Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation
Emergency Preparedness Update
for June 15-16, 2019

Federal Grants Restricted To Fighting Opioids Miss The Mark

(NPR & KHN) The federal government has doled out at least $2.4 billion in state grants since 2017, in hopes of stemming an opioid epidemic that killed 47,600 people in the U.S. in that year alone. But state officials note that drug abuse problems seldom involve only one substance. And while local officials are grateful for the funding, the grants can be spent only on creating solutions to combat opioids, such as prescription OxyContin, heroin and fentanyl.

According to the most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 11 states — including California, Pennsylvania and Texas — have reported that opioids were involved in fewer than half of their total drug overdose deaths in 2017.

Also, the federal cash infusion is guaranteed for only a few years, which throws the sustainability of the states' efforts into question. Drug policy specialists say the money may not be adequate to improve the mental health care system. And more focus is needed on answering the underlying question of why so many Americans struggle with drug addiction, they say.

States have received the federal funds for opioids primarily through two grants: State Targeted Response to the Opioid Crisis and State Opioid Response. The first grant, authorized by the 21st Century Cures Act, totaled $1 billion. The second pot of money, $1.4 billion (approved as part of last year's omnibus spending bill), sets aside a portion of the funding for states with the most drug poisoning deaths.

Mounting evidence points to a worrisome rise in methamphetamine use nationally. The presence of cheap, purer forms of meth in the drug market coupled with a decline in opioid availability has fueled the stimulant's popularity.

The number of drug overdose deaths involving meth tripled from 2011 to 2016, the CDC reports. And hospitalizations involving amphetamines — the class of stimulants that includes methamphetamine — are spiking.

The problem of meth addiction is hard to address, doctors say. Treatment options for this addiction are narrower than the array available for opioids.

Learn more: https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/06/13/731512068/federal-grants-restricted-to-fighting-opioids-miss-the-mark-states-say

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Webinar: Understanding and challenging the growing opioid epidemic through care collaboration
Tuesday, June 18th, 2019 | 12 noon ET (11:00am CT)

(Becker) Addressing the growing opioid crisis starts with understanding the addiction behind substance use disorder, and addressing all aspects affecting the disorder.

Learn more & register: https://go.beckershospitalreview.com/understanding-and-challenging-the-growing-opioid-epidemic-through-care-collaboration

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Walmart to support Norton Children's Hospital
'Just for Kids' Critical Care Center

(Lane Report) Walmart announced Thursday it will commit the next $3 million it raises in the Louisville area to support the Norton Children's Hospital "Just for Kids" Critical Care Center.

This amount, which will be given to the Children's Hospital Foundation, will bring Walmart's total support of the hospital to nearly $8 million since 2007. Walmart previously has supported the hospital's trauma program and imaging services. The donations come through Walmart's participation

in Children's Miracle Network Hospitals and is a result of individual Walmart store campaigns in the Louisville area.

Full story: https://www.lanereport.com/114139/2019/06/walmart-to-support-norton-childrens-hospital-just-for-kids-critical-care-center/

UofL ends negotiations to buy KentuckyOne's Louisville assets
Read more: https://www.lanereport.com/114137/2019/06/uofl-ends-negotiations-to-buy-kentuckyones-louisville-assets/

Watchdog: Abuse and neglect in nursing facilities unreported

(AP) (AP) — Nursing facilities have failed to report thousands of serious cases of potential neglect and abuse of seniors on Medicare even though it's a federal requirement for them to do so, according to a watchdog report released Wednesday that calls for a new focus on protecting frail patients.

Auditors with the Health and Human Services inspector general's office drilled down on episodes serious enough that the patient was taken straight from a nursing facility to a hospital emergency room. Scouring Medicare billing records, they estimated that in 2016 about 6,600 cases reflected potential neglect or abuse that was not reported as required. Nearly 6,200 patients were affected.

Full story: https://apnews.com/f57f2739a78b44dd8678a77e0f787701

Maine becomes 8th state to legalize assisted suicide

(AP) — Maine legalized medically assisted suicide on Wednesday, becoming the eighth state to allow terminally ill people to end their lives with prescribed medication.

Oregon was the first state to legalize such assistance, in 1997, and it took over a decade for the next state, Washington, to follow suit. While still controversial, assisted suicide legislation is winning increasing acceptance in the United States, and this year at least 18 states considered such measures.

Read more: https://apnews.com/7f0fe9d789294a02852c1669c892f382

WHO experts again say Ebola not global health emergency

(CIDRAP) A World Health Organization (WHO) emergency committee convened in the wake of imported Ebola cases in Uganda said today that the situation still doesn't warrant a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC), but they did express serious worries about the threat to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and its neighbors and over a lack of funds.

Though the outbreak is a health emergency in the DRC and the immediate region, it doesn't meet all three criteria for a PHEIC under the International Health Regulations (IHR). And the experts say that formal temporary recommendations under the IHR would not enhance current response operations.

Read more: http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2019/06/who-experts-again-say-ebola-not-global-health-emergency

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CDC has announced (last week) that it is standing up the Emergency Operations Center in response to the ongoing Ebola outbreak in the Eastern DRC. This is a level-3 activation, the lowest level activation, but that means that additional CDC and EOC staff will be supporting the CDC role in the inter-agency response.

Top WMD Official Quietly Leaves Pentagon

(FP News) Guy Roberts, the U.S. Defense Department's top civilian in charge of nuclear, chemical, and biological defense programs, quietly stepped down in April for reasons that remain murky, one of the latest in a series of high-profile exits from the Pentagon over the past six months.

Read full story: https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/06/13/top-wmd-official-quietly-leaves-pentagon/

More Wildfires Bring Focus On How All That Smoke May Harm Firefighters

(NPR) As wildfires have grown more frequent and intense in recent years, communities have complained about the health impact of all that smoke, and the economic hit to recreation and tourism. But residents can seek relief by staying indoors and using air filters or masks.

These aren't options for the wildland firefighters fighting those blazes, or managing prescribed burns aimed at preventing them. They endure smoky conditions rarely experienced in residential communities, and it's an occupational hazard scientists and fire agencies are just beginning to understand.

The hazards have long been known for those who fight fires in buildings. Studies have shown they have elevated risks of cancer, heart and lung disease, and even mental health issues, says Rick Swan, a 30-year veteran of CalFire, and health and safety director with the International Association of Firefighters, a labor union. But wildland firefighters have largely been left out of the research.
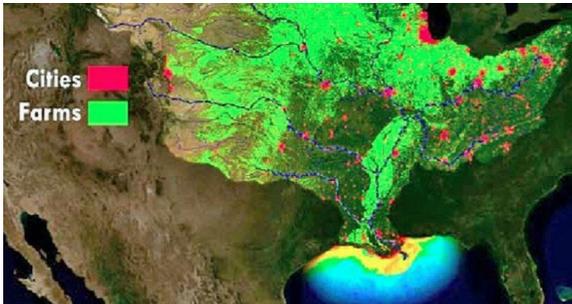
Wildland firefighters and crews are exposed to fine particulate matter that can absorb deep into the lungs. They breathe carbon monoxide that can cause a significant and immediate loss in cognitive function.

Read more: https://www.npr.org/2019/06/12/731435003/more-wildfires-bring-focus-on-how-all-that-smoke-may-harm-firefighters

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The Gulf could see one of the largest dead zones in history this year

(CNN) A "dead zone" is known in scientific literature as hypoxia, which means low oxygen. This water, with its low concentration of dissolved oxygen, can no longer support the life that calls that part of the ocean home. For decades, researchers have tracked exactly how big the annually recurring dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico will be.

Dead zones were first noticed the area in the 1970s, and they've been growing in size ever since. Based on current conditions, some scientists think that the Gulf of Mexico will experience the second-largest dead zone on record in July.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration also released a dead zone prediction report Monday and anticipates a slightly smaller dead zone of 7,829 square miles. That's still larger than the five-year average measured size of the dead zone, typically 5,770 square miles. The two reports use different models to make their calculations.

The dead zone is connected to runoff from one of the largest rivers in the world, the Mississippi. Thousands of acres of farms have flooded this year because of what NOAA calls "the abnormally high amount of spring rainfall." That means there is a lot more water from those fields going straight into the river, which empties into the Gulf.

Full CNN story: https://www.cnn.com/2019/06/10/health/gulf-dead-zone-study-climate-scn/index.html

NOAA Report: https://www.noaa.gov/media-release/noaa-forecasts-very-large-dead-zone-for-gulf-of-mexico

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Kroger berry recall details
possible hepatitis A contamination

(WDRB) -- Check your fridge; Kroger announced Friday that it is recalling frozen berry products due to possible hepatitis A contamination.

According to a news release from the U.S. Food & Drug Administration, the products in question are Townsend Farms' Private Selection Frozen Triple Berry Medley (48- and 16-ounce bags) and 16-ounce bags of Private Selection Frozen Blackberries.

The 48-ounce bags of Triple Berry Medley have a best-buy date of July 7, 2020, and the 16-ounce bags have a best-buy date of June 19, 2020. The blackberries have two best-buy dates, June 19, 2020 and July 2, 2020.

Learn more: https://www.wdrb.com/news/kroger-recalls-frozen-berries-due-to-possible-hepatitis-a-contamination/article_ab87b2da-8a29-11e9-80cc-87266e406d94.html

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US government is warning against poop transplants
after a person died from E. coli following the procedure

(Business Insider) One person has died from an e. coli infection stemming from a poop transplant, and the US government is warning it could happen again.

The Food and Drug Administration on Thursday published a bulletin warning against possible complications from fecal microbiota transplantation (FMT), which has been rising in popularity for the treatment of C. diff, a debilitating gut infection.

Read more: https://www.businessinsider.com/fda-warns-against-poop-transplants-following-e-coli-death-2019-6

Why Air Ambulance Bills Are Still Sky-High

(NPR & KHN) The median air ambulance bill is more than $36,000 and is seldom covered by health plans. So far, legislative hurdles and industry pressure have kept Congress from stepping in.

Full story: https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/06/14/732174170/why-air-ambulance-bills-are-still-sky-high

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Information on *Control Center* for FirstNet
(Deploy, manage, monitor and scale your connected devices and Internet of Things (IoT) solutions.)

(AT&T FirstNet) Through the use of Control Center for FirstNet, powered by Cisco Jasper, Public Safety Entities can manage and monitor the connectivity of IoT devices enabled with FirstNet Capable Subscriber Identification Modules (SIMs) over the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN) in near real-time. Control Center for FirstNet is a cloud-based platform which simplifies the deployment and management of connected devices and Internet of Things solutions for Public Safety Entities, regardless of the size or complexity of the solution. Accelerate your IoT success with Control Center for FirstNet which puts you in control of your IoT solutions.

Control Center for FirstNet combines the best in class management of IoT devices with First Priority™ to provide all Primary User Public Safety Entities quality of service, priority and preemption (QPP) at no extra charge. Extended Primary User Public Safety Entities have the ability to purchase First Priority™ capability, without preemption, for an additional charge. These unique features allow Public Safety Entities to efficiently manage their devices, budgets, and services.

Key Features & Benefits

· **Our most advanced Software Package:** Control Center for FirstNet is reserved for FirstNet customers and contains advanced features.

· **Designed for Public Safety:** The cloud-based platform delivers visibility and agility to implement, deploy, manage, support and scale.

· **Diagnostics:** Near real-time network intelligence and diagnostics to restore performance.

· **Automation:** Set-and-forget automation to simplify and reduce costs.

· **Multi-layered security:** Protective, multi-layered IoT security to safeguard your data, devices, and IT systems.

· **Service reliability:** Diagnostics, analytics, and alerts allow you to monitor, respond to unusual behavior, and optimize performance, and more.

· **Usage monitoring:** Get alerts and notifications to help you stay on top of costs. Cost monitoring in near real-time within the billing cycle can help eliminate unexpected spend.

Address questions to:
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859-327-7642

HHS Health Sector Cybersecurity Coordination Center
White Paper on *Bluekeep*

The HHS Health Sector Cybersecurity Coordination Center has released white paper on the Bluekeep vulnerability. Microsoft recently announced a high risk vulnerability in some versions of Windows, nicknamed "BlueKeep," that could allow attackers to gain significant access to computers and networks.

BlueKeep is considered a "wormable" vulnerability, meaning it can be spread rapidly and automatically – without user interaction – across the internet on unprotected systems, similar to what was observed in the WannaCry ransomware attacks which crippled more than 300,000 machines across 150 countries.

The NSA, in addition to many other security researchers, believes that it will be only a matter of time before threat actors begin targeting this vulnerability in cyber campaigns.

For questions on the report, contact HC3@hhs.gov. More information on the Traffic Light Protocol (TLP) designations is available via the US-CERT website.

Humana's Fusion Center
Is Recruiting for a Security Analyst

Learn more: https://jobs.aus.com/job/louisville/security-operations-analyst/22950/12185974

HHS Health Sector Cybersecurity Coordination Center Threat Briefing
on Vulnerability/Patch Management in the Healthcare Enterprise

The HHS Health Sector Cybersecurity Coordination Center has released this report on vulnerability/patch management in the healthcare enterprise. The white paper is labeled TLP: white.

For questions on the report, contact HC3@hhs.gov. More information on the Traffic Light Protocol (TLP) designations is available via the US-CERT website.

US-CERT: Adobe Releases Security Updates

Adobe has released security updates to address vulnerabilities affecting ColdFusion, Adobe Campaign, and Adobe Flash Player. An attacker could exploit some these vulnerabilities to take control of an affected system.

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) encourages users and administrators to review Adobe Security Bulletins APSB19-27, APSB19-28, and APSB19-30 and apply the necessary updates.