



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

<https://www.healthwatchusa.org> Aug. 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 July Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup>:

- 2 Articles/op-eds regarding COVID-19.
- 2 Presentations.

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

## Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> 2022 Activities Report:

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

## Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> 2021 Activities Report:

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

## Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> 2020 Activities Report:

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

# Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> - Peer Reviewed-Publications, News Articles & OpEds

TABLE 2 - Vaccination Status and SARS-CoV-2 Infections, Obesity, and Deaths in Nations Represented at the Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> Webinar

	Australia	Germany	Qatar	Singapore	Sweden
Total cases per 1 million population	395,074	416,732	166,018	346,547	254,607
Rate of death per 1 million population	595	1,807	244	279	2,004
Population fully vaccinated	86%	76%	>99%	90%	74%
Additional vaccine dose	56%	74%	67%	78%	71%
Population older than 65 y	15.88%	22.99%	1.19%	10.89%	20.59%
Obesity in adult population*	30.4%	25.7%	33.9%	6.6%	22.1%

Data Sources: Worldometer, Coronavirus; Wikipedia, List of Countries by Age Structure; New York Times, T Vaccinations Around the World; Our World in Data, Obesity. Data as of October 24, 2022.  
\*Obesity in adult population 18 years and older: defined as body mass index greater than or equal to 30

## Frontline Worker Safety in the Age of COVID-19: A Global Perspective:

The third Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> COVID-19 webinar/conference assembled 16 speakers from 4 continents who shared information regarding frontline worker safety in the age of COVID-19.

**Download summary white paper** (Journal of Patient Safety):

[https://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Fulltext/9900/Frontline\\_Worker\\_Safety\\_in\\_the\\_Age\\_of\\_COVID\\_19\\_A.126.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Fulltext/9900/Frontline_Worker_Safety_in_the_Age_of_COVID_19_A.126.aspx)

**Presentation Videos and online continuing education** are available at:

<https://www.healthwatchusa.org/conference2022/index.html>



## One Step Forward, 2 Back: CDC's Proposals for Infection Control in Health Care Facilities

"During the CDC's June 2023 Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC)

meeting, concerns were expressed regarding proposed updates to existing infection control guidance for health care facilities which would place patients, health care workers, and nursing home residents at risk.... The United States' post-emergency infection control strategy involves scaling back data collection, weakening guidance, not effectively reporting health care worker or patient acquisitions, and not setting firm and effective standards for control. HICPAC/CDC is on the verge of weakening contact precautions (by adopting EBPs) and weakening airborne precautions, thereby ignoring decades of occupational health research." [References](#) Infection Control Today. July 24, 2023.

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/one-step-forward-2-back-cdc-s-proposals-infection-control-health-care-facilities>



## Opinion: Post Pandemic Strategies Are Inadequate To Assure Public Safety

Many COVID-19 experts place the odds at 20% in the next two years of experiencing an outbreak comparable to that caused by the Omicron variant. Unfortunately, SARS-CoV-2 is not the only disease on the rise. The lack of publicly available data regarding the incidence of MRSA, COVID-19, and other pathogens in the United States is concerning. This data should be readily and publicly available for community and facility-onset infections. For now, patients can only guard against exposure to aerosolized pathogens by wearing a well-fitted N95 mask in healthcare settings and using CO2 monitors to screen for adequate air ventilation. What is needed to control an organism is what is required to

be implemented. The pathogen does not care where it is. The same interventions are needed in nursing homes as are needed in hospitals. And workers need to be protected from all, not some aerosolizing pathogens. No one wishes to be sick for days or weeks at a time. Just because it does not kill you is not an excuse to only provide a worker with a surgical mask or to not take necessary preventative strategies to limit airborne spread. [References](#) Infection Control Today. July 13, 2023.

<https://www.infectioncontroltoday.com/view/opinion-the-latest-on-covid-19-where-are-we-now->

## Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> - Meeting Presentations & Comments



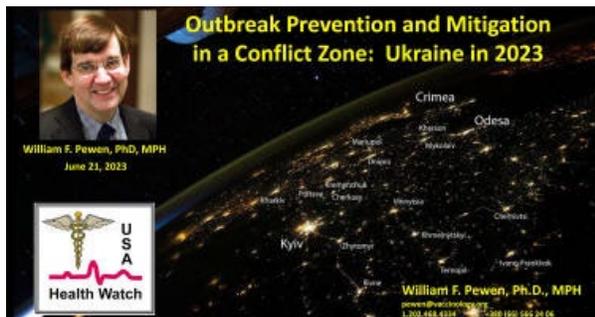
## The Easiest— Affordable High-quality Medical Security for All Americans

Alan Sager  
Health Watch USA  
Wednesday 19 July 2023

### Affordable High-quality Medical Security for All Americans - Alan Sager, PhD

Dr. Alan Sager, PhD, sketches a plan for health care for all in the United States. We currently spend five times as much on healthcare as defense. That spending should be enough to make medical security for everyone the easiest problem to solve in our nation. Today, though, the political path of least resistance is to just throw more money to allow unequal and ineffective business-as-

usual to limp along. But that money will run out within the next decade. So we need to be ready with solid ways to stabilize and reform health care. Unfortunately, health care in the U.S. lacks both a functioning free market and effective government oversight. Monopolies and bureaucracies rarely work well for those who rely on them. We therefore have to develop and test simple and trustworthy ways to cover everyone, contain cost, pay doctors and hospitals and other caregivers, and make sure we have the right caregivers in the right places. Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> meeting, July 19, 2023. <https://youtu.be/kJDnlo-seew>



### Outbreak Prevention and Mitigation in a Conflict Zone: Ukraine in 2023

William Pewen, PhD, MPH, discusses the difficulties in vaccinating the population in an active conflict zone. Difficulties with vaccine funding, distribution and disinformation are discussed along with the vaccination history and future outlook for Ukraine. Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> meeting, June 21, 2023.

<https://youtu.be/n244tNGaykA>

## Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> - Articles of Interest



### Italian study shows ventilation can cut school COVID cases by 82%

"An experiment overseen by the Hume foundation think-tank compared coronavirus contagion in 10,441 classrooms in Italy's central Marche region. COVID infections were steeply lower in the 316 classrooms that had mechanical ventilation systems, with the reduction in cases more marked according to the strength of the systems." "With applications guaranteeing a complete replacement of the air in a classroom 2.4 times in an hour, infections were reduced by 40%. They were lowered by 66.8% with four air replacements per hour and by 82.5% with six air replacements, the study showed."

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/italian-study-shows-ventilation-can-cut-school-covid-cases-by-82->

[2022-03-22/](#)

## **Long Covid causing 'debilitating impact' on doctors**

"Many are left in financial limbo as they have been forced to quit work or reduce their hours, the British Medical Association (BMA) report warns. This is "contributing to the loss of UK health service staff at a time when we can least afford it", the authors said. Some 600 doctors with long Covid were quizzed about the impact on their day-to-day lives. One in five told the BMA and the Long Covid Doctors for Action group they had been forced to stop work or significantly cut back on their hours. Nearly half (49%) said they have experienced loss of earnings as a result of long Covid symptoms of which include: fatigue, headaches, muscular pain, nerve damage, joint pain, ongoing respiratory problems."

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/british-medical-association-nhs-life-b2368815.html>

## **One in five doctors with long COVID forced to stop working or cut back hours**

"The British Medical Association (BMA) found one in five doctors with long COVID had been forced to stop work or significantly cut back on their hours." "NHS staff are able to seek support for long COVID from their GP or one of the 100 specialist clinics available nationwide. The NHS has also committed £324 million to support people with ongoing symptoms of long COVID." <https://news.sky.com/story/one-in-five-doctors-forced-to-stop-working-or-cut-back-hours-due-to-long-covid-12914407>

## **Trends in State-Level Maternal Mortality by Racial and Ethnic Group in the United States**

"While maternal mortality remains unacceptably high among all racial and ethnic groups in the US, American Indian and Alaska Native and Black individuals are at increased risk, particularly in several states where these inequities had not been previously highlighted. Median state MMRs for the American Indian and Alaska Native and Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Other Pacific Islander populations continue to increase, even after the adoption of a pregnancy checkbox on death certificates. Median state MMR for the Black population remains the highest in the US. Comprehensive mortality surveillance for all states via vital registration identifies states and racial and ethnic groups with the greatest potential to improve maternal mortality. Maternal mortality persists as a source of worsening disparities in many US states and prevention efforts during this study period appear to have had a limited impact in addressing this health crisis." JAMA Network.

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2806661>

## **Behavioral factors and SARS-CoV-2 transmission heterogeneity within a household cohort in Costa Rica**

"The estimated household secondary attack rate is 34% (95% CI 5–75%). Mask wearing by the index case is associated with the household transmission risk reduction by 67% (adjusted odds ratio = 0.33 with 95% CI: 0.09–0.75) and not sharing bedroom with the index case is associated with the risk reduction of household transmission by 78% (adjusted odds ratio = 0.22 with 95% CI 0.10–0.41)."

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s43856-023-00325-6>

## **Understanding America's Labor Shortage**

"Workforce participation remains below pre-pandemic levels. We have 1.97 million fewer Americans working today compared to February of 2020."

"Right now, the latest data shows that we have 9.9 million job openings in the U.S., but only 5.8 million unemployed workers...the labor force participation rate is 62.6%, down from 63.4% in February 2020. In fact,

we have nearly two million fewer Americans participating in the labor force today compared to February of 2020. "More than a quarter (28%) indicated that they have been ill and their health has taken priority over looking for work." " <https://www.uschamber.com/workforce/understanding-americas-labor-shortage>

## **New Air Monitor Can Detect COVID-19, Flu, RSV, and Other Viruses in Real-Time**

Proof-of-concept device could also monitor for flu, RSV, and other respiratory viruses.

"The inexpensive, proof-of-concept device could be used in hospitals and health care facilities, schools, and public places to help detect CoV-2 and potentially monitor for other respiratory virus aerosols, such as influenza and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). Results of their work on the monitor, which they say is the most sensitive detector available, are published (on July 10) in the journal Nature Communications. "There is nothing at the moment that tells us how safe a room is," Cirrito said. "If you are in a room with 100 people, you don't want to find out five days later whether you could be sick or not. The idea with this device is that you can know essentially in real time, or every 5 minutes, if there is a live virus." "

<https://scitechdaily.com/new-air-monitor-can-detect-covid-19-flu-rsv-and-other-viruses-in-real-time/>

## **Real-time environmental surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 aerosols**

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-023-39419-z>

## **Why the CDC's New Mask Guideline Proposal May Actually Imperil Frontline Workers**

"Brosseau and Seminario said the lack of focus on worker safety indicates a larger problem in health care of putting profit over safety. "[Hospital administrations] don't want to spend the money. Fit testing is a big issue you have to do for respirators. That takes time and money. So if they can say, 'Oh, a surgical mask is just as good,' they can get around those expenses." Upgrading ventilation systems is exponentially more costly as well. So despite OSHA's purported oversight, new CDC guidelines may give hospital systems some cover to take the quicker and cheaper option—with significant implications for hospital workers. "The decisions some of these public health people are making are not getting better," she said. "They're getting worse." "

<https://www.thedailybeast.com/new-cdc-mask-guidelines-may-actually-imperil-frontline-workers-experts-say>

## **Association of close-range contact patterns with SARS-CoV-2: A household transmission study**

"We did not find an association between close-range proximity events and SARS-CoV-2 household transmission. Our findings may be due to study limitations, that droplet-mediated transmission during close-proximity contacts plays a smaller role than airborne transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in the household, or due to high contact rates in households." <https://elifesciences.org/articles/84753>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37461328/>

## **Dublin deer herd first in Europe to be infected with COVID-19 virus, raising concerns about further spread**

"Researchers worry SARS-CoV-2 could become established in European deer, following detection of antibodies in urban herd. In North America, SARS-CoV-2 has spread among white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) since at least 2021. Researchers have documented numerous instances of both human-to-deer and deer-to-deer transmission, as well as three cases of COVID-19 in humans that may have originated in wild deer." Science: <https://www.science.org/content/article/dublin-deer-herd-first-europe-be-infected-covid-19->

[virus-raising-concerns-about-further](#)

## **Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in free-ranging white-tailed deer in the United States**

Study found: Deer are reservoirs to a variety of legacy SARS-CoV-2 variants which may well reemerge in humans when our immunity drops. Transmission from deer to humans can occur. The study analyzed 8,830 white-tail deer in the United States. Nasal and oral samples had a positivity rate of 10.7%.

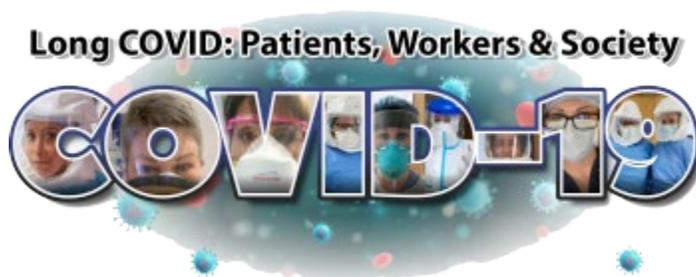
Deer are host to "Pango lineages including the Alpha, Gamma, Delta, and Omicron variants. At least 109 independent spillovers from humans, which resulted in 39 cases of subsequent local deer-to-deer transmission and three cases of potential spillover from white-tailed deer back to humans."

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-023-39782-x>

## **USC Basketball: How A COVID-19 Infection Could Have Impacted Bronny James' Heart**

An uncomfortable truth about a still-circulating airborne virus. A variety of problems could have caused impending USC freshman combo guard Bronny James to have a cardiac arrest ... The possibility exists that this could mark one of the many instances of heart damage following a coronavirus infection. Strokes, heart problems, respiratory issues, blood clotting and cognitive trouble have all seen a massive uptick in young people following the acute phase of COVID-19 infections. <https://www.si.com/college/usc/basketball/how-a-covid-19-infection-could-have-impacted-bronny-james-heart-ak1987>

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**Nov. 1st, 2023**  
**Health Watch**  
**USA<sup>sm</sup> Webinar**

**Long COVID's Impact on Patients, Workers & Society**  
**Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup>**

**For More Information Go To:** <http://www.healthconference.org>

## Speakers for the Nov. 1st 2023 Webinar Include:



**Ambassador Deborah Birx, MD** Past White House Coordinator Coronavirus Response (USA) "Impact of Long COVID on the United States".



**Peter J. Hotez, MD, PhD**, Dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine and Professor of Pediatrics and Molecular Virology & Microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine. will present on "Global Vaccines and Vaccinations: The Science vs The Anti-science."

Dr Hotez will discuss the impact of developing new low cost and accessible vaccines for global health, including a recombinant protein COVID-19 "people's vaccine" now administered to more than 100 million adolescents and children in India and Indonesia. He will also discuss new trends in antivaccine sentiments in the US and an escalating and globalizing antisience empire.

## Additional Presenters:

**1. Pam Belluck**, New York Times Reporter -- Presentation: "How Long COVID is affecting people's jobs and their needs at work."

**2. Eleni Iasonidou, MD**, Pediatrician, Founder of Long Covid Greece and a one of the very first Greek representatives to join Long Covid Kids. Presentation: "Long Covid and its impact on children."

**3. Georgios Pappas, MD, PhD**, Physician, Researcher and Advocate. Specializing on zoonoses and preparedness against deliberate and natural outbreaks/ epidemics – Presentation: "Combating Disinformation regarding COVID-19 and Long COVID."

**4. Jane Thomason, MSPH, CIH**, Industrial Hygienist, National Nurses United & California Nurses Association -- Presentation: "The impact of Long COVID on Nurses."

**5. Greg Vanichkachorn, MD, MPH**, Occupational and Aerospace Medicine, Mayo Clinic-- Presentation: "Symptoms, treatment and rehabilitation of patients with Long COVID."

**6. Dr. Wilmore Webley**, PhD, University of Massachusetts, -- Presentation: "The effectiveness of vaccines to prevent Long COVID."

**7. Brian T. Walitt, MD, MPH**, Clinician with the NIH's National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. -- Presentation: "Neuropsychiatric manifestations of Long COVID & Chronic Fatigue Syndrome."

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**Continuing Education Is Planned for Physicians, Nurses, Social Workers, Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapy, Dentistry and Respiratory Therapy. For More information Go To:**  
<http://www.healthconference.org>

**Download Speaker Bios:** [https://www.healthconference.org/healthconference.org-files/2023Conference\\_downloads/Bios-Speakers-2023-HWUSA-Conference-6.pdf](https://www.healthconference.org/healthconference.org-files/2023Conference_downloads/Bios-Speakers-2023-HWUSA-Conference-6.pdf)

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**Download last year's summary white paper from 2022 Worker Safety Conference (Journal of Patient Safety):** [https://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Fulltext/9900/Frontline\\_Worker\\_Safety\\_in\\_the\\_Age\\_of\\_COVID\\_19\\_A.126.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Fulltext/9900/Frontline_Worker_Safety_in_the_Age_of_COVID_19_A.126.aspx)

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