



Health Watch USAsm Newsletter

<https://www.healthwatchusa.org> May. 1, 2023

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

Activity for the Month of Apr. Health Watch USAsm:

- 2 Articles/op-eds regarding COVID-19.
- 1 Presentation.

Information Regarding Health Watch USAsm Sept. 14th, 2022 COVID-19 Conference - Frontline Worker Safety: <https://healthconference.org>

Health Watch USAsm 2022 Activities Report:

<https://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Officers/20221231-HWUSA-Report-2022-2.pdf>

Health Watch USAsm 2021 Activities Report:

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

Health Watch USAsm 2020 Activities Report:

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

Health Watch USAsm - News Articles & OpEds



Industry Voices—As healthcare's labor shortages worsen, masking remains critical

"Staffing shortages have created healthcare worker burnout and skyrocketed hiring prices. A vicious feedback loop ensued. N95 masks are one of the keys to the optimal maintenance of a healthy healthcare workforce and breaking this cycle. The expense of these masks pales in comparison to the expenses paid by hospitals to hire agency replacement workers. The benefits of high-quality masks extend far beyond SARS-CoV-2, since they will help prevent illnesses from other common airborne pathogens, decreasing sick leave and allowing the facility to maintain the provision of high-quality services." Fierce Healthcare. Apr. 7, 2023.

<https://www.fiercehealthcare.com/providers/industry-voices-healthcares-labor-shortages-worsen-masking-remains-critical>

CDC seeks new weapons against antimicrobial resistance

Kevin Kavanagh, M.D., founder and president of the patient advocacy organization Health Watch USA, applauds the CDC for investigating decolonization in more depth. "This new CDC strategy could represent a paradigm shift in how we approach the prevention of infectious diseases," Kavanagh told Fierce Healthcare in an email. "Identifying carriers along with isolation and decolonization is key to the control of many pathogens. This includes MRSA, Candida auris and even COVID-19. In actuality, we should determine all the bacteria which are present in a patient's microbiome, both on admission to healthcare facilities and nursing homes but also as part of a physical examination." The identification of individuals carrying dangerous pathogens would be a good first step, said Kavanagh. "If decolonization fails, sequestering the patient or

nursing home resident with others with compatible microbiomes may be an option,” Kavanagh said. “However, staff should continue contact precautions, so they do not become colonized and spread the pathogens to the community and their home.” Fierce Healthcare. Apr. 12, 2023.
<https://www.fiercehealthcare.com/payers/not-your-fathers-decolonization-approach-cdc-seeks-new-weapons-against-antimicrobial>



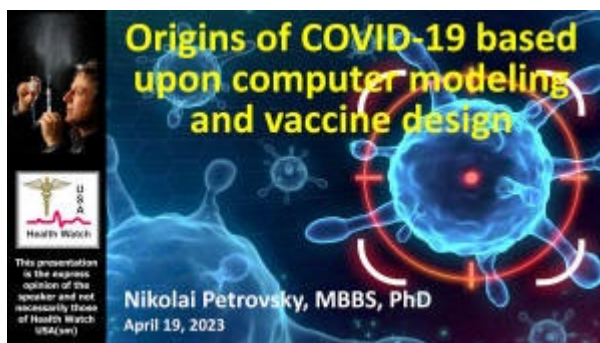
The Health of US Citizens Is Declining— But Why?

Some policymakers have blamed the infection increase on time-tested public health strategies, such as the few weeks of lockdowns 3 years ago. However, this phenomenon is also seen in Sweden, a country that implemented limited mandates and shunned masking. There is mounting research evidence that infection with SARS-CoV-2 causes immunological damage in at least a subset of patients, a subset which may progressively enlarge as reinfections occur. Unfortunately, many interventions have fallen by the wayside in the United States, explaining our marked decrease in life expectancy. We can declare the pandemic has ended, but the virus is an unrelenting adversary that does not respond to political pressure. Infection Control Today. Apr. 5, 2023.
<https://www.infectioncontrolday.com/view/the-health-of-us-citizens-is-declining-but-why->

COVID-19 Masking: Hundreds of Thousands of Russian Social Media Bots Have Tricked the Public

"Fake news and disinformation may significantly inhibit the adoption of masking by the public. The Washington Post reports that recently leaked national security documents indicate the Russians “boasted” that “less than 1%” of their sham social media profiles and bots have been caught. One of their propaganda campaigns spreads the conspiracy theory that the United States was hiding the side effects of vaccines. A “network of hundreds of thousands of social media bots emulate(ed) users” and was intended to divide the West, and apparently was very successful. One could argue that this has led to a loss of confidence in public health authorities, adversely impacting adopting of COVID-19 mitigation strategies. As a hyper-traveling world society has emerged, dangerous pathogens spread almost instantaneously. The United States needs to adapt. As a first step, health care facilities should require universal masking to protect patients and staff." Infection Control Today. Apr. 19, 2023. <https://www.infectioncontrolday.com/view/covid-19-masking-hundreds-thousands-russian-social-media-bots-have-tricked->

Health Watch USAsm - Meeting Presentations & Comments



Origins of COVID-19 based upon computer modeling and vaccine design.

Nikolai Petrovsky, MBBS, PhD, discusses computer modeling of the ACE2 receptors of various species along with vaccine development and the insights these provide into the origin of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus which causes COVID-19). Of importance is that the Furin Cleavage Site on the SARS-CoV-2 virus is not found in SARS-CoV-1 or in the broader family of viruses. The Furin Cleavage Site can be obtained through mutation or recombination, but neither seems plausible. The

binding of the original virus to the ACE2 receptor has the highest affinity to human receptors. It binds less tightly to other animal cells. The pangolin was felt to be a possible intermediary host. The recovered coronavirus from this animal had a highly similar spike protein to SARS-CoV-2, but the remainder of the virus was highly dissimilar. The possibility was discussed that the pangolin may be the source of an artificially transferred spike protein to SARS-CoV-2. Modeling predicted that COVID-19 would not efficiently bind to the bat ACE2 receptor which supports the need for an intermediate host. The strongest viral binding to any ACE2 animal receptor studied, was to humans, which in itself indicates the original virus was already optimally evolved to infect humans at the very first of the pandemic. Health Watch USA(sm) meeting April 19, 2023. https://youtu.be/h_3LhZpplow

Health Watch USAsm - Articles of Interest

More empathy from ChatGTP? Chatbot offers more sympathetic medical advice than real doctors

"The results were surprising: panel members preferred ChatGPT's responses over doctors' 79 percent of the time. AI responses also received significantly higher quality ratings, with "good" or "very good" quality answers 3.6 times more likely to come from ChatGPT (physicians 22.1% vs. ChatGPT 78.5%). The AI responses were found to be more empathetic than those of human doctors, with "empathetic" or "very empathetic" responses nearly 10 times more likely to come from ChatGPT (physicians 4.6% vs. ChatGPT 45.1%)." <https://studyfinds.org/empathy-chatgtp-medical-advice/>
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamainternalmedicine/fullarticle/2804309>

CDC set to stop tracking community levels for Covid-19

"As the nation's public health emergency expires on May 11, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will stop reporting its color-coded Covid-19 Community Levels as a way to track the spread of the infection. Instead, the CDC will keep tabs on Covid-19 largely by tracking hospitalizations in some areas, according to a source familiar with the agency's plans." April 28, 2023. CNN.
<https://www.cnn.com/2023/04/28/health/cdc-covid-community-levels/index.html>

CDC meeting, intended to mark covid progress, sees virus cases of its own

"We're letting you know that several people who attended the [Epidemic Intelligence Service] Conference have tested positive for COVID-19," a CDC branch chief wrote in an email to staff on Friday and obtained by The Washington Post, adding that at least one person at the division's recruiting event on Wednesday had tested positive. Nordlund said that conference leaders publicly announced the potential cases in the closing session of the conference, canceled an in-person training, emailed all officers with current CDC guidance and offered to extend the hotel stays of sick attendees who needed to isolate. The Washington Post. April 28, 2023. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2023/04/28/covid-cases-cdc-conference/>

Infectious particles of the SARS-CoV-2 virus isolated from hospital air

"Quebec scientists have succeeded in isolating infectious particles of the SARS-CoV-2 virus from air samples collected from hospital rooms of COVID-19 patients and kept frozen for more than a year, a new study shows." <https://www.news-medical.net/news/20230419/Infectious-particles-of-the-SARS-CoV-2-virus-isolated-from-hospital-air.aspx>

Enhanced inhibition of MHC-I expression by SARS-CoV-2 Omicron subvariants

"Our results point to the inherently strong ability of SARS-CoV-2 to hinder MHC-I expression and demonstrated that Omicron subvariants have evolved an even more optimized capacity to evade CD8 T cell recognition." PNAS. April 10, 2023. <https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2221652120>

The Unspoken Reason Why Many Doctors and Nurses Are Quitting

"We are burned out and overwhelmed. Violence against healthcare workers is a regular occurrence. We are worn down by the daily roadblocks set up by intransigent health insurers, error-promoting electronic health records, and C-suite executives with little understanding of the boots-on-the-ground perspective. We have been working through COVID-19 and staffing shortages, in systems that are crumbling around us." Time <https://time.com/6267208/doctors-nurses-quitting-malpractice-litigation/>

Spread of COVID-19 in households is linked to virus on hands and surfaces, say researchers

The study of 279 households in London, published in The Lancet Microbe, "Our real-life study in London households provides the first empirical evidence to show that the presence of SARS-CoV-2 on people's hands and surfaces contributes significantly to spread of COVID-19. Since we didn't systematically sample household air, we cannot rule out airborne transmission occurring in parallel." <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-04-covid-households-linked-virus-surfaces.html>

Risk factors and vectors for SARS-CoV-2 household transmission: a prospective, longitudinal cohort study

"Presence of SARS-CoV-2 RNA on primary cases' and contacts' hands and on frequently-touched household surfaces associates with transmission, identifying these as potential vectors for spread in households." [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanmic/article/PIIS2666-5247\(23\)00069-1/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanmic/article/PIIS2666-5247(23)00069-1/fulltext)

Maternal SARS-CoV-2, Placental Changes and Brain Injury in 2 Neonates

"The constellation of clinical findings, placental pathology, and immunohistochemical changes strongly suggests that second-trimester maternal SARS-CoV-2 infection with placentitis triggered an inflammatory response and oxidative stress injury to the fetoplacental unit that affected the fetal brain. The demonstration of SARS-CoV-2 in the deceased infant's brain also raises the possibility that SARS-CoV-2 infection of the fetal brain directly contributed to ongoing brain injury. "

<https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/doi/10.1542/peds.2022-058271/191033/Maternal-SARS-CoV-2-Placental-Changes-and-Brain>

Frontline Workers: A Global Perspective



Sept. 14th, 2022
Health Watch USAsm
Webinar

Frontline Worker Safety in the Age of COVID-19
Health Watch USAsm

Speakers Included:



Past Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders, MD

– Introduction [View Video](#)



Professor Lidia Morawska, PhD, MSc. "Airborne infection transmission & Impact on Frontline Workers" Time Mag. Top 100 Most influential persons in the World for 2021. (Australia) [View Video](#)



Ambassador Deborah Birx, MD "COVID-19 USA - Lessons and new tools to improve workplace safety". Past White House Coordinator Coronavirus Response (USA) [View Video](#)



Professor Nele Brusselaers, MD, PhD "Evaluation of science advice during the COVID-19 pandemic in Sweden" (Sweden) View Video



Ziyad Al-Aly, MD "An Overview of Long COVID" (USA) View Video

Continuing Education Currently Available Online

Enduring materials are online and have been approved for 6 credit hours of Category I AMA Continuing Education and ANCC nursing credits for 6 hours. In addition, 6 hours of continuing education is provided for Physical Therapy, Respiratory Therapy, and Dentistry. 7.2 hours of continuing education is provided through the Kentucky Board of Nursing. Radiology has been approved for 5.5 hrs. Credits are pending for Occupational Therapy.

There is no charge for continuing education credit hours.

For more information go to: <https://healthconference.org>

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