



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

[www.healthwatchusa.org](http://www.healthwatchusa.org) Dec. 15th, 2014

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

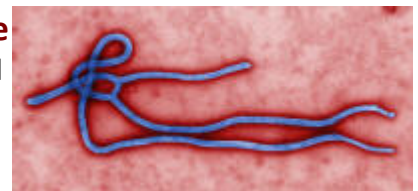
## India's Version Of CRE is On The Rampage

NYT: " 'Superbugs' Kill India's Babies and Pose an Overseas Threat: "Five years ago, we almost never saw these kinds of infections," said Dr. Neelam Kler, chairwoman of the department of neonatology at New Delhi's Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, one of India's most prestigious private hospitals. "Now, close to 100 percent of the babies referred to us have multidrug resistant infections. It's scary." "

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/04/world/asia/superbugs-kill-indias-babies-and-pose-an-overseas-threat.html>

## Ebola Response Reveals Double Standard In U.S. Health Care

Forbes: "(For Ebola) U.S. health officials have spared no expense and health care workers have, appropriately, insisted no preventive measure is too extreme. Meanwhile, another infectious disease has been killing thousands of Americans each year with very little media fanfare or public outcry."



[www.forbes.com/sites/robertpearl/2014/12/11/ebola-double-standard/](http://www.forbes.com/sites/robertpearl/2014/12/11/ebola-double-standard/)



## MRSA Surveillance and Isolation - The Success at the Louisville VA Medical Center

Raul Nakamatus, MD - Assistant Professor at the Division of Infectious Diseases at University of Louisville and at the Robley Rex VA Medical Center presents their success in MRSA reduction using a protocol that includes Surveillance and Isolation. Download lecture slides at:

You Tube: <http://youtu.be/q4-YzdtLL6c>

[http://www.healthwatchusa.org/conference2014/Presentations/nakamatsu/07-](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/conference2014/Presentations/nakamatsu/07-Nakamatsu UNIVERSAL MRSA SURVEILLANCE.pdf)

[Nakamatsu UNIVERSAL MRSA SURVEILLANCE.pdf](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/conference2014/Presentations/nakamatsu/07-Nakamatsu UNIVERSAL MRSA SURVEILLANCE.pdf)

## Healthcare Coverage, Cost and Access

### Arkansas, Kentucky Report Sharpest Drops in Uninsured Rate

Medicaid expansion, state exchanges are credited. Kentucky had the second highest drop in their uninsured rate, 8.5%.

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/174290/arkansas-kentucky-report-sharpest-drops-uninsured-rate.aspx>

### Half of Doctors Listed as Serving Medicaid Patients Are Unavailable, Investigation Finds

New York Times: <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/09/us/politics/half-of-doctors-listed-as-serving->

[medicaid-patients-are-unavailable-investigation-finds.html](http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/issue_briefs/2014/rwjf414946)

### **Robert Wood Johnson: What Is the Result of States Not Expanding Medicaid?**

"In the 24 states that have not expanded Medicaid, 6.7 million residents are projected to remain uninsured in 2016 as a result. These states are foregoing \$423.6 billion in federal Medicaid funds from 2013 to 2022, which will lessen economic activity and job growth. Hospitals in these 24 states are also slated to lose a \$167.8 billion (31 percent) boost in Medicaid funding that was originally intended to offset major cuts to their Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement." [http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/issue\\_briefs/2014/rwjf414946](http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/issue_briefs/2014/rwjf414946)

### **ACA Enrollment and Healthcare Coverage (Less than Predicted)**

Washington Post: "Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell announced that, by the end of 2015, 9 million to 9.9 million Americans probably will be in health plans sold through the federal and state insurance exchanges created under the health-care law. The administration's expectations are as much as roughly 30 percent beneath the most recent prediction of the Congressional Budget Office — that 13 million people will have health coverage through these exchanges next year."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2014/11/10/obama-administration-predicts-significantly-lower-health-care-enrollment/>

### **Without Subsidies Women and Old & Young Average Higher Monthly Premiums With Obama Care:**

"The average increase in premium cost for a 23 year old woman and man was 44.9% to 78.2%. The average increase in premium cost for a 63 year old woman and man was 37.5% to 22.7%."

<http://www.healthpocket.com/healthcare-research/infostat/obamacare-2014-premiums-higher-than-pre-reform-market#.VINI78niGG4>

### **Consumer Reports: It's time to get mad about the outrageous cost of health care**

"And if you're wondering why you can't get ahead financially, blame it on the fact that health care is eating your raises. Since 2000, incomes have barely kept up with inflation and insurance premiums have more than doubled. The average employer family health plan that cost companies \$6,438 per staffer in 2000 shot up to \$16,351 by 2013. That's money that could have gone into your paycheck but didn't because your employer had to spend it on your health insurance instead."

<http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/magazine/2014/11/it-is-time-to-get-mad-about-the-outrageous-cost-of-health-care/index.htm>

***So if you are spending more for the insurance premium and spending less on healthcare (services), it means the cost of insurance is increasing and the insurance company is paying out less. Does not make sense since the medical loss ratio for insurance companies is fixed. (Must only earn 15% to 20% of premiums for overhead and profit).***

### **Kaiser Family Foundation:**

"For single coverage, 57% of covered workers are in plans that require them to make a contribution of less than or equal to a quarter of the total premium, 2% are in plans that require a contribution of more than half of the premium, and 14% are in plans that require no contribution at all. For family coverage, 42% of covered workers are in plans that require them to make a contribution of less than or equal to a quarter of the total premium and 15% are in plans that require more than half of the premium, while only 5% are in plans that

require no contribution at all for family coverage."

<http://kff.org/health-costs/report/2014-employer-health-benefits-survey/>

### **More Health Care Costs Shift To Consumers**

<http://online.wsj.com/articles/more-cost-of-health-care-shifts-to-consumers-1417640559>

## **Total Healthcare Dollars Spent in The United States**

### **Healthcare Spending Slows – In step with the overall economy**

Health Affairs: 'In 2013 US health care spending increased 3.6 percent to \$2.9 trillion, or \$9,255 per person. The share of gross domestic product devoted to health care spending has remained at 17.4 percent since 2009.'

<http://content.healthaffairs.org/content/early/2014/11/25/hlthaff.2014.1107>

"The key question is whether health spending growth will accelerate once economic conditions improve significantly," said Micah Hartman, a statistician in the Office of the Actuary at CMS and lead author of the Health Affairs article, in a statement. "Historical evidence suggests it will."

[www.fiercehealthfinance.com/story/cms-healthcare-spending-growth-continues-historic-low-rate/2014-12-03](http://www.fiercehealthfinance.com/story/cms-healthcare-spending-growth-continues-historic-low-rate/2014-12-03) <http://www.fiercehealthfinance.com/node/14691/print>

### **National Health Expenditure Projections, 2013–23: Faster Growth Expected With Expanded Coverage And Improving Economy**

Health Affairs: "The combined effects of the Affordable Care Act's coverage expansions, faster economic growth, and population aging are expected to fuel health spending growth this year and thereafter (5.6 percent in 2014 and 6.0 percent per year for 2015–23). However, the average rate of increase through 2023 is projected to be slower than the 7.2 percent average growth experienced during 1990–2008."

<http://content.healthaffairs.org/content/early/2014/08/27/hlthaff.2014.0560.abstract>

## **Healthcare Quality.**

FREE Access to HW USA Policy Letter to the journal Health Policy regarding CMS's Policy of Non-Payment of Hospital Acquired Conditions.

HW USA found that there were too few and far too small penalties for the policy to be effective.

<http://authors.elsevier.com/a/1Q95lcP6mjQOg>

### **Financial Ties of FDA Device Advisers are Often Undisclosed**

<http://blogs.wsj.com/pharmalot/2014/12/09/what-money-financial-ties-of-fda-device-advisers-are-often-undisclosed/>

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**Health Watch USA Meeting: Dec. 17, 2014 at 7:00 pm ET. James Davis RN, MSN, CCRN, CIC, HEM** Mr. Davis is board-certified in infection control and epidemiology (CIC), is a practicing critical care RN, holds national certification in adult critical care nursing (CCRN) and is a certified healthcare environmental manager (HEM). He is currently a Senior Infection Prevention Analyst for ECRI under contract with the Pennsylvania Patient Safety Authority. Mr. Davis will present on Surgical Site Infection Prevention Utilizing Patient Screening and Decolonization. [Download Article](#)

Kathy Day, RN, member of HW USA's Board of Directors, will also give a short presentation on Nursing and The Ebola Epidemic.

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