



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for September 23, 2021

KY COVID-19 Update

(From [KY Daily Summary](#)) There were 4,099 new cases reported Thursday, with 1,093 cases 18 and under. The positivity rate is down to 11.33%. There were 44 new deaths reported, for a total of 8,466 to date. There are 2,223 hospitalized with COVID, with 625 in an ICU and 424 on a vent. 90.5% of the ICU capacity is occupied.

Governor hopes COVID-19 cases have plateaued

(WLEX) Kentucky's coronavirus cases appear to be leveling off, Governor Andy Beshear announced on Thursday. "We are hoping that in the very least we are plateauing," said Beshear.

Specifically, Beshear was referencing the number of people hospitalized with COVID-19, the weekly amount of new cases, and the state's positivity rate. He believes these data points point to a plateau.

"It's overall good news, but we're still in a very dangerous situation," said Beshear.

Full story link: <https://www.lex18.com/news/coronavirus/governor-hopes-covid-19-cases-have-plateaued>

Watch YouTube: https://youtu.be/2mnr0m4V_R0

Related story - Governor Expands Kentucky National Guard Support to More Hospitals

(From [Press Release](#)) On Thursday during his weekly [Team Kentucky update](#), Gov. Andy Beshear said he has now deployed 505 Kentucky National Guard members to 29 hospitals throughout the state, expanding the Guard's presence by 94 members and to four more hospitals.

"This is the largest deployment of the Kentucky National Guard for a health care crisis in the commonwealth's history," said Gov. Beshear. "We continue to hear from our hospitals how much these incredible professionals help."

As of today, 64 of 96 Kentucky hospitals are reporting critical staffing shortages, and 130 adult ICU beds are available statewide. Five Kentucky children with COVID-19 are currently on ventilators.

To see a map of current Kentucky National Guard, COVID-19 testing and nursing student support to hospitals, click [here](#).

Following FDA, ACIP recommends COVID-19 booster shots

(CIDRAP) Americans aged 65 and older who received the two-dose Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine should get a third booster dose of that vaccine if it has been at least 6 months since completing their vaccination series. That was the recommendation the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) made late yesterday, and it was echoed today during a meeting of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).

In addition to those 65 and older, the FDA [authorized](#) booster doses of the Pfizer vaccine for people 18 through 64 who are at high risk of severe COVID-19 or whose institutional or occupational exposure puts them at high risk of severe COVID-19. ACIP agreed with recommending a booster for the first group but not the second.

"The FDA amended the [emergency use authorization] for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine to allow for a booster dose in certain populations such as health care workers, teachers and day care staff, grocery workers and those in homeless shelters or prisons, among others," said Acting FDA Commissioner Janet Woodcock, MD, in a press release.

Addressing ACIP this morning, CDC Director Rochelle Walensky, MD, MPH, said she supported the FDA's decision, and used the example of a young emergency department physician as someone who would benefit from a booster dose.

Members also discussed the problematic logistics of recommending a third dose: Would being fully vaccinated, if over 65, now mean three shots, or just two? And what about Americans over 65 who received the Moderna or Johnson & Johnson vaccines? And does a board recommendation of boosters signal—falsely—that the current vaccines are ineffective? At the end of the meeting today, the committee voted on four questions. They agreed that vaccine boosters should be used for those 65 and older, and for those 50 to 64 who have underlying medical conditions that make them prone to severe COVID-19. Heated discussion, however, broke out over the third and fourth recommendations.

The third recommendation the committee considered was a booster for those 18 to 49 based on individual benefit and risk given underlying medical conditions.

The fourth and final consideration was for those 18 and older who worked in an occupational setting that put them at more risk for COVID-19 infections, including frontline workers, people who live in congregate settings, and caregivers for the immunocompromised.

In the end the third recommendation passed 9-6, and the fourth did not pass, by a 6-9 vote.

Full CIDRAP story: <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-authorizes-booster-dose-pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccine-certain-populations>

Full FDA News Release: <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-authorizes-booster-dose-pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccine-certain-populations>

Pregnant women who get COVID-19 vaccine pass antibodies to newborns

(UPI) One way to help protect newborns from COVID-19 is for women to get their COVID-19 vaccine while pregnant. A study published Wednesday found that mothers-to-be who had either the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine passed high levels of antibodies to their infants.

Researchers from the NYU Grossman School of Medicine discovered that 100% of 36 newborns tested at the time of birth had protective antibodies after their mothers had received the vaccines.

They observed the highest levels of antibodies in cord blood of mothers who were fully vaccinated in the second half of their pregnancies. This correlates with protection for the babies in their first months of life.

Learn more: https://www.upi.com/Health_News/2021/09/23/covid19-newborns-antibodies-women-vaccination/7271632367535/

New Mexico health officials suspect two people dead from ivermectin poisoning

Learn more: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2021/09/23/two-people-died-ivermectin-poisoning-new-mexico/5830791001/>

Llama antibodies may fight COVID-19 in humans, researchers say



(UPI) The future of [COVID-19](#) treatments might include a tiny antibody made by llamas. British researchers credit a llama named Fifi with their finding. The investigators said these llama nanobodies, which are also produced by camels, could eventually be produced in a lab and administered by a nasal spray, binding tightly to the COVID-19 virus and neutralizing it.

The potential solution appears easier than using antibodies from human patients who have recovered from the virus, the study authors noted. Those human antibodies typically are delivered by infusion in a hospital setting.

Read more: https://www.upi.com/Health_News/2021/09/23/covid19-llama-antibody-human-treatment/8001632402502/

EPA Moves to Sharply Limit Potent Gases Used In Refrigerators and Air Conditioners

(NPR) The new rule is intended to decrease the use of greenhouse gases known as hydrofluorocarbons by 85% over the next 15 years. The gases that are thousands of times more powerful than carbon dioxide.

Story: <https://www.npr.org/2021/09/23/1040028555/epa-refrigerants-hydrofluorocarbons-climate-change-co2>

ARH to buy Paul B. Hall Regional Medical Center

(WYMT) Appalachian Regional Healthcare (ARH) officials said they have signed an asset purchase agreement to acquire Paul B. Hall Regional Medical Center in Paintsville. The purchase is expected to be completed within 70 days, with ARH taking over day-to-day operations on Dec. 1st. The purchase is subject to customary approvals and closing conditions.

Read more: <https://www.wytm.com/app/2021/09/23/arh-buy-paul-b-hall-regional-medical-center/>

ARH Press Release: <https://www.arh.org/newsfeed/appalachian-regional-healthcare-to-purchase-paul-b-hall-regional-medical-center>

Global Resilience Webinar
September 29 @ 11 AM ET

GreenGrid Security Series IV: Can we build a low carbon, but rock solid grid?

Learn more & register: <https://grcom.eiscouncil.org/the-greengrid-security-series-iv/>

The KHRF 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 KHRF are supported by US DHHS ASPR HPP funds through a contract with Kentucky Public Health.