



Health Watch USAsm Newsletter

www.healthwatchusa.org Aug 1, 2021

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 June Health Watch USAsm has:

- 4 articles/opeds regarding COVID-19.
- 13 Radio Shows concerning the COVID-19 virus.
- 2 Public Presentations.

Our 2021 COVID-19 Conference Presentations and additional resources can be accessed from: <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/COVID19.htm> & 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 2020 Activities Report: <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Officers/20201231-HWUSA-Report-2020.pdf>



We can't will away COVID-19, and the delta variant is spreading rapidly. Get vaccinated

Watching our nation's Fourth of July celebration one could only conclude that we have decided to will COVID-19 away and ignore its presence. Many do not want to trust science and argue over the validity and meaning of the data, but determining what will happen is actually quite easy. Just look at the United Kingdom. Currently, the U.K. is spiking cases and Boris Johnson predicted there could be 50,000 cases by July 19, Both Gov. Andy Beshear and Sen. Mitch McConnell agree that everyone who can should become vaccinated. And when those two agree on something, one should listen. Courier Journal. [References](#) Courier Journal. July 8, 2021.

<https://www.courier-journal.com/story/opinion/2021/07/08/covid-19-delta-variant-spreading-rapidly-get-vaccinated/7883587002/>

Why we need a worldwide perspective about wearing masks, especially when traveling

For many, they appear to be stuck in the stage of denial and anger. And one of the manifestations of this is the anger being displayed on air travel; most confrontations are over the use of masks.

There should be little question that one of the highest risk settings for acquiring COVID-19 are crowded transportation hubs and vehicles, especially where passengers can come in contact with international travelers.

Several countries, such as Australia and Singapore, have practically closed their borders to travelers. As long as the United States' borders remain relatively open and we are dealing with highly contagious variants, the least we can do is to require travelers to wear masks.

References Courier Journal. July 19, 2021.

<https://www.courier-journal.com/story/opinion/2021/07/19/traveling-and-covid-19-why-we-need-federal-mask-mandate/7984984002/>

Centers for Disease Control releases new mask guidance. Here's what it means for Kentucky

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh, a retired Somerset physician and Chairman of Health Watch USA, a non-profit patient advocacy organization, said the CDC should have acted sooner to try to mitigate the spread of the Delta variant by recommending masks in most indoor settings. "They're leading from behind," he said. "I think our state of Kentucky needs to get its own policy. We need to do what is required to protect our citizens."

Kavanagh said masks should be worn in indoor settings where people are exposed to others outside their households. While vaccinated individuals are less likely to experience symptoms or serious illness, they could still spread it to others, he said.

And the longer the virus circulates, the more likely it is to mutate into even more dangerous forms that could evade the vaccine.

"We're in grave danger," he said. "This virus is out to win." <https://www.courier-journal.com/story/news/local/2021/07/27/amid-covid-delta-variant-surge-cdc-issues-new-masking-advice/5386431001/>



CDC: 74% of COVID-19 Cases in Cluster Happened Among Vaccinated

Kevin Kavanagh, MD, a member of Infection Control Today's Editorial Advisory Board urged early this week in a Q&A with ICT® that, as the headline to the article put it: "Everybody Needs to be Vaccinated and Wear a Mask." About the MMWR study, Kavanagh said that "this outbreak makes the Israeli data which we reported on Wednesday look overly optimistic. In the Cape Cod outbreak, the vaccine appears to have had little efficacy in the prevention of infections or symptomatic disease. The data that we have today indicates the vaccines are highly effective in preventing hospitalization, severe disease and death. But it needs to be remembered that even those with mild infections can develop long COVID. A small study out of Israel which studied health care workers who had a vaccine breakthrough infection found 19% had symptoms

greater than 6 weeks.”

Five people were hospitalized, and 4 of them had been fully vaccinated. Kavanagh pointed out that “the Delta variant is much more infectious, producing 1000 times more virions than the wild type of virus. And the viral load of individuals with breakthrough infections was the same as those who are not vaccinated. This outbreak occurred in a highly vaccinated area. We all need, regardless of where you live, you need to wear medical grade masks (preferably N95s) and become vaccinated.”

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/cdc-74-of-covid-19-cases-in-cluster-happened-among-vaccinated>

Latest Data Point to a Need for COVID-19 Booster Shots

Overall, The data from the Ministry of Health of Israel found that after 2 doses of the vaccine the effectiveness in the prevention of infection with the Delta variant was 39% and the prevention of symptomatic disease was 41%. However, the main observation is that once immunity takes hold, the infections by the alpha variant (in May—middle graph) almost disappeared. But in late June and July, the Delta variant emerged and markedly decreased the vaccine’s ability to prevent breakthrough infections. Surprisingly, as indicated by anecdotal reports, the young are not spared. The Israeli data need to be confirmed. A good first step would be for the CDC to release its data on reinfections so all can evaluate it.

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/latest-data-point-to-a-need-for-covid-19-booster-shots>

Viewpoint: CDC Continues to Bumble COVID-19 Response

We need to have a paradigm shift in the way we view this virus, planning and implementing strategies to allow us to live with an endemic pathogen. Needless-to-say, early recognition of aerosolization would require the use of N-95 masks and make upgrading ventilation systems an imperative. Others are starting to follow former Surgeon General Jerome Adams’ advice. On July 19, 2021, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended that all children over the age of 2, regardless of vaccination status, wear masks in schools this fall. [References](#) Infection Control Today. July 20, 2021.

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/cdc-arguably-continues-to-bumble-covid-19-response>

<https://ci.uky.edu/kentuckyhealthnews/2021/07/26/somerset-doctor-says-spread-strength-of-delta-variant-mean-its-too-late-to-vax-it-or-mask-it-both-needed-in-high-spread-areas/>

CDC Expected to Tighten Masking Rules for Fully Vaccinated

One of the experts who challenged the CDC's guidelines is Kevin Kavanagh, MD, a member of the ICT®'s Editorial Advisory Board who just last week in an opinion piece implored the agency to take a different approach to COVID-19.

"We need to have a paradigm shift in the way we view this virus, planning and implementing strategies to allow us to live with an endemic pathogen," Kavanagh wrote. And in a Q&A posted to ICT®'s website this morning with a headline—"Everybody Needs to be Vaccinated and Wear a Mask"—that may prove to be prescient. Kavanagh said that he's "convinced this virus is about one or two iterations away from completely avoiding the vaccine. And remember, we have the lambda variant and the kappa variant which are sitting out there in the wings, waiting for immunity to drop and possibly cause another wave."

But, as Kavanagh said, it's the Delta variant that's really changed the nature of the battle against COVID-19. The CDC relaxed masking guidelines for the fully vaccinated based on data taken from previous iterations of the coronavirus. Kavanagh said that his biggest concern is that "everybody's in the mindset that this pandemic is over with. We don't need to do anything else. And if you're vaccinated, you have a get-out-of-jail card, and you can go on with your life as if it was normal. And with this Delta variant, nothing could be further from the truth. I feel it is imperative that everyone, even those vaccinated, start wearing masks and start following public health strategies, which were followed over the surge of the winter holidays. I can't stress that more."

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/cdc-expected-to-tighten-masking-rules-for-fully-vaccinated>

Stage May be Set for Next COVID-19 Surge

Beating back infection is a numbers game: Viruses against antibodies. If the virus changes its armor so the antibodies cannot attach, it develops an advantage. However, it can also produce viruses which are more efficient at attaching to and invading cells, or simply just produce a lot more viruses, overwhelming the immune system.

As we are on the beginnings of another COVID-19 surge, many are starting to question whether we can vaccinate our way out of this pandemic. Can we vaccinate our way into herd immunity? Possibly not, because 3 barriers are shedding doubt on accomplishing this goal. [References](#) Infection Control Today. July 13, 2021.

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/stage-may-be-set-for-next-covid-19-surge>

VA Mandates That All Employees be Vaccinated

Kevin Kavanagh, MD, a member of Infection Control Today®'s Editorial Advisory Board, warns that "this virus is about one or two iterations away from completely avoiding the vaccine." About the VA's mandate, Kavanagh says that "it is becoming increasingly

apparent to even the most conservative policymakers that we are in this pandemic for the long term. One of our most pressing needs is for a nationally integrated and coordinated public health care system. I believe this would fit well into the Department of Veterans Affairs' fourth mission which is to respond and aid the United States in health emergencies. The VA has both the infrastructure and knowledge to implement this strategy."

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/va-mandates-that-all-employees-be-vaccinated>

Lambda Variant of COVID-19 Might Be Resistant to Vaccines

Kevin Kavanagh, MD, a member of ICT®'s Editorial Advisory Board, argues that the emergence of the lambda variant underscores the need to consider vaccines just 1 layer of protection against COVID-19 infection, and that they should be combined with masks and goggles.

"It needs to be remembered that a high-quality mask or respirator can decrease viral exposure up to sixfold, making them an important adjunct to vaccines with reduced efficacy," Kavanagh tells ICT®. "Our goal needs to be to prevent both death and long-term disability."

Slow the spread and the mutations of COVID-19, Kavanagh urges. And though there may be very few cases of the lambda variant in the U.S., it still "underscores the need for travel restrictions, including quarantining of returning [travelers], regardless of vaccination status," says Kavanagh. "We also need to pivot away from our current two-tiered advisories regarding vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals. With the lambda and Delta variants we all should become vaccinated plus follow public health advice."

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/lambda-variant-of-covid-19-might-be-resistant-to-vaccines>

COVID-19 Isn't Done with Us Yet, Medical Experts Warn

Kevin Kavanagh, MD, a member of Infection Control Today®'s (ICT®) Editorial Advisory Board, worries that the unvaccinated put others at risk, if not of death from COVID-19, but from long COVID. Kavanagh worries that far from being a return to pre-COVID normal, when the pandemic finally recedes it will leave a destructive overload of disabilities behind. "We need to have as much diligence in preventing chronic disability in the young as we do in preventing deaths in the elderly," Kavanagh tells ICT®. Kavanagh's concern dovetails with those of the author of a study in *Circulation* in April with the ominous title: "Avoiding the Coming Tsunami of Common, Chronic Disease: What the Lessons of the COVID-19 Pandemic Can Teach Us." *Infection Control Today*. July 20, 2021.

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/covid-19-isn-t-done-with-us-yet-medical-experts-warn>

COVID-19 Case Counts Surge in 46 States

Medical experts have been warning for weeks that this could happen. Kevin Kavanagh, MD, a member of Infection Control Today®'s (ICT®) Editorial Advisory Board, pointed out just yesterday that the stage has been set for another COVID-19 surge. "Beating back infection is a numbers game: viruses against antibodies," Kavanagh wrote. "If the virus changes its armor so the antibodies cannot attach, it develops an advantage. However, it can also produce viruses which are more efficient at attaching to and invading cells, or simply just produce a lot more viruses, overwhelming the system."

Kavanagh has also mentioned the dangers posed by long COVID-19, and how the young are not immune to that problem. "One of the things that's really frustrated me with this epidemic and pandemic is that people are totally focused on dying.... But in actuality, the disabilities are much, much more concerning because that is even affecting the young people." Infection Control Today. July 14, 2021.

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/covid-19-case-counts-surge-in-46-states>

Infectious Disease Organizations: Health Care Workers Must be Vaccinated

Back in April, Kevin Kavanagh, MD, a member of Infection Control Today®'s Editorial Advisory Board, wrote in an opinion piece in ICT® that health care workers who refuse to get the COVID-19 vaccine put vulnerable patients at risk, an act Kavanagh described as "reprehensible." Kavanagh wrote that "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. July 13, 2021.

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/infectious-disease-organizations-health-care-workers-must-be-vaccinated>

Health Watch USA - Presentations



COVID-19: Lessons Learned in Peru and the Lambda Variant

Dr. Patrick Palmieri from Peru discusses the Peruvian COVID-19 pandemic and Lambda Variant. The effects of the Lambda Variant are uncertain because of an underdeveloped healthcare system and poor recordkeeping. Similar to what was

reported by Dr. Paul Yonga from Kenya corruption was a major barrier

<https://youtu.be/oTOFJiLYa2Q> . In Peru's case this involved a lack of ventilators and oxygen. There also appeared to be a higher rate of physicians being diagnosed with COVID-19 who are vaccinated. This observation is compounded by questions of the efficacy of the

vaccine and some healthcare workers giving fake vaccination shots. Compared to excess death data, the true death rate in Chile was three-fold higher. The difference was created by the Government only counting those deaths which had a positive test in a country with limited testing. This is a situation similar to India. (Dr. Rodrigeus-Bano from Spain also discussed this problem in his presentation <https://youtu.be/pWuu10Gg7ro>). There is very little vaccination hesitancy in Chile. The vaccine rollout was marred by a scandal of the rich and influential receiving the vaccine first. One success is the Peruvian program of vaccinating people in their homes. It is perplexing why vaccines and at home vaccinations are so controversial in the United States. This type of activity should be what public health is all about. (23:12)

Download Slides: <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Meeting/PDF-Download/20210720-HWUSA-Meeting-Palmieri.pdf>

View YouTube Video of the Presentation: <https://youtu.be/bd5-vkiEdwU>

Everybody Needs to be Vaccinated and Wear a Mask

Kevin Kavanagh, MD: "The initial SARS virus is extremely deadly, and also spreads like wildfire. Luckily, it was snuffed out with public health strategies. But that virus also attached to the H2 receptor. And that's what caused this virus to be so lethal. That's the SARS virus. Well, the COVID-19 virus (SARS-CoV-2) and SARS are similar. They're both coronaviruses. (SARS-CoV-2), the virus that we're currently dealing with has a lot of room to continue to mutate, and to become more infectious and more lethal." "I am convinced this virus is about one or two iterations away from completely avoiding the vaccine. And remember, we have the lambda variant and the kappa variant which are sitting out there in the wings, waiting for immunity to drop and possibly cause another wave." Infection Control Today. July 27, 2021.

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/everybody-needs-to-be-vaccinated-and-wear-a-mask>

Radio / Podcasts

COVID-19: Delta Infecting All, But Killing Unvaccinated

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USAsm discusses the need for all to wear masks, practice social distancing and become vaccinated. The Delta Variant is commonly causing symptomatic breakthrough infections. Israeli data shows the Pfizer vaccine has a 39% effectiveness in preventing infection and a 40% effectiveness in preventing surgeries. They are very good at preventing hospitalizations, and severe COVID-19 (along with death), with a 88% and 92% efficacy respectively. Those who have a breakthrough vaccine infection can spread the virus as easily as those who are unvaccinated and have an infection. The Delta

variant produces up to 1000 times more virions than the wild-type virus. Jack Pattie Show. July 30, 2021. (14:18). Updated information regarding the CDC's report on the Cape Code outbreak indicates the Israeli data may be over optimistic.

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/cdc-74-of-covid-19-cases-in-cluster-happened-among-vaccinated>

COVID-19: USA Sleeping As The Delta Variant Is Spreading

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USAsm discusses the Delta Variant and how it is rapidly spreading in the United States. Reestablishment of public health strategies is advisable. Universal masking indoors, even for those vaccinated should be undertaken. The mRNA vaccines are effective in preventing hospitalizations and deaths but infections and the risks of long COVID can still occur. Currently the WHO recommends universal masking (including those vaccinated), the CDC does not. The United Kingdom is currently having a large spike in cases with increase in hospitalizations. The United Kingdom has delayed full reopening. Jeff Santos Show. July 1, 2021. <https://youtu.be/644cimbud18>

COVID-19: Delta Variant Spiking Cases in The United Kingdom

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USAsm discusses the impending surge in the United States by the Delta Variant. This may occur when people congregate indoors in August or the Fall. In the United Kingdom, despite having over 60% of the adult population fully vaccinated, cases are spiking similar to the level they were over the Thanksgiving Holidays. In Singapore, an elimination strategy resulted in the almost complete disappearance of multiple types of viral infections, including COVID-19, flu, adenovirus, rhinoviruses, and enteroviruses. With relaxations of their COVID-19 strategies, many viral infections returned after several weeks, but the flu remains all but absent. If the United States performed as well as Singapore, we would have under 2000 deaths, total for the entire pandemic. Vaccines need to be viewed as a layer of protection, but one can still become infected with the Delta Variant if vaccinated. The WHO recommends those vaccinated continue to wear masks and social distance. Vaccines will prevent most severe disease and hospitalizations. But people can still develop mild to moderate infections. Long COVID-19 has recently been reported to occur in 27% of those with COVID-19 who were not hospitalized and in 19% of those with asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infections (Study from FAIR Health). Bottom line, get vaccinated and continue to observe public health strategies to avoid COVID-19. Jack Pattie Show. July 2, 2021. <https://youtu.be/0CgxOnLmfOc>

COVID-19: Delta Surging in the United States

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USAsm discusses the Delta Variant. The Jack Pattie Show was one of the first to sound the alarm about this variant on June 2, 2021. Since then infections are starting to surge. All, even those vaccinated, need to wear masks and social distance. Reports indicate that the mRNA vaccines are 60% to 70% effective, meaning that

even the vaccinated can become infected. However, they are less likely to be hospitalized and much less likely to die. Misinformation about this pandemic is a major problem and is being spread by both foreign adversaries and unfortunately some of our leaders. There are those who feel 80 to 85% of Kentucky's population is immune and herd immunity may have been reached. Schools need to prepare to live with this virus. Schools need to spend allocated funds on upgrading ventilation and testing. In Germany, every student and staff are tested twice a week. And we must not set our goal at the prevention of death. This is a low bar for good public health. A large Veterans Health Administration study found that between 30 days and 6 months non-hospitalized COVID-19 patients had 59% increased risk of dying. Long COVID-19 can affect almost every organ of the body including the heart, liver, kidney and brain. Jack Pattie Show. July 16, 2021. (16:10)

<https://youtu.be/pFCPUfBOoa4>

2021-19: Delta Tightening Grip and Masks Not Required ??

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USAsm discusses the need for all including the vaccinated to wear masks in indoor settings. Allowing those who are vaccinated to not wear masks also allowed the unvaccinated to not comply with masking requirements. In addition, there is mounting evidence that the Delta Variant can cause vaccine breakthrough infections. With this variant, vaccine effectiveness is in the mid 60% for the prevention of infections. In indoor settings we all need to wear masks. The Delta Variant also requires one to wear a high-quality mask preferably an N-95 or medical grade mask. We need to prepare for living with this virus and future variants for years to come. This means upgrading our infrastructure and schools including ventilation systems, hybrid learning, small class sizes, podding and frequent testing on students and teachers. Jack Pattie Show. July 19, 2021 (7:35) https://youtu.be/dl_IsDBLpNo

COVID-19 Articles of Interest

Covid-19 Breakthrough Infections in Vaccinated Health Care Workers

Reported outcomes on 39 breakthrough cases in healthcare workers. "Most breakthrough cases were mild or asymptomatic, although 19% had persistent symptoms (>6 weeks). The B.1.1.7 (alpha) variant was found in 85% of samples tested." "19% reported having "long Covid-19" symptoms, which included a prolonged loss of smell, persistent cough, fatigue, weakness, dyspnea, or myalgia." <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2109072>

Israel says Pfizer Covid vaccine is just 39% effective as delta spreads, but still prevents severe illness

Pfizer and BioNTech's Covid-19 vaccine is just 39% effective in Israel where the delta variant is the dominant strain, according to a new report from the country's Health Ministry.

The two-dose vaccine still works very well in preventing people from getting seriously sick, demonstrating 88% effectiveness against hospitalization and 91% effectiveness against severe illness, according to the Israeli data.

<https://www.cnbc.com/2021/07/23/delta-variant-pfizer-covid-vaccine-39percent-effective-in-israel-prevents-severe-illness.html>

As COVID-19 Cases Surge, Fauci Says 'We've Got To Do Much Better'

Anthony Fauci. All Things Considered. NPR July 21, 2021. "I was in a situation just the other night talking to health authorities from multiple different cities throughout the country and they all felt the same way. That given the fact that we are seeing this uptick in cases in general and certainly in breakthrough cases that they are all recommending that in fact () are in an indoor situation that they wear masks no matter what.

<https://www.npr.org/2021/07/21/1018882667/as-covid-19-cases-surge-fauci-says-more-americans-need-to-get-vaccinated>

Nearly 120,000 children in US have lost a primary caregiver to COVID-19: Internal CDC data

An estimated 119,000 children across the country have lost a primary caregiver due to COVID-19 associated death, and more than 140,000 children experienced the death of a primary or secondary caregiver, defined as co-residing grandparents or kin, according to data in an internal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention document obtained exclusively by ABC News.

"These numbers demonstrate how the mortality shock of the pandemic is directly affecting tens of thousands of children. These are really intimately experienced losses that will certainly have consequences for children's wellbeing going forward," Smith-Greenaway said.

<https://abcnews.go.com/Health/120000-children-us-lost-primary-caregiver-covid-19/story>

1 in 5 Americans believes microchips are hidden in COVID vaccines, poll finds

Around 20% of Americans believe the government uses COVID vaccines to microchip

people, according to a recent poll.

An Economist/YouGov survey conducted July 10-13 based on a sample size of 1,500 adults found that 15% of respondents said it was “probably true” that vaccines contain microchips while 5% said it was “definitely true.”

<https://www.kentucky.com/news/coronavirus/article252883663.html>



COVID-19 Lessons Learned: A Global Perspective

Health Watch USAsm & Massachusetts Nurses Association

Conference Videos are Now Available. Continuing Educational Credits through Southern Kentucky AHEC. For more information on continuing education go to

www.healthconference.org

COVID-19: Introduction To Suppression Strategies

Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USAsm 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 (B1617.2) 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 USAsm 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/eV8lBv7ADU4>

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>

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