



# Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> Newsletter

[www.healthwatchusa.org](http://www.healthwatchusa.org) Feb. 1, 2022

Member of the National Quality Forum and a designated "Community Leader" for Value-Driven Healthcare by the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services

## *In the Month of Jan. Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> had:*

- 6 articles/opeds regarding COVID-19.
- 9 Radio Shows concerning the COVID-19 virus.
- 1 Presentation.

Our 2021 COVID-19 Conference Presentations and additional resources can be accessed from:

<http://www.healthwatchusa.org/COVID19.htm> & [www.healthconference.org](http://www.healthconference.org)

## *Health Watch USA's June 15, 2021 Annual Conference: COVID-19: A Global Perspective*

<http://www.healthconference.org>

## *Health Watch USA's 2021 Activities Report:*

<http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Officers/20211231-HWUSA-Report-2021.pdf>

## *Health Watch USA's 2020 Activities Report:*

<http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Officers/20201231-HWUSA-Report-2020.pdf>

## Health Watch USA - Presentations



### **COVID-19 Update in the State of Florida and Issues Beyond**

Linda Spaulding, RN, CIC discusses the current state of COVID-19 in the State of Florida. Topics include, staffing shortages, worker safety, violence against healthcare workers and reduced access to healthcare with critical non-COVID patients. Health Watch USA Meeting. Jan. 20, 2022.

[https://youtu.be/ARiwww\\_NX30](https://youtu.be/ARiwww_NX30)

# Health Watch USA - News Articles & OpEds



## With few masks, will 2022 Kentucky legislative session be a COVID-19 super-spreader event?

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh, a retired Somerset physician, who follows COVID-19, called holding a legislative session without masks and regular testing "ill-advised." "Unfortunately, they are setting an example for their constituents," said Kavanagh, chairman of the patient advocacy group Health Watch USA. "I think we need to try to have everybody trying to follow public health advice and not spreading the virus." Dr. Kevin Kavanagh, a retired Somerset physician, who follows COVID-19, called holding a legislative session without masks and regular testing "ill-advised." "Unfortunately, they are setting an example for their constituents," said Kavanagh, chairman of the patient advocacy group Health Watch USA. "I think we need to try to have everybody trying to follow public health advice and not spreading the virus."

Courier Journal. Jan. 7, 2022. <https://www.courier-journal.com/story/news/politics/ky-general-assembly/2022/01/07/2022-kentucky-legislative-session-potential-covid-19-super-spreader/9103795002/>



## Those Who Believe in Herd Immunity Cannot Do the Math

COVID-19 mutations are evading our immunity and at the same time our immunity is waning. Herd immunity to disease and the eradication of SARS-CoV-2 is no

longer possible. According to the United Kingdom's Imperial College COVID-19 response team, a two-dose vaccine (AstraZeneca and Pfizer) provides a vaccine effectiveness in the prevention of symptomatic disease between 0% and 20% with the Omicron Variant, and a previous infection gave a protection of 19%. However, unlike infections, you can safely receive a booster with an mRNA vaccine. Three-dose vaccinations provide a vaccine effectiveness for the prevention of symptomatic disease from Omicron of between 55% and 80%. Current data are placing the final nails in the coffin of herd immunity. [References](#) Infection Control Today. Jan. 26, 2022.

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/those-who-believe-in-herd-immunity-cannot-do-the-math>

## Viewpoint: COVID-19 Forever Cancels the Old Normal

Contrary to the "vaccinate and all will be well" narrative, "mild" does not mean just avoiding hospitalization, nor does surviving a COVID-19 acute illness mean you have recovered. Vaccines are an important layer of armor but they, in themselves, will not stop COVID-19. Public health is focused on the community, not one's own health. In public health, as vaccine efficacy falls, it is even more imperative that all who can, become vaccinated. We must slow down the spread of this virus. It is easy to advocate for personal freedom and act irresponsibly when someone else is funding your safety net.

[References](#) Infection Control Today. Jan. 24, 2022.

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/viewpoint-covid-19-forever-cancels-the-old-normal>

## **Animal Farms: COVID-19 Doesn't Need Humans to Survive.**

Animal infection sets the stage for an independent evolution of SARS-CoV-2 which, after an extended evolutionary period, can jump back to humans causing disease with an unpredictable infectivity and case fatality rate. This is what appears to have happened with the Omicron variant. In other words, we all need to start taking this virus more seriously and uniformly enact effective control measures.

**References** Infection Control Today. Jan. 20, 2022.

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/animal-farm-covid-19-doesn-t-need-humans-to-grow>

## **Viewpoint: Time to Consider Penalties for COVID-19 Unvaccinated**

We may need to pivot to the strategy adopted by Singapore, to have voluntarily unvaccinated individuals pay at least a portion of their care. It is very easy to act irresponsibly when others are funding your safety net. SARS-CoV-2 is endemic, and we must adapt to live with it. This is based on observing that immunity from SARS-CoV-2, whether from vaccines or infections, is short lived, asymptomatic spread is frequent and the incubation time is very short, making identification of contacts problematic and vaccinations not having enough time to ward off disease. To cope with this pandemic, we need to decrease the spread of this virus. Executive action is needed for the formation of a National Public Health Service (possibly by fully implementing the Department of Veterans Affairs' 4th mission), along with the reappointment of a Coronavirus Task Force in the US. Building this pandemic response foundation is an overriding imperative. **References** Infection Control Today. Jan. 9, 2022. <https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/viewpoint-time-to-consider-penalties-for-covid-19-unvaccinated>

## **Even 'Mild' COVID-19 Can Make You the Sickest You've Ever Been**

SARS-CoV-2 causes a system infection and is commonly detected in the heart and brain, exemplified by the loss of smell from brain tissue destruction and loss of cardiac function from myocarditis. There are well over 12,000 Kentuckians who have died of COVID-19. Even with Kentucky having some of the lowest in-network costs for COVID-19 hospital care in the nation, the total bill so far is just shy of 1 billion dollars (\$990,040,866). This alone is an unsustainable amount, but it does not include the cost of outpatient care, mass testing, and chronic treatment for those afflicted with long-COVID-19. What is so infuriating is that the vast majority of individuals who are hospitalized are unvaccinated. It is imperative that they are uniformly adopted to suppress the spread of the virus in the community and prevent damage to our economy and the collapse of essential services. **References** Infection Control Today. Jan. 4, 2022. <https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/even-mild-covid-19-can-make-you-the-sickest-you-ve-ever-been>

## **Viewpoint: Those Who Underestimate Omicron Aren't Doing the Math**

Infectivity causes more harm and deaths than lethality and in the case of Omicron more than makes up for its somewhat milder infections in immunologically naive individuals. Our best protection is to become fully vaccinated, including boosters, along with optimizing ventilation in buildings, wearing N95 masks and frequent testing. Schools might be able to be opened with a degree of safety, if these mitigation strategies are rigorously followed, but if not, both students and teachers will be at risk. In addition, it needs to be remembered that Omicron causes more severe disease in children than with other variants. **References** Infection Control Today. Jan. 3, 2022.

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/viewpoint-those-who-underestimate-omicron-aren-t-doing-the-math>

## **Omicron 'Stealth Omicron' Starting to Get Noticed, Setting Off Some Alarms**

Kevin Kavanagh, MD, a member of Infection Control Today®'s Editorial Advisory Board, agrees. "With the large number of new mutations, I feel BA.2 should be viewed as a new variant," says Kavanagh. "The variant appears to outcompete Omicron." Even if individuals infected with stealth Omicron turn out to have only "mild COVID-19"—a term Kavanagh has argued is a misnomer—if it nonetheless also turns out to be more infectious than original Omicron, that will cause even more disruptions to medical supply chains and add more burden to already overstressed health care systems. "I feel we can all agree that the speed with which these new variants are developing is causing unsustainable stress on our society," says Kavanagh. "We need to all implement public health strategies to slow down spread, which will also slow down the emergence of additional variants." Infection Control Today. Jan. 24, 2022. <https://www.infectioncontrolday.com/view/-stealth-omicron-starting-to-get-noticed-setting-off-some-alarms>

## **COVID-19 Infecting White Tail Deer To Create Transmission Danger**

This could be particularly problematic when it comes to trying to control COVID-19 spread and mutations, a point made by Kevin Kavanagh, MD, in a Q&A with Infection Control Today® (ICT®) last November. Talking about a study done by the US Department of Agriculture (DOA) on white-tail deer, Kavanagh—a member of ICT®'s Editorial Advisory Board—said that "the deer apparently live with COVID-19 quite well, but, yet rapidly spread it amongst the herds. And that's actually very problematic, because if it finds a host that it doesn't make sick, but yet it can mutate and change and then reinfect other animals and plus mankind, that is one of the worrisome scenarios that could take place." Infection Control Today. Jan. 17, 2022. <https://www.infectioncontrolday.com/view/covid-19-finds-home-in-deer-where-it-can-mutate-into-a-new-variant>

## **U.S. Supreme Court Upholds Health Care Worker COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate**

Kevin Kavanagh, MD, another ICT® EAB member, has long called for vaccine mandates for health care workers. In a Viewpoint in April 2021, Kavanagh wrote: "If you work in a health care facility, you need to be vaccinated against SARS-CoV-2. If you choose not to become vaccinated, then you should choose not to be working in a health care setting." Infection Control Today. Jan. 14, 2022. <https://www.infectioncontrolday.com/view/top-court-upholds-health-care-worker-covid-19-vaccine-mandate>

## **What Infection Preventionists Must Do in Current Omicron Crisis**

Kevin Kavanagh, MD, another ICT® EAB member, says that "it is even more imperative for us to up our mask protection with the highly infectious Omicron variant. A high-quality mask which fits well is required."

The best option is the N95, says Kavanagh.

"Even if not formally fit tested its performance can still be high, if worn properly. One study by MacIntyre CR, et al. even observed in a randomized controlled trial (published in Influenza and Other Respiratory Viruses) that 'there was no significant difference in outcomes between the N95 arms with and without fit testing' and 'non-fit-tested N95 respirators were significantly more protective than medical masks against CRI (chronic respiratory illnesses).'" Kavanagh says that all frontline workers and the public need to "be careful to make sure there is a good fit even if the mask is not formally fit

tested. A mask placed over an N95 may hold the mask tighter to the face and assure an even tighter fit. This is important if the N95 is used repeatedly, and the elastic bands are beginning to stretch. Surgical masks will also offer some protection, but they are much harder to fit and require a second mask to hold them against the face.” Infection Control Today. Jan. 13, 2022.

<https://www.infectioncontrolday.com/view/what-infection-preventionists-must-do-in-current-omicron-crisis>

### **Cloth Masks Are Useless Against COVID-19 (Redux): Omicron Version**

Kevin Kavanagh, MD, a member of ICT®’s Editorial Advisory Board, said at the time (April 2020) that while cloth masks might not keep someone from catching COVID-19, they may help prevent them from spreading it. In an article in May 2020 in ICT®, Kavanagh wrote that “when one exhales, coughs or sneezes, the particles are fairly directional and directed into the mask. One study estimated that cloth masks can stop up to 90% of droplets.... And over 100 countries now recommend the wearing of cloth masks by the public.” But what a difference a new COVID-19 variant can make. Kavanagh’s advice in 2020 had been tailored to the original variants of COVID-19, Alpha and Beta. When Delta appeared, Kavanagh altered his advice to fit the new reality. In a Q&A with ICT® in July 2021, Kavanagh said that “we need to be wearing respirators or N95s. Cloth masks, surgical masks with holes on the sides—those will not work.” Kavanagh has been ahead of the curve when it comes to predicting what the unpredictable SARS-CoV-2 might hit us with next. Infection Control Today. Jan. 12, 2022.

<https://www.infectioncontrolday.com/view/cloth-masks-are-useless-against-covid-19-redux-omicron-version>

### **Delta, Omicron Coinfection Could Create a Super-Variant**

Delta and Omicron coinfection is one of several concerns voiced by Paul Burton, MD, the Chief Medical Officer at Moderna, to a panel of lawmakers in the United Kingdom.

Kevin Kavanagh, MD, a member of Infection Control Today®’s Editorial Advisory Board, wrote recently that “those who are not vaccinated or immunosuppressed are at risk for severe disease. Just these additional patients alone could easily collapse our overrun health care system. A transitory collapse has already happened in many regions of our nation during this pandemic which resulted in needed and sometimes urgent non-COVID-19 care to be delayed and sometimes unavailable.” Infection Control Today. Jan. 10, 2022.

<https://www.infectioncontrolday.com/view/delta-omicron-coinfection-could-create-a-super-variant>

### **‘Omicron the Pandemic Killer’ Idea Ignores Dangers of Long COVID**

As noted by Kevin Kavanagh, MD, another member of ICT®’s EAB, a core difficulty in society’s attempt to guide COVID-19 from pandemic to endemic is that COVID is not just a respiratory virus. Kavanagh wrote in October that SARS-CoV-2 is similar to HIV because it can “silently spread throughout the host’s body and attack almost every organ.” Kavanagh writes that “much of the abandonment of public health measures has been spurred by a massive disinformation campaign which has successfully convinced a relatively large portion of our population that as long as one lives through COVID-19 all will be well. The young and healthy have especially embraced this narrative.” It is a false narrative, Kavanagh warns, because “the premise that mild infections do not carry significant risks is false. In part this belief is driven by those who have not died from COVID-19 being counted as ‘recovered’ as opposed to ‘survived’. SARS-CoV-2 causes a system infection and is commonly detected in the heart and brain, exemplified by the loss of smell from brain tissue destruction and loss of cardiac function

from myocarditis. Even those who develop 'mild' COVID-19 can develop long COVID-19 which in many cases lasts for a year or longer." Infection Control Today. Jan. 4, 2022.

<https://www.infectioncontrolday.com/view/-omicron-the-pandemic-killer-idea-ignores-dangers-of-long-covid>

## Radio / Podcasts

### **Jan. 28, 2022. Stealth Omicron Invading, The FDA is NOT Trying to Kill Republicans**

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> discusses the out-of-control COVID-19 pandemic in Kentucky. Misinformation is fueling the pandemic and killing Kentuckians. Monoclonal antibodies are not meant to be a first line of defense in this pandemic. They can be variant specific, are difficult to manufacture and are in short supply. Two were not effective against Omicron and taken off the market. The misinformation spread by some of our leaders that this was done by the FDA to kill Republicans is further dividing our nation and playing into the playbooks of our foreign adversaries. The Stealth Omicron Variant (BA.2) is taking off in several countries and appears to be more infectious. According to Denmark infectious disease experts this may be due to further immune escape properties. Jack Pattie Show. <https://youtu.be/cp-0bGvLci4>

### **Jan. 24, 2022. Omicron: BA.2 Variant Causing 50% of Cases in Denmark**

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> discusses the BA.2 Variant "Stealth Omicron" which is causing 50% of the cases in Denmark and increasing exponentially. He stresses the need for boosters, and vaccinations in those who have had an infection. A two dose mRNA vaccine does not appear to provide adequate protection against Omicron and greater than 9.5% of Omicron cases are reinfections (in individuals having a previous natural infection). Jack Pattie Show.

<https://youtu.be/Tb18lEnhrh8>

### **Jan. 17, 2022. Omicron Still Infectious After 5 days, France Mandating Vaccinations.**

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> discusses the need for more stringent isolation recommendations in the United States. Several studies have now found 25 to 35% of COVID positive individuals are still positive after 5 days. Testing negative with two rapid tests (over two days) is needed. There is also disinformation circulating regarding the vaccines not being of use against Omicron. This has arisen from articles which have found reduced vaccine effectiveness in preventing infections. However, they are still very effective in preventing hospitalizations and deaths. Over 80% of those hospitalized and over 90% of those in the ICU are unvaccinated. Pfizer and Moderna are coming out with a new vaccine to cover Omicron in March. This will be important to take to broaden your immunity and have coverage for future variants. France has passed a law mandating vaccination for individuals in public venues, a negative test will no longer be accepted. Jack Pattie Show. <https://youtu.be/d2lQziqqYWg>

### **Jan. 10, 2022. Omicron: Hospitals in Crisis With "Non-COVID" COVID Patients.**

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> stresses that COVID-19 affects every organ of the body. With Omicron, expect a wide range of presentations. COVID-19 is as much a cardiovascular as it is a lung disease. Patients may well present with heart attacks and strokes which may not have

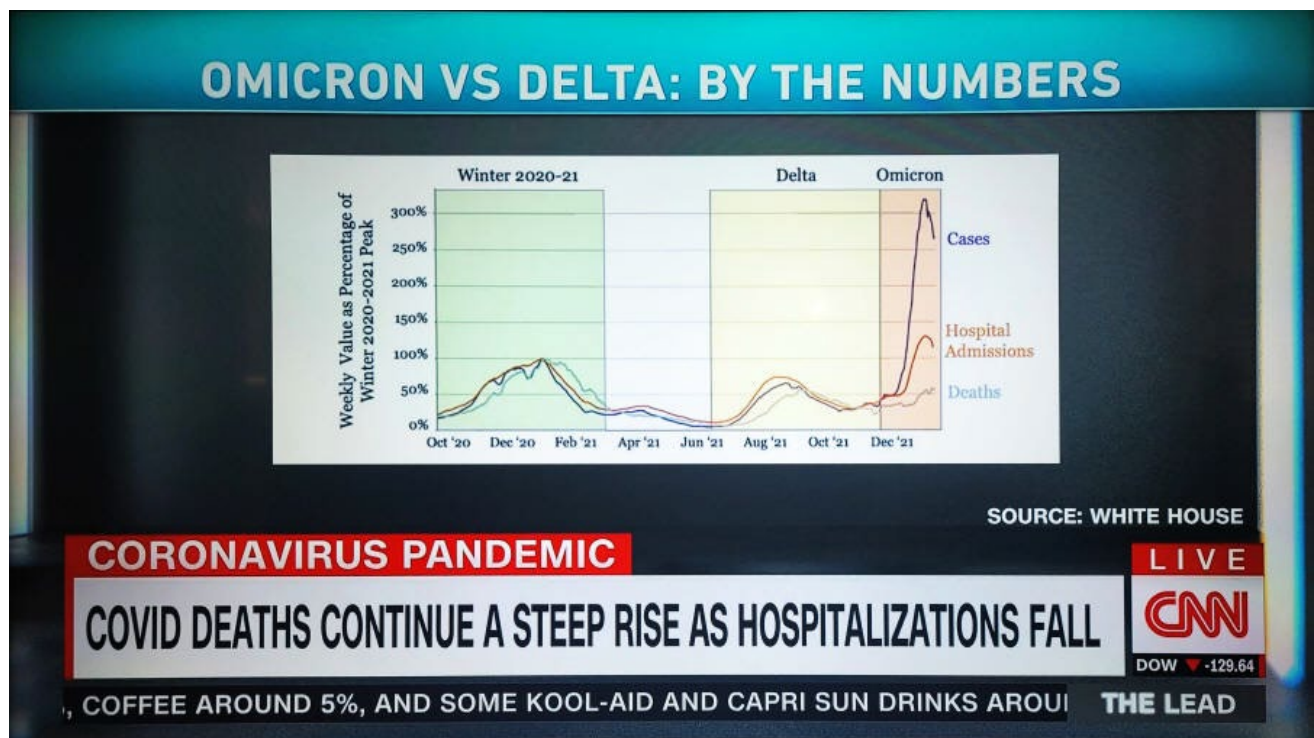


occurred if they did not contract SARS-CoV-2. The question which should be asked: Is the positivity rate in "non-COVID" cases greater than the rate found in the community, if it is then SARS-CoV-2 may well be a contributing factor? Dr. Kavanagh also discusses the need for testing after being released from 5 days of quarantine. And he relates two COVID-19 stories in family units of his relatives. One vaccinated with mild infections, the other unvaccinated with severe results. Both outbreaks came from children attending school and/or daycare. In addition, rapid testing was found to be very useful and predictive. Jack Pattie Show. <https://youtu.be/ZhrXcqW-koc>

## COVID-19 Articles of Interest

**CNN Graphic: Omicron, many more cases, more hospitalizations, about the same number of deaths than Delta.**

Overall a more challenging surge. Hope this one is the last.



### Clinical Outcomes Among Patients With 1-Year Survival Following Intensive Care Unit Treatment for COVID-19

"Clinical Outcomes: At 1 year after ICU treatment for COVID-19, physical symptoms were reported by 182 of 245 patients (74.3%), mental symptoms were reported by 64 of 244 patients (26.2%), and cognitive symptoms were reported by 39 of 241 patients (16.2%)."

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2788504>

## University of Michigan study shows mask mandates at schools show lower COVID transmission rates

"The rate of infection reached an average of about 45 cases per 100 thousand students by late September in school districts with mask mandates. Virus spread was 62% higher in school districts without mask rules- where the infection rate averaged 73 cases per 100 thousand students by late September." [https://www.abc12.com/coronavirus/university-of-michigan-study-shows-mask-mandates-at-schools-show-lower-covid-transmission-rates/article\\_9dfcd525-94d5-50cb-9b00-ac1c2171d7fe.html](https://www.abc12.com/coronavirus/university-of-michigan-study-shows-mask-mandates-at-schools-show-lower-covid-transmission-rates/article_9dfcd525-94d5-50cb-9b00-ac1c2171d7fe.html)

## Why humans are losing the race against superbugs

"That resistance out there is actually now one of the leading causes of death in the world," says Dr. Chris Murray, the director of the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. Murray is one of the authors of a new study, published in the medical journal The Lancet, that finds that in 2019, drug-resistant infections directly killed 1.2 million people and played a role in 5 million more deaths worldwide."

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2022/01/20/1074373834/why-humans-are-losing-the-race-against-superbugs>

## Omicron is not that mild: 50,000 to 300,000 more US deaths projected by March: COVID-19 updates

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/omicron-is-not-that-mild-50000-to-300000-more-us-deaths-projected-by-march-covid-19-updates/ar-AASThPf>

## NBA Omicron Cases Finds Many Still Infectious After CDC-Recommended Self-Isolation

"Among omicron cases identified within a day or less of a previous negative test result, more than half were still infectious five days after their first positive test, NBA Omicron Cases Finds Many Still Infectious After CDC-Recommended Self-Isolation. Among omicron cases identified within a day or less of a previous negative test result, more than half were still infectious five days after their first positive test..." <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dereksaul/2022/01/15/study-of-nba-omicron-cases-finds-many-still-infectious-after-cdc-recommended-self-isolation-period-ends/>

# COVID-19 Global Update



## COVID-19: A Perspective from Healthcare Professionals from Around The World.

On Dec 15, 2021, a meeting of prominent infectious disease experts from around the world was conducted by Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup>. Authorities from the United States, Singapore, Australia, Germany, and Peru were in



attendance along with a short narrative update from the United Kingdom. Overall, all nations are reporting a significant rise in cases due to the Delta Variant. Omicron is starting to take hold and the United Kingdom is bracing for an onslaught of patients which may overrun their healthcare system. Preventative strategies and barriers of the various countries are presented. Strategies discussed are masking, testing, travel bans, vaccine passports, natural immunity, vaccinations and financial disincentives. The United States, similar to other countries around the world, have little or no reserve to muster to confront an onslaught of hospitalizations due to the highly infectious Omicron Variant. Unless the United States starts to embrace public health advice, COVID-19 may become a catastrophe both in lives ruined, lost and in economically breaking dollar costs. Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> Meeting. Dec. 15, 2021. <https://youtu.be/QOgZcBPqBEk>



## COVID-19 Lessons Learned: A Global Perspective

*Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> &  
Massachusetts Nurses Association*



### White Paper: COVID-19 lessons learned: a global perspective

On June 15, 2021, infectious disease authorities from around the world participated in a joint webinar to share experiences and lessons learned in combating the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the overriding goals of the conference “COVID-19 Lessons Learned: A Global Perspective” was to provide documentation of worldwide COVID-19 response strategies, in order to combat the plethora of misinformation and conspiracy theories that are being actively disseminated. This misinformation is having a profound negative impact on controlling the pandemic in many countries. Misinformation which was addressed in the conference included challenging the seriousness of COVID-19 infections, a refusal to recognize aerosolization as the major mechanism of spread, a belief

that schools can be opened safely without implementation of extensive control strategies, and that masks and vaccines are not effective. A second goal was the identification of common strategies between nations. Common strategies included the implementation of a range of closures, mask mandates, travel bans and the need for expanded testing. But of utmost importance there was recognition of the need to implement a coordinated national strategy, which is depoliticized and led by scientists. ARIC. Aug. 26, 2021.

<https://aricjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13756-021-00992-x>

**Conference Videos are Now Available.** Continuing Educational Credits through Southern Kentucky AHEC. For more information on continuing education go to [www.healthconference.org](http://www.healthconference.org)

### **COVID-19: Introduction To Suppression Strategies**

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> discusses strategies used by many countries including exclusion, elimination, suppression, and mitigation; along with the disruptive influences of misinformation and false hopes for herd immunity. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/Ej98j5WiGUw>

### **COVID-19: Lessons Learned in Australia**

Professor Imogen Mitchell, Clinical Director of the Australian Capital Territory COVID-19 Response, discusses lessons learned in Australia. To date there are 910 deaths from COVID-19. If the United States did as well, adjusted for population, we would have lost less than 13,000 individuals. Australia is a federated nation, early on the State and Territories formed a national governing committee, guided by scientists, to formulate and direct the nation's COVID-19 response. Strategies included a zero tolerance for cases with cities imposing lockdowns, masking, physical distancing, along with strong testing and contact tracing for as few as 1 or 2 cases. Travel restrictions and 14-day quarantine were imposed on those entering the country and travel between State and territories was restricted during outbreaks. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/UpFrw3Wdbmw>

### **COVID-19: Lessons Learned in Singapore**

Dr. Matthias Maiwald, Adjunct Associate Professor at the Department of Microbiology & Senior Consultant in Microbiology, National University of Singapore, discusses the COVID-19 response in Singapore. Strategies used were social distancing, mask wearing, and the closing of schools and non-essential businesses during a full lock-down. In addition, contact tracing was facilitated by phone app reporting of contacts in Singapore's population. Outbreaks occurred in migrant workers' dorms, and other outbreaks were associated with the airport, a hospital and a shopping mall. At hospitals, all patients were tested for SARS-CoV-2 upon admission and staff were tested every two weeks, if vaccinated; and once a week, if not vaccinated. An important observation was that during the full lock-down, infectious diseases caused by many other respiratory viruses all but disappeared. Rhinoviruses and enteroviruses reappeared 13 weeks after the end of lock-down, later adenoviruses reappeared. However, influenza stayed at a very low level well into 2021. This is a testament as to how effective the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 is in comparison to other respiratory viruses, and how difficult it will be to eradicate it around the world. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/-WPQv9ghTy0>

### **COVID-19: Lessons Learned in Kenya**

Dr. Paul Yonga discusses lessons learned in Kenya. Kenya adopted a suppression strategy guided by a newly formed National Emergency Response Committee. The country utilized regional and localized lockdowns, mandatory masking, curfews and social distancing. Barriers included stigmatization of the disease, large political rallies and a lack of vaccines, the latter of which inhibited the long-term effectiveness of a suppression strategy. There were also poor working conditions for frontline workers and healthcare staff, including a lack of PPE and pay shortages. Currently, Kenya is expecting another wave, possibly driven by the Delta Variant which comprises 90% of sequenced cases in some regions. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/oTOFJiLYa2Q>

### **COVID-19: India In Crisis -- Vineeta Gupta, MD, JD**

Dr. Vineeta Gupta describes the conditions in India and the socioeconomic challenges which inhibit the pandemic's control. The impact of the Delta (B.1.617.2) Variant on India and the United States is also discussed. <https://youtu.be/vsOj76yBH9g>

### **COVID-19: Lessons Learned in Spain**

Dr. Jesús Rodríguez-Baño, MD, PhD from University Hospital Virgen Macarena, University of Sevilla discusses Spain's COVID-19 response. Spain is a federated nation. The country underwent three waves. During the first wave a national emergency was declared, and a hard lockdown was enacted. In the second and third waves regional governments guided the response. During these waves there were limits on gatherings and universal masking was mandated. Spain did not have a well-developed anti-vaccination movement as was seen in other European countries. However, the COVID-19 response became politicized during the second and third waves, a phenomenon seen in several other countries, including the United States. There was also intense discussion over the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine. Politics and economics took the lead in some of the decisions instead of healthcare, but everyone agreed there needs to be a balance in every decision taken. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/pWuu10Gg7ro>

### **COVID-19: Lessons Learned in Germany**

Dr. Sebastian Hoehl presents on COVID-19 lessons learned in Germany. Dr. Hoehl was one of the first to recognize that asymptomatic spread is a major contributor to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. In his presentation he discusses strategies used by Germany to quell COVID-19 surges and the importance of frequent testing in the opening of schools. He also discusses the social disparities of COVID-19 and how it targets and disproportionately affects the socially disadvantaged. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/9is03QomGI>

### **COVID-19: Lessons Learned In The United Kingdom**

Dr. Stephanie Dancer provides an extensive description of how SARS-CoV-2 spreads and the importance of aerosolization. COVID-19 clusters at NHS Lanarkshire, Scotland, was caused by spread from the community, and was transmitted in hospitals by both patients and staff. Corrective measures included the use of masks, opening of windows and minimizing the risks in bathrooms and of toilet plumes. Air exchanges in most hospitals were deficient. They were improved to six complete air exchanges per hour for general wards and ten for bathrooms. Proper building ventilation is of utmost importance in controlling respiratory pathogens. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/sMW3wUWUboA>

### **COVID-19: Lessons Learned in the United States**

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> discusses how the United States has viewed and dealt with COVID-19. Barriers to true acceptance are exemplified by Kubler-Ross stages of grief: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression and Final Acceptance. The role of foreign adversaries and misinformation is discussed and how this is preventing true acceptance of COVID-19 and an effective pandemic response. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/eV8IBv7ADU4>

### **COVID-19: Comments Regarding Variants**

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh Discusses COVID-19 Variants

1. The Delta Variant detected in The United States & the need for more genomic sequencing to detect

community spread.

2. Mutations and Variants can be tracked on the websites.

<https://nextstrain.org/> and <https://outbreak.info/>

3. How Variants are named and How The Spanish Flu Got its Name.

4. Almost all nations in almost all pandemics mitigate the severity and extent of disease and deaths.

YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/U9Xs6JizJSE>

### **COVID-19: Veteran Administration's Fourth Mission**

Acting Deputy Secretary Carolyn Clancy and Under Secretary Dr. Beth Taylor discusses the Veteran Administration's fourth mission to aid and support state and local health care systems in times of pandemics and other health emergencies. The presentation details the Veterans Administration activities to support health care systems during the COVID-19 pandemic along with lessons learned during the reassignment of resources and staff to support the United States' pandemic response. YouTube Video:

<https://youtu.be/oBtNJeoNW2k>

=====

To subscribe to Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup>

newsletter go to:

<https://healthwatchusa2016.hosted.phplist.com/lists/?p=subscribe&id=1>

Visit and "Like" HW USA's Facebook Page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/HealthWatchUsa>

