



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

## Newsletter

[www.healthwatchusa.org](http://www.healthwatchusa.org) June 1, 2019

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



### **Collective ignorance and government timidity are public health threats.**

**LA Times OpEd:** "I live in Kentucky, a state with the nation's largest hepatitis A outbreak, an emerging measles outbreak and a governor who said he exposed his children to chickenpox rather than get them vaccinated. In the past year, two heads of infection control in Kentucky's Department of Health have left the position. The first one was asked to leave after he expressed the need for an urgent increase in infection control funding. I

am a firm believer that we must learn from history or be doomed to repeat it. Unfortunately, the United States and many other nations appear not to have learned this lesson with regard to public health and are heading down a dangerous path." <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-kavanagh-epidemics-health-public-policy-20190516-story.html>



### **Kevin Kavanagh, MD from Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> comments at the CDC HICPAC meeting, May 16, 2019:**

Kevin Kavanagh, MD, Health Watch USA(sm), stresses the need for accurate reporting of and increased transparency of dangerous pathogens. Public Comment given before the CDC's HICPAC Committee. May 16, 2019. View YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/zFGjj4D42x4>

Comments regarding infection control in Nursing Homes and a proposal to consider a facility microbiome approach. <https://youtu.be/HudRv5SphZk>



### Pressing Topics in Public Health

Kevin Kavanagh, MD discusses a variety of public health issues, including vaccines, vaping, smoking and the importance of restaurant cleanliness on the Jack Pattie Radio Show. May 21, 2019. <https://youtu.be/RTzxEhYUa6Q>

### Comment on National Quality Forum's Pressure Injury (Ulcer) Metric

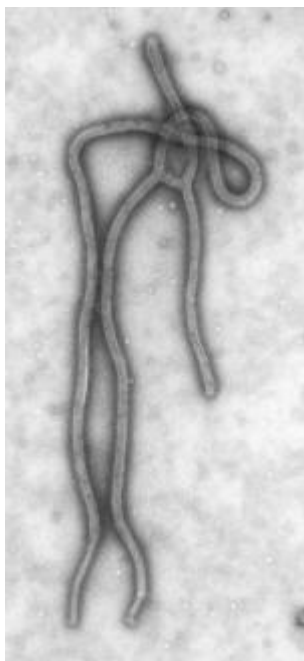
"Pressure Injury should be viewed as 100% preventable and aggressive preventative strategies should be implemented in all at-risk patients, not just those showing signs of impending ulcers. These include, mattress cushions, turning the patient every 2 hours and preemptively padding areas which are prone to form ulcers."

<http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Initiatives/PDF-Downloads/20290517-Comment-PressureInjuryMetric-2.pdf>

### Officials fighting U.S. measles outbreaks threaten to use rare air travel ban

"Federal authorities keep a Do Not Board list to prevent those who pose a public health risk from getting on planes. The government's travel ban authority often gets little discussion "because it is a politically charged and politically visible request," said Lawrence Gostin, a professor of global health policy at Georgetown University. "There is nothing unethical or wrong about it. It's just plain common sense that if you have an actively infectious individual, they should not get on an airplane." "

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2019/05/23/officials-fighting-us-measles-outbreaks-threaten-use-rare-air-travel-ban/>



### Fighting Ebola when mourners fight responders

New York Times: "The Ebola epidemic in the Eastern Congo, the second-largest ever recorded, is out of control despite some early success with a new vaccine. Efforts have been hobbled by attacks on treatment centers and personnel by residents who don't trust them or the government. Despite some early success — helped by a new and effective vaccine — the disease has come roaring back in the past two months. "

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/19/world/africa/ebola-outbreak-congo.html>

## Finances

### **Sweeping Senate healthcare proposal would address surprise billing & hospital price transparency**

<https://www.fiercehealthcare.com/hospitals-health-systems/bipartisan-surprise-billing-drug-transparency-measure-floated-capitol-hill>

### **HHS Finalizes Rule Requiring Manufacturers Disclose Drug Prices in TV Ads to Increase Drug Pricing Transparency**

"...will require direct-to-consumer television advertisements for prescription pharmaceuticals covered by Medicare or Medicaid to include the list price – the Wholesale Acquisition Cost – if that price is equal to or greater than \$35 for a month's supply or the usual course of therapy.

<https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2019/05/08/hhs-finalizes-rule-requiring-manufacturers-disclose-drug-prices-in-tv-ads.html>

## Healthcare Quality

### **The Leapfrog Group Releases Hospital Ranking**

New Report Finds Risk of Death Nearly Doubles for Patients Using Hospitals Graded As "D" or "F". Researchers assessed more than 2,600 hospitals receiving Hospital Safety Grades and found that when compared to "A" hospitals:

- Patients at "D" and "F" hospitals face a 92% greater risk of avoidable death
- Patients at "C" hospitals on average face an 88% greater risk of avoidable death
- Patients at "B" hospitals on average face a 35% greater risk of avoidable death

Even "A" hospitals are not perfectly safe, but researchers found they are getting safer. If all hospitals had an avoidable death rate equivalent to "A" hospitals, 50,000 lives would have been saved, versus 33,000 lives that would have been saved by "A" level performance in 2016.

<https://www.hospitalsafetygrade.org/about-us/newsroom/display/752840>

## Medical Devices

### **FDA takes action to protect women's health, orders manufacturers of surgical mesh intended for transvaginal repair of pelvic organ prolapse to stop selling all devices**

"The order is the latest in a series of escalating safety actions related to protecting the health of the thousands of women each year who undergo surgery transvaginally to repair POP (Pelvic Organ Prolapse)."

<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-takes-action-protect-womens-health-orders-manufacturers-surgical-mesh-intended-transvaginal>

### **Hidden FDA Reports Detail Harm Caused By Scores Of Medical Devices**

"Kwazneski had no idea the FDA had quietly granted the makers of surgical staplers a special "exemption"

allowing them to file reports of malfunctions in a database hidden from doctors and from public view."  
<https://khn.org/news/hidden-fda-database-medical-device-injuries-malfunctions/>

### **Recalled defibrillator among exemptions in FDA's hidden database**

"The FDA has allowed device makers to file 1.1 million reports of injuries or malfunctions to a little-known internal FDA database since 2016, a recent Kaiser Health News investigation has found, spurring top FDA officials to pledge to open those records within weeks and shut down the "alternative summary reporting" program."

<https://www.cnn.com/2019/05/20/health/medtronic-fda-partner/index.html>

## **Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> Oct. 17, 2019 Conference**



**Public Health in Crisis  
Drug Resistant Bacteria & Opioids  
Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> Patient Safety  
Conference  
Oct 17, 2019 in Lexington Kentucky**

**Speakers include:** <http://www.healthconference.org/index.html>

- 1) Past Surgeon General, Dr. Joycelyn Elders;
- 2) USA Today Reporter, Jayne O'Donnell;
- 3) Kaiser Healthcare News Reporter, Laura Ungar;
- 4) FDA Expert Panel Chair: Raeford Brown, MD;
- 5) FACT Food Safety Director and Senior Analyst for Keep Antibiotics Working, Steve Roach.

Registration is now open for the 2019 HW USA Patient Safety

Conference: <http://www.healthconference.org/healthconference.org/files/payment.htm>

Download Brochure: [http://www.healthconference.org/healthconference.org-files/2019Conference\\_downloads/Brochure.pdf](http://www.healthconference.org/healthconference.org-files/2019Conference_downloads/Brochure.pdf)

## **Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> June 19, 2019 Meeting**

June 19, 2019 at 7:00 PM ET. Over Adobe Connect. To attend please email [healthwatchusa@gmail.com](mailto:healthwatchusa@gmail.com)

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