



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for March 22, 2022

President warns Russian cyberattacks 'coming'

The president tells companies to immediately harden defenses against potential Russian cyberattacks.

(Politico) President Joe Biden on Monday warned of Russian cyberattacks against the U.S. — making his most prominent alert yet about what he called new intelligence concerning the Putin regime's plans.

"The more Putin's back is against the wall, the greater the severity of the tactics he may employ ... one of the tools he's most likely to use in my view, in our view, is cyberattacks," Biden said on Monday. "The magnitude of Russia's cyber capacity is fairly consequential and it's coming," he continued.

Anne Neuberger, the deputy national security adviser for cyber and emerging technology, warned that the Russian government was eyeing U.S. critical infrastructure but did not cite any specific plans for attacks. She described Biden's warning on Monday as "a call to action and a call to responsibility" to guard against attacks.

[The White House released a fact sheet](#) prior to Neuberger's comments detailing ways that U.S. companies can defend themselves against cyberattacks, including mandating the use of multifactor authentication and encrypting data.

Full article: <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/03/21/biden-russia-cyberattacks-00018942>

FBI Warns Of Work-From-Home Money Laundering Scams

[WFMY-TV](#) Greensboro, NC (3/21) reports the FBI's Tampa office and Better Business Bureau West Florida "are warning of a common employment scam that could land those targeted behind bars. It's a trade-based money laundering scheme, dubbed the 'package mule scam.' People are contacted by scammers and led to believe they have a legitimate job as a package inspector. These people are asked to receive an array of packages at their home, then check out the package, add a new label and ship it out." Such packages "were likely purchased illegally, maybe with stolen credit card information, and they're being used as a middleman, muddying the supply chain and making it harder for police to track bad actors down."

KY General Assembly ends state of emergency by overriding veto, say Beshear can get one more month of extra food benefits from feds

(KY Health News) Kentucky's overwhelmingly Republican legislature has overridden Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear's veto of a resolution ending the Covid-19 state of emergency about one month early, resulting in a \$100 cut for 544,000 people. Legislators say he can get that money back another way.

"It is my very clear understanding from reading the federal guidance that every governor across the state has the opportunity to extend the access to those additional benefits for a one-month period beyond the state's declaration of the end of emergency," Senate President Pro Tem David Givens of Greensburg, said during the Senate floor debate. Givens later added, "And if I'm not mistaken, I think 28 other states have ended their state of emergency and successfully received that one-month extension if they have so applied."

Beshear's office did not respond directly to questions about Givens' remarks, instead referring Kentucky Health News to Beshear's veto letter and a letter sent to every legislator Monday by S. Travis Mayo, general counsel to the governor, suggesting that they still disagree with this assertion. The counsel's letter said the emergency allotment requires "a State declaration of an emergency related to Covid-19." The legislature has barred Beshear from declaring another Covid-19 emergency without its OK. **<Click headline to read more.>**

Most of Kentucky's coronavirus measures continue to fall, but Covid-19 death reports continue to average about 40 per day

(KY Health News) Nearly 40 Kentuckians per day were recorded as dying from Covid-19 last week, even as new coronavirus cases and positive-test rates kept falling.

Kentucky reported 8,639 new cases of the virus in the reporting week that ended Sunday, March 20. That was 9% less than the prior week, when the state reported 9,532 new cases. The daily average last week was 1,234 per day; the prior week's daily average was 1,362.

One-fourth of last week's new cases, or 2,194 of them, were in Kentuckians 18 and younger.

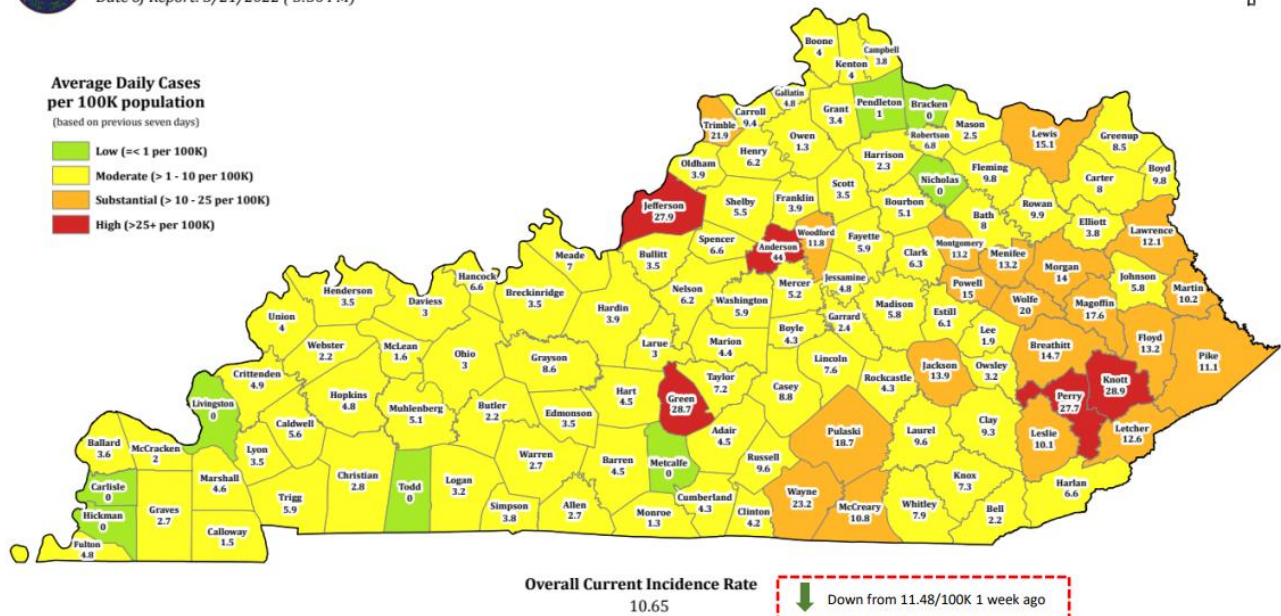
The share of Kentuckians testing positive for the virus in the reporting week was 3.08%, down from 4.17% the prior week. The last time it was even close to this new rate was in early July, when the highly contagious Omicron variant of the virus was just taking hold. This is the eighth straight week both of these numbers have fallen.

COVID-19 7-Day Average Daily Incidence Rate By County



COVID-19 Current Incidence Rate in Kentucky

Date of Report: 3/21/2022 (3:56 PM)



The **Kentucky Department for Public Health** reports the statewide incidence rate over the last seven days is 10.65 daily cases per 100,000 residents. Counties with rates more than double that rate are Anderson, 44; Knott, 30.9; Green, 30; Jefferson, 29.3; Perry, 28.3; Wayne, 23.2; and Trimble, 21.9.

[NOTE: Captain. Doug Thoroughman, an Epidemiologist Field Officer serving with KDPH, said in a post to the state's public health response team, that "Kentucky had its lowest case count since the 1st week of November, 2021. Early indications are that the BA.2 strain is more transmissible than BA.1, but likely not so much that we will see a surge as large as we did with the first Omicron wave, especially in light of the current immunity levels due to that surge, as well as vaccine-acquired immunity. At this point, there is not a clear picture about what will happen in the U.S. or Kentucky – we should be prepared, but there is reason to hope that it will not cause a large impact on hospital capacity due to existing immunity and no clear increase in severity for BA.2."]

Related story - New COVID variant is spreading across the US.

Here's what you need to know about BA.2

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2022/03/18/omicron-variant-covid-19-coronavirus/7089686001/>

CDC aiming to improve collection, analysis of public health data

Learn more: <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/healthcare-information-technology/cdc-aiming-to-improve-collection-analysis-of-public-health-data.html>

CMS to hospitals: Let patients, visitors wear N95s

(Beckers Hospital Review) U.S. health officials are poised to clarify guidelines on masking practices in hospitals after reports surfaced that facilities were asking patients and visitors to swap N95 masks for surgical masks, three sources familiar with the matter told [Politico](#).

CMS is planning to notify hospitals that patients should be allowed to wear N95s, according to Mia Ives-Rublee, a disability advocate with the liberal think tank Center for American Progress who met with federal officials March 18. The agency also wants to ensure patients know how to file a complaint against a facility that requests someone take off their mask or fails to follow CDC guidelines. CMS is slated to discuss the topic with state survey agencies this week, sources told [Politico](#).

The talks come after a March 16 [Politico](#) report found hospitals across the country often ask patients and visitors to [replace or cover](#) their N95 masks with a surgical mask in line with CDC guidelines, which public health experts say are outdated.

During the March 18 meeting, one CDC official said the agency does not recommend broad use of N95s because many people do not wear them correctly, according to Ms. Ives-Rublee.

The CDC did not immediately respond to [Politico's](#) request for comment, and CMS declined to comment. View the full article [here](#).

As a nurse faces prison for a deadly error, her colleagues worry: *Could I be next?*

(NPR) Four years ago, inside the most prestigious hospital in Tennessee, nurse RaDonna Vaught withdrew a vial from an electronic medication cabinet, administered the drug to a patient and somehow overlooked signs of a terrible and deadly mistake.

The patient was supposed to get Versed, a sedative intended to calm her before being scanned in a large, MRI-like machine. But Vaught accidentally grabbed vecuronium, a powerful paralyzer, which stopped the patient's breathing and left her brain-dead before the error was discovered.

Vaught, 38, admitted her mistake at a [Tennessee Board of Nursing hearing](#) last year, saying she became "complacent" in her job and "distracted" by a trainee while operating the computerized medication cabinet. She did not shirk responsibility for the error, but she said the blame was not hers alone.

This week, she goes on trial in Nashville on criminal charges of reckless homicide and felony abuse of an impaired adult for the killing of Charlene Murphey, the 75-year-old patient who died at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in late December 2017. If convicted of reckless homicide, Vaught faces up to 12 years in prison.

Full story: <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2022/03/22/1087903348/as-a-nurse-faces-prison-for-a-deadly-error-her-colleagues-worry-could-i-be-next>

COVID-19 antibody shipments to be cut by 30%

(Becker's Hospital Review) States will see a significant reduction in shipments of COVID-19 monoclonal antibody treatments from the federal government beginning March 21 as the White House's request for \$15.6 billion in pandemic [funding](#) stalls in Congress, [ABC News](#) reported.

ABC News obtained internal government planning documents that showed shipments of the treatments could be cut by 30 percent.

"The allocation projections are subject to change and should be used for planning purposes only," the document said. "Of course, the COVID-19 environment remains dynamic."

Six details:

1. Weekly distributions of GlaxoSmithKline and Vir's sotrovimab antibody, which has [performed](#) well against omicron, will be cut from 52,230 to 35,000 doses through the next three weeks at least, based on the documents.
2. Meanwhile, weekly allocations of Eli Lilly's [bebtelovimab](#) antibody, also shown to be effective against omicron and the BA.2 subvariant, will be reduced from 49,000 to 30,000 doses.
3. Beginning March 31, AstraZeneca's [Evusheld](#) — a pre-exposure prophylaxis for COVID-19 meant for immunocompromised people — will be allocated on a monthly basis, and unordered doses will be swept up at the end of the month.
4. Without additional funding and orders, the supply of Pfizer's Paxlovid and Merck's molnupiravir [antiviral pills](#) could also run out by September.
5. Beginning March 19, unordered COVID-19 treatment doses in each distribution cycle will be reclaimed into the federal inventory for future redistribution, according to the documents. This new policy is an effort to ration drugs and ensure limited supplies are flowing in the most efficient manner amid stalled COVID-19 funding, [ABC News](#) reports.
6. A purchase of hundreds of thousands more monoclonal antibody courses planned for this week will be canceled, with the White House anticipating the U.S. will fully exhaust the current supply by May.

Source: <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/supply-chain/covid-19-antibody-shipments-to-be-cut-by-30-6-details.html>

Experts skeptical of more COVID-19 boosters despite drugmakers' efforts

(Becker's Hospital Review) Immunology experts have not concluded that more COVID-19 boosters are necessary despite Pfizer and Moderna's efforts to promote the shots, [Kaiser Health News](#) reported March 21. On March 13, Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla, PhD, [said](#) a second booster shot of the COVID-19 vaccine is necessary for protection against infection. Many COVID-19 experts criticized Dr. Bourla's announcement, saying it lacked scientific merit and confused the public about the country's objectives in its fight against the disease.

Statements such as Dr. Bourla's pressure regulatory bodies to approve additional shots before government experts can examine evidence, John Moore, PhD, an immunology professor at Weill Cornell Medical College in New York City, told [Kaiser Health News](#).

Phil Krause, MD, a former deputy director of the FDA's biologics center, said Dr. Bourla's announcement was based on a Israeli study that has not been peer reviewed. The study assessed patients only a few weeks after they had received their fourth vaccine dose. Dr. Krause said the limited scope of the data means clarity cannot be achieved regarding a fourth shot's duration of protection.

Vaccine experts are also skeptical about whether frequent boosters can improve protection against infection, as two or three vaccinations protect most people against serious illness but do little to prevent infection after three or four months.

Even amid this skepticism from experts, [Pfizer](#) and [Moderna](#) have made recent applications to the FDA for emergency use authorizations for fourth shots. Pfizer is seeking authorization for adults 65 and older while Moderna is seeking authorization for all adults.

Source: <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/pharmacy/experts-skeptical-of-more-covid-19-boosters-despite-drugmakers-efforts.html>

KY Health News

Flu cases in Kentucky have ticked up a bit in the last few weeks, and it's not too late to get a flu shot; season can go through May

---- Other Healthcare News ----

- [Pfizer recalls some lots of blood pressure drug due to potential carcinogen](#)
- [Alcohol use disorder led to 232 million missed workdays a year in U.S.](#)
- [Seven hospitalized in Ohio as fentanyl released through air vents of juvenile detention center](#)



Presents:

Pre-hospital Trauma Life Support

Time: 0900-1700 CST

Date: May 9th & 10th, 2022

Location: 39 Jefferson Street
Cadiz, KY

Cost: \$40.00 per participant

For more information, contact: David Webb at
david.webb@gmr.net.

The student must provide their own book.

Registration required!

Louisville's new 911 call deflection program

(WFPL) A new program aimed at diverting some 911 calls away from a police response and to a mobile crisis response team is closer to becoming reality. Using part of the \$5 million Metro Council approved to go toward public safety projects in the most recent budget, the implementation of the program is underway. The pilot program will only operate out of the [Louisville Metro Police Department's fourth division](#) and respond to calls the police's critical response team would normally handle.

The program includes a behavioral health hub that will operate within the MetroSafe 911 call center downtown, where dispatchers will be able to assess whether a police response is needed. Then a newly created mobile response team can be sent to crises to help de-escalate situations and provide resources. The crisis response team will come from a partnership with Seven Counties Services.

Learn more: <https://wfpl.org/louisvilles-new-911-call-deflection-program-moves-ahead/>

House to Slow, if Not Stop, Daylight Saving Time Bill

(Newser) Time might stand still for the legislation to make daylight saving time permanent. The bill sailed through the Senate last week, but House members are less sure about it, the [Hill](#) reports. Several lawmakers of both parties said that they'd like to see more research on the issue or that the war in Ukraine is dominating their time now. Also, some argue [permanent standard time](#) would be healthier. Rep. John Yarmouth said House members weren't expecting the Senate to pass the bill so quickly. "I don't know that many members have really thought through it," he said. House leaders plan a more deliberative approach, per the [Washington Post](#).

Read more: <https://www.newser.com/story/318357/permanent-daylight-saving-finds-less-eagerness-in-house.html>

---- Three interesting stories to finish off with ----

- **The only active earthquake fault in Kentucky – The Reelfoot Fault**
Read and see more: <https://original.newsbreak.com/@anita-durairaj-561241/2445640952199-the-only-active-earthquake-fault-in-kentucky>
- **Indiana giving rebates for safe room construction through the FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant Program**
<https://www.newsbreak.com/news/2547378902449/indiana-giving-rebates-for-safe-room-construction>
- **[Wildfires in the U.S. are larger, more frequent and more widespread](#)**

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.