#)

What Is A Cold Chain? And Why Do So Many Vaccines Need It?

NPR full story: <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2021/02/24/965835993/what-is-a-cold-chain-and-why-do-so-many-vaccines-need-it>

US Executive Order seeks to secure critical supply chains

(From [AHA Today](#)) President Biden today will sign an executive order to create more resilient and secure supply chains for critical and essential goods, the White House [announced](#), calling last year's shortages of personal protective equipment for front-line health care workers "unacceptable." The order calls for a one-year federal review of U.S. supply chains in six key sectors, including public health and biological preparedness; and an immediate 100-day review to address vulnerabilities in the supply chains for active pharmaceutical ingredients, essential minerals, semiconductors and large capacity batteries.

Amid COVID-19 pandemic, flu has disappeared in the US

(AP News) Flu has virtually disappeared from the U.S., with reports coming in at far lower levels than anything seen in decades. Experts say that measures put in place to fend off the coronavirus — mask wearing, social distancing and virtual schooling — were a big factor in preventing a “twindemic” of flu and COVID-19. A push to get more people vaccinated against flu probably helped, too, as did fewer people traveling, they say. <[Read More](#) >

CIDRAP News Scan for Feb 25, 2021

Key stories: *COVID-19 in dental hygienists; COVID spread in Air Force trainees; Listeria outbreak tied to cheese; More Ebola in Guinea, DRC; H5N8 avian flu in poultry*

Why are we still disinfecting surfaces to stop COVID-19?

(Popular Science) A lot has happened over the past year, so you can be forgiven for not having a clear memory of what some of the major concerns were at the beginning of the pandemic. However, if you think back to the beginning of the pandemic, one of the major concerns was the role that surfaces played in the transmission of the virus.

The key question isn't whether surface transmission is possible, or whether it can occur in the real world—it almost certainly can. The real question is: What is the extent of the role of surface contact in the transmission of the virus? That is, what is the likelihood of catching COVID via a surface, as opposed to other methods of transmission?

There's little evidence that surface transmission is a common way in which the coronavirus is spread. The main way it's spread is by the air, either by larger droplets via close contact, or by smaller droplets called aerosols. As a side note, the relative role these two routes play in transmission is probably a much more interesting and important question to clarify from a public health perspective.

Learn more: <https://www.popsoci.com/story/health/covid-19-surfaces-spread-clean/>

Gyms with maskless users shown to be at high risk for COVID spread

Read full ABC story: <https://abcnews.go.com/Health/gyms-maskless-users-shown-high-risk-covid-spread/story?id=76091541>

Johns Hopkins: Health Security Headlines; Extracts from Feb 25, 2021

[Crisis Standards of Care: Lessons from New York City Hospitals' COVID-19 Experience The Emergency Medicine Perspective](#) - The purpose of this project was to convene a series of forums in which clinicians from hospitals across New York City could frankly discuss their experiences with implementation of crisis standards of care (CSC). The Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, in collaboration with New York City Health + Hospitals, convened a virtual working group in October 2020, consisting of 15 New York City intensive care unit (ICU) directors, and interim recommendations were shared in November 2020

[Characteristics and Outcomes of US Children and Adolescents With Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children \(MIS-C\) Compared With Severe Acute COVID-19 \(JAMA\)](#) In this case series that included 539 patients with MIS-C and 577 patients with severe COVID-19, patients with MIS-C were more likely than those with severe COVID-19 to be 6 to 12 years old, be non-Hispanic Black, and have severe cardiovascular or mucocutaneous involvement and more extreme inflammation. The study findings suggest patterns of clinical presentation and organ involvement that distinguish between patients with MIS-C and severe acute COVID-19.

[Dr. Fauci Says New Data Suggests 'Long' Covid Symptoms can Last Up to 9 Months \(CNBC\)](#) Symptoms of “long Covid,” which researchers are now calling Post-Acute Sequelae of Covid-19, or PASC, can develop “well after” infection, and severity can range from mild to “incapacitating,” said Fauci, also the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

[Sanofi Lends Manufacturing Support to Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 While Pursuing Own Vaccine \(Homeland Preparedness News\)](#) In an effort to meet global supply demands, Sanofi has agreed to support the manufacturing of a COVID-19 vaccine made by Janssen Pharmaceutical NV and Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc., both of which are part of Johnson & Johnson. The single-dose vaccine will mark Sanofi's second manufacturing support offer, following an agreement to aid Pfizer-BioNTech to manufacture and supply more than 125 million doses of their own vaccine.

[Announcing the Lancet Commission on Vaccine Refusal, Acceptance, and Demand in the USA \(Lancet\)](#) The Lancet has established the Commission for Vaccine Refusal, Acceptance, and Demand in the USA to design a multisectoral plan for public policy to support high acceptance of safe and effective vaccines in the USA. Our goal is to understand and report on the state of vaccine acceptance and its potential link to vaccine hesitancy. Additionally, we will work to identify and predict future trends in vaccine acceptance and impacts on

the public health community. We will also identify and assess demand-side vaccine uptake interventions and solutions to counter anti-vaccine information.

More than one million in Texas lack drinking water after winter storm

(Texas Tribune) Over 1.4 million Texans still faced water disruptions on Wednesday afternoon, more than a week after Texas' winter storms wreaked havoc on the state's power grid and water services. More than 20,000 people were completely without running water Wednesday afternoon because of water main breaks, mechanical failures, frozen or broken water lines or other issues, a Texas Commission on Environmental Quality spokesperson said. Experts estimate that damage from the storm will cost billions. Thousands of Texans are facing damage from burst pipes, which have flooded homes and left many without water. This problem can be especially rampant for apartment dwellers, who live in multi-unit buildings where it can be more difficult in finding the problem areas.

Since a peak of about 14.9 million Texans faced water disruptions on Friday, the state's water situation has steadily improved. More than 1,100 boiling water notices issued after the storm have since been rescinded, including in Houston, Austin, Arlington, Fort Worth, San Antonio, Corpus Christi and Galveston.

Full story: <https://www.texastribune.org/2021/02/24/texas-water-winter-storm/>

How you can help prevent teen suicide as pandemic takes toll on Kentucky's students

(KyForward News) In a 2018 survey, about 16% of Kentucky students said they had considered ending their own life. During the pandemic, healthcare providers have seen an increase in psychiatric disorders and suicidal thoughts and behaviors in children as young as elementary school age. The increased feelings of isolation, loneliness, fear and uncertainty can have a detrimental effect on a child's mental health. Other factors such as grief and loss, the family's financial status, and experiencing abuse can contribute to child and adolescent suicidal ideation.

Parents, teachers, and friends can help prevent suicide if they know what signs to look for and what questions to ask. Your child's friends may have a better idea of what is going on with them than you, which is developmentally appropriate for adolescents. Get to know your child's friends, give them your number and let them know they should contact you if they are worried.

Read more: <https://www.kyforward.com/alissa-briqqs-how-you-can-help-prevent-teen-suicide-as-pandemic-takes-toll-on-kentuckys-students/>

Ready Responder resources ensure peace of mind when disaster strikes

Ready.gov's webpage [Ready Responder](#) offers resources and guides for both firefighters and law enforcement to help them be prepared when disasters occur. The [Ready Responder Toolkit](#) is designed to provide emergency response agencies with a series of planning tools to help prepare their personnel and their families for emergencies.

This toolkit contains sample newsletters, training activities, and several planning templates. Samples and planning templates can be used for developing both an organizational preparedness plan and an individual or family preparedness plan. (Source: [Ready.gov](#))

"Smart grid" interoperability standards from NIST may benefit future emergency services

Just as southern states are recovering from the power blackouts caused by winter storms, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) has released [Version 4.0 of its Smart Grid Framework](#), a roadmap to strengthen the resilience of the nation's power infrastructure through use of interoperability standards.

The Emergency Services Sector may benefit from the capabilities generated by "smart grid" interoperability. The power grid is no longer a one-way distribution system of electricity from generator to consumer. It is now a complex system of systems, capable of two-way transmission, communication, and real-time monitoring. It utilizes a hybrid network that includes the traditional electricity infrastructure alongside utility-owned communications networks and the services of public broadband and wireless carriers.

NIST's [Framework and Roadmap for Smart Grid Interoperability Standards](#) emphasizes the value of interoperability as the "crucial enabler" of many critical capabilities within this complex power infrastructure.

A [Technical Note](#) from NIST, just released this month, examined the benefits of utility-based interoperability investments for Hurricane Irma in 2017. The report conservatively estimated that Florida counties that made interoperability investments in their power infrastructure realized nearly \$1.7 billion of operational resilience benefits in the form of avoided customer interruption costs.

Emergency communications may also reap future benefits from a modernized, interoperable power infrastructure. Earlier this month, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) announced phase two of a pilot program for [Next Generation Network Priority Services \(NGN-PS\)](#) that will use the electric grid for emergency communications.

CISA's pilot program will demonstrate how national security and emergency preparedness (NS/EP) communications signals can utilize the electrical power infrastructure as a backup to existing communications infrastructure, while prioritizing first responder traffic over all other traffic. The program is part of a larger effort to provide priority services for voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)-based networks. *(Sources: [NIST](#), [CISA](#))*

FBI Training Opportunity:

**Mitigating Chemical/Explosive and Biological Threats
Through Triggers and Tripwires for the Emergency Response Sector**

The Federal Bureau of Investigation Weapons of Mass Destruction Directorate (FBI WMDD) Chemical and Biological Countermeasures Unit (CBCU) developed online training based on case examples of subjects who possessed or attempted to possess chemical and biological materials for nefarious purposes.

The goal of the presentation is to inform the audience on the importance of information sharing, capacity building, and other situational awareness capabilities that exist in every state and territory. Additionally, this presentation will provide audience members relevant triggers and tripwires of the above-mentioned threats, discuss tripwire information that was provided, and how local WMD Coordinators can assist in mitigating these threats in their area of responsibility.

This training is one of many initiatives the FBI WMDD leads to prevent and neutralize WMD threats against the homeland and interests abroad. WMDD focuses on outreach, intelligence, operational response, and investigative capabilities designed to keep WMD threats from becoming a reality. Through creating an avenue of information sharing with first responders, specifically medical staff, this will allow for the potential to mitigate the use of chemical and biological agents for WMDs. This is a shared commitment between the federal government, the private sector, and members of the community, including law enforcement, hazmat, and first responders.

This presentation will occur on **Wednesday, March 24, 2021 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. ET**. Please note that **Daylight Saving Time (+1 hour) is in effect during this time**.

For more information about this training event, visit the [FBI WMDD CBCU webpage](#).

To register for this training event, visit the [registration page](#). The participant call-in number is 800-768-3395. *(Source: [FBI WMDD CBCU](#))* Extracted from [The InfoGram](#) created by EMR-ISAC.

<p>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 added or deleted, 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 KHREF are supported by US DHHS ASPR HPP funds through a contract with Kentucky Public Health.</p>
