



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for August 3-4, 2019

It could be months before Kentucky gas explosion cause determined

(WLKY) The National Transportation Safety Board is leading the investigation into a pipeline rupture in central Kentucky. Officials said it expects the area to be blocked off for at least a week while the NTSB investigates, but it could be up to a year before the NTSB determines what caused the explosion. Officials said a woman died and at least six people were hurt.

As of now, everyone is out of the hospital except for one man, who told WLKY, "It's just miraculous that anybody walked away from this."

Read and see more: <https://www.wlky.com/article/watch-ntsb-gives-update-on-kentucky-gas-explosion-investigation/28590912>

KDPH Commissioner Howard leaving for DC

(Courier-Journal) Dr. Jeffrey Howard, Kentucky's commissioner for public health, who faced criticism for [his handling of the nation's worst Hepatitis A outbreak](#), is stepping down to join the White House, state officials confirmed. Howard told his staff Friday he was leaving for a fellowship in Washington.

Howard, who graduated medical school in 2014, was named acting Kentucky's acting commissioner for public health in November 2017 and led the state public health system struggling amid years of budget cuts and layoffs, a state pension crisis and an epidemic of opioid addiction.

Read more: <https://www.courier-journal.com/story/news/2019/08/02/kentucky-public-health-commissioner-stepping-down-white-house-role/1906824001/>

Highlands Regional Med Center now part of ARH

(WYMT) Officials with Appalachian Regional Healthcare announced they have finalized the purchase of their 3rd hospital in Floyd County. ARH took over Highlands Regional Medical Center, based in Prestonsburg with clinics and home health operations in several Big Sandy counties, at 12:01 Thursday morning.

The 192-bed hospital will now operate under the new name of Highlands ARH Regional Medical Center. It becomes the 13th member of the ARH system, with hospitals in many counties across the mountains.

Read more: <https://www.wyvt.com/content/news/ARH-finalizes-purchase-of-Highland-Regional-Medical-Center-513487131.html>

Norton lowers opioid prescriptions by over 50% through data analysis, education

Find out more: <https://insiderlouisville.com/health/norton-lowers-opioid-prescriptions-by-over-50-through-data-analysis-education/>

Telemedicine study raises antibiotic stewardship concerns

(CIDRAP) A study of more than 12,000 telemedicine encounters involving children with respiratory ailments has found that antibiotics were prescribed in more than half of the visits, and that patient satisfaction was strongly linked to receiving an antibiotic.

Providers who prescribed antibiotics were more than three times a likely to receive a 5-star rating from patients, researchers from the Cleveland Clinic reported yesterday in *Pediatrics*.

The study adds to a growing body of research suggesting that antibiotic prescribing for respiratory tract infections (RTIs) is high in telemedicine, both for children and adults, and that patients who receive antibiotics are more satisfied with the encounter.

Full story: <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2019/08/telemedicine-study-raises-stewardship-concerns>

Ebola reports show more health workers infected

(CIDRAP) The Democratic of the Congo (DRC) resumed publishing daily reports on the country's ongoing Ebola outbreak, adding more details about the response in Goma and noting that 149 health workers have now been infected with the deadly virus.

Learn more: <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2019/08/ebola-reports-show-more-health-workers-infected>

New - Report on Fire-Related Firefighter Injuries

(USFA) This topical report addresses the details of firefighter injuries sustained at, responding to or returning from a fire incident, focusing on data as reported to the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) from 2015 to 2017.

Get the report here: https://www.usfa.fema.gov/data/statistics/reports/firefighter_injuries_v20i2.html

ATLS Course @ UK College of Nursing
August 22 & 23
ACS accredited for CMD
Course fee: \$1,100
To register email: amanda.rist@uky.edu

----- From DHS/ASPR Healthcare and Public Health Sector Highlights -----

CISA: Recommended Immediate Action to Safeguard Against Ransomware Attacks

The DHS Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), Multi-State Information Sharing & Analysis Center (MS-ISAC), National Governors Association (NGA), and the National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO) have released a [Joint Ransomware Statement](#) with recommendations for state and local governments to build resilience against [ransomware](#):

Back up systems—now (and daily). Immediately and regularly back up all critical agency and system configuration information on a separate device and store the backups offline, verifying their integrity and restoration process. If recovering after an attack, restore a stronger system than the one lost, fully patched and updated to the latest version.

Reinforce basic cybersecurity awareness and education. Ransomware attacks often require the human element to succeed. Refresh employee training on recognizing cyber threats, phishing, and suspicious links—the most common vectors for ransomware attacks. Remind employees of how to report incidents to appropriate IT staff in a timely manner, which should include out-of-band communication paths.

Revisit and refine cyber incident response plans. Have a clear plan to address attacks when they occur, including when internal capabilities are overwhelmed. Make sure response plans include how to request assistance from external cyber first responders, such as state agencies, CISA, and MS-ISAC, in the event of an attack.

CISA encourages organizations to review the [Joint Ransomware Statement](#) and the following ransomware guidance:

- [MS-ISAC Security Primer on Ransomware](#)
- [CISA Tip Sheet on Ransomware](#)
- [NGA Disruption Response Planning Memo](#)
- [NASCIO Cyber Disruption Planning Guide](#)

Hospital Preparedness for Unplanned Information Technology Downtime Events: A Toolkit for Planning and Response

This [36-page toolkit](#) is designed to assist hospitals and other healthcare organizations with improving their readiness for unplanned information technology (IT) downtime events, which is essential in emergency preparedness. It is organized with these sections: Recognizing the Scope of the Issue; Collaborative Planning; Multidisciplinary Response Teams; Improving Response Tools; Ensuring Efficient Communication; Speeding Recovery; and Training and Exercise. ([Link](#))

The KHREF Emergency Preparedness Update is assembled several times a week. When events make it necessary, the Update may be sent out several times a day to keep our hospital and the healthcare community advised on preparedness news and information. Most of this information is compiled from open sources, and where possible reference links will be provided. There is an archive of [Emergency Preparedness Updates available here](#). If you would like to add or delete, or have something you would like to contribute to a future edition of the Emergency Preparedness Update, please contact rbartlett@kyha.com (include your current email address). The preparedness program for the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) and KHREF are supported by US DHHS ASPR HPP funds through a contract with Kentucky Public Health.