



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for August 2, 2021

Gov. Beshear Announces New Testing and Vaccine Program in State-Run Health Care Facilities

(From [Press Release](#)) Gov. Andy Beshear discussed the latest on the COVID-19 delta variant in Kentucky and explained how Kentucky is leading by example with a new testing and vaccine program at state-run health care facilities.

Cabinet for Health and Family Services Secretary Eric Friedlander, who joined the Governor on Monday, explained that universal masking will be required in all state-run health care facilities, including veterans nursing homes, effective tomorrow, Aug. 3. In addition, following the recommendation of the Long-Term Care Task Force, the cabinet will require all contractors and state employees working in these state-operated facilities be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by Oct. 1, unless there is a religious or medical reason they cannot be vaccinated. If any of the staff in these facilities is unvaccinated, they will be tested at least twice weekly for their safety and the safety of the Kentuckians they serve.

The latest move comes after Gov. Beshear announced last week new COVID-19 precautions based on updated guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The Governor required all employees and visitors at state office buildings, regardless of vaccination status, to wear face coverings.

Executive Order Renewing Emergency Order for Pharmacists

On Friday, Gov. Beshear signed an executive order renewing emergency orders for pharmacists to ensure their authority in the ongoing battle against COVID-19. The order says pharmacists located in any Kentucky county may dispense emergency refills of up to a 30-day supply of any non-scheduled medication for residents of any county in the state.

Case info for August 2nd:

- ✓ Number of people who have received at least one vaccine dose in Kentucky: **2,319,625**
Number of unique individuals who have received a vaccine dose since Friday: **22,663**
- ✓ New Cases: **1,052**
- ✓ Positivity Rate: **9.77%**
- ✓ Current Hospitalizations: **796**
- ✓ Current Intensive Care Admittances: **250**
- ✓ Currently on Ventilators: **98**

Watch the press conference (starts about 5 min in): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtJ4l26jiJM&pp=sAQA>

COVID-19 Cases Continue to Surge Over Weekend – FL and TX Lead Average daily cases over 78,000

(CIDRAP) Over the weekend, COVID-19 cases continued to surge across the country with Florida experiencing record daily highs of new cases and hospitalizations. The current surge of virus activity is due to the highly transmissible Delta (B1617.2) variant.

Yesterday the country reported 25,141 new COVID-19 cases, and 71 deaths, according to the Johns Hopkins COVID-19 [tracker](#). In total, America has confirmed 35,020,438 COVID-19 cases, including 613,254 deaths.

The 7-day average of new daily COVID-19 cases is 78,472, according to data from the *Washington Post*. New daily cases rose 54.2% over the past week, while deaths rose by 31.6% and hospitalizations by 42.2%.

The outbreak is concentrated in areas with low vaccination coverage. The 7-day average of new daily cases is now higher than the peak of last summer. [Target, Kroger, and Walmart](#) are once again revisiting mask policies in light of the Delta surge.

Using data from the CDC, a [Kaiser Family Foundation](#) analysis now suggests less than 1% of fully vaccinated people are experiencing breakthrough infections.

Read full CIDRAP report: <https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/08/florida-and-texas-lead-us-covid-19-surge>

Johns Hopkins: Health security Headlines Extracts from [August 2, 2021](#)

[The U.S. is Wasting Vaccine Doses, Even as Cases Rise and Other Countries Suffer Shortages](#). (New York Times) A survey of data from 10 states shows that about one million doses have gone to waste since the nation began administering Covid-19 vaccines in December. Much of the loss has come as demand for inoculations plummeted, with the daily rate of vaccinations now at less than one-fifth of its peak average of 3.4 million shots, reached in mid-April.

[VACCINES Act Introduced in U.S. House To Protect Veterans During Public Health Emergencies](#)

(Homeland Preparedness News) Bipartisan legislation that would direct the U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish tests and vaccinations to America's military veterans during public health emergencies was recently introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Veterans' Access to Care Concerning Inoculations Needed in Emergency Situations (VACCINES) Act, H.R. 4506, which U.S. Rep. Mark Amodei (R-NV) sponsored on July 19 with cosponsor U.S. Rep. Conor Lamb (D-PA), would ensure that all veterans, regardless of their status within the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) healthcare system, would be eligible to receive testing and vaccination services in the event of a future national public health emergency.

UK Pediatric Emergency Medicine Symposium

Pediatric Emergencies: Early Assessment and Treatment of Children

The third annual UK Pediatric Emergency Medicine symposium is an outreach educational event. The target audience is physicians and clinicians who care for children but don't necessarily have specific training in pediatrics. This will be a virtual conference on **September 28th from 7:30 AM to 5:30PM ET**.

Program information can be found at <https://www.cecentral.com/live/20847>

Program agenda: <https://www.cecentral.com/live/20847/agenda>

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[Armis Identifies Nine Vulnerabilities in Critical Infrastructure Used by Over 80% of Major Hospitals in North America - Armis](#)

(Shared by AHA's Cybersecurity Team) Researchers at [Armis](#), the unified asset visibility and security platform provider, have today announced the discovery of nine critical vulnerabilities in the Nexus Control Panel, which powers all current models of Translogic's **pneumatic tube system (PTS) stations** by [Swisslog Healthcare](#). The Translogic PTS system is a critical infrastructure for healthcare used in more than 3,000 hospitals worldwide. The system is responsible for delivering medications, blood products, and various lab samples across multiple departments of a hospital. The discovered vulnerabilities can enable an unauthenticated attacker to take over PTS stations and gain full control over the tube network of a target hospital. This type of control could enable sophisticated ransomware attacks that can range from denial-of-service of this critical infrastructure to full-blown man-in-the-middle attacks that can alter the paths of the networks' carriers, resulting in deliberate sabotage of the workings of the hospital.

Modern PTS systems are IP-connected, and offer advanced features, but, despite the prevalence of these systems, and the reliance of hospitals on their availability to deliver care, the security of these systems has never been thoroughly analyzed or researched.

"This research sheds light on systems that are hidden in plain sight but are nevertheless a crucial building block to modern-day healthcare," said Nadir Izrael, co-founder and CTO at Armis. "Understanding that patient care depends not only on medical devices, but also on the operational infrastructure of a hospital is an important milestone to securing healthcare environments."

How Could PwnedPiper Be Used? - Five of the discovered PwnedPiper vulnerabilities can be used to reach remote-code-execution and by gaining access to a hospital's network, an unauthenticated attacker can use one of these to take over Nexus stations. By compromising a Nexus station, an attacker can leverage it for reconnaissance purposes, including harvesting data from the station such as RFID credentials of any employee that uses the PTS system, details about each station's functions or location, as well as gain an understanding of the physical layout of the PTS network. From there, an attacker can take over all Nexus stations in the tube network, and hold them hostage in a sophisticated ransomware attack.

"Armis disclosed the vulnerabilities to Swisslog on May 1, 2021, and has been working with the manufacturer to test the available patch and ensure proper security measures will be provided to customers," said Ben Seri, Armis VP of Research, who leads the team that discovered the vulnerabilities. "With so many hospitals reliant on this technology we've worked diligently to address these vulnerabilities to increase cyber resiliency in these healthcare environments, where lives are on the line."

Ben Seri and Barak Hadad will present their research on PwnedPiper at this year's Black Hat USA on Wednesday, August 4th, and Thursday, August 5th. You can find more details [here](#).

For more information, Armis has published a detailed blog to help hospitals navigate the vulnerability at <https://www.armis.com/pwnedpiper>.

For additional information from Swisslog Healthcare, please see the following security advisory [here](#).

Tornado Count Jumps to 9 Across Pa., NJ Following Severe Storms

(NBC) The number of confirmed tornadoes in Pennsylvania and New Jersey grew to nine on Sunday, as the scope of this week's severe storms continues to come into focus. The National Weather Service said an EF1

tornado with winds peaking at 90mph touched down in Weisenberg Township, Pennsylvania. The tornado traveled 1.6 miles, uprooting trees and damaging crops but claiming no lives. < [Read more](#) >

**FEMA Releases Guide on Key Planning Factors and Considerations
for Response to and Recovery from a Chemical Incident**

*(Homeland Security Today)*The rise to prominence of the chemical industry over the past century and current use of innumerable chemicals in everyday life have increased the risk of exposure to or contamination by a host of substances that can threaten human, animal and/ or environmental health. Exposures may result from industrial or transportation accidents, from unintended contamination of products or from deliberate chemical releases. The recent use of chemical agents in warfare and in assassinations highlights how preparedness activities must accommodate both intentional and accidental chemical incidents. <[Read more](#) >

Wastewater disposal method may limit earthquakes caused by fracking

(UPI) Oil and gas companies can prevent earthquakes by reducing the rate of wastewater injections, according to a new study.

To extract oil and gas trapped deep in rock deposits, fossil fuel companies use hydraulic fracturing, or the the injection of high-pressure fluids deep into Earth's crust.

Because these injection fluids are filled with toxic chemicals, the resulting wastewater must be disposed of safely.

Most operations blast the dirty water deep underground at old injection sites, but numerous studies -- from [Middle America](#) and [Appalachia](#) to [Sichuan, China](#) -- have linked the practice with increases in regional earthquakes.

Learn more: https://www.upi.com/Science_News/2021/07/28/italy-wastewater-injections-earthquakes/9691627498560/

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.