



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
HEALTH

Institute for Health Policy and Leadership

January 23, 2019 | Issue 45

Healthcare News At A Glance

Government shutdown is affecting Indian Health Service (IHS)

– Many Native American communities throughout the country no longer have access to services such as food, medication, and substance abuse counseling through IHS due to the shutdown. In other shutdown-related news, health systems in Michigan and New Jersey are offering to provide services without co-pays and deductibles for furloughed federal employees.

Supreme Court declines to hear appeal of a court case brought by Iraq and Afghanistan veterans

– Veterans of the Iraq war and the War in Afghanistan filed a lawsuit in 2008 against the military contracting agent KBR for releasing toxic smoke by burning tires and medical waste adjacent to the soldiers' barracks. More than 160,000 veterans believe they were affected. The US Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit sided with the US District Court in saying that KBR cannot be held liable for following orders from the US military; the Supreme Court declined to hear the appeal.

Walgreens forms multiple partnerships to compete with Amazon

– Walgreens has multiple agreements and partnerships in place with companies such as Humana Inc. and Verily Life Science. In its latest agreement, Walgreens will be working with Microsoft cloud-computing software for data collection and computation. There will be a pilot project that involves digital corners in 12 Walgreens stores to promote health devices and manage chronic diseases.

Many transgender people are murdered every year– The Human Rights Campaign finds that 128 transgender people were murdered since 2013; multiple organizations believe that more than 24 transgender people were murdered in 2018. More than three-quarters of the victims are people of color. According to the 2015 US Transgender Survey, transgender people are particularly vulnerable to sexual and domestic violence.

Kaiser Family Foundation ranks states according to opioid overdose death rates in 2017– The states with the highest and lowest death rates were West Virginia (49.0 per 100,000 individuals) and Nebraska (3.1 per 100,000 individuals), respectively. The average US death rate was 14.9 per 100,000 individuals.

Highlighted Research

1. Study from the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* finds that there is a positive correlation between gun ownership and youth suicide; the difference in gun ownership between the ten states with the highest rates of youth suicide and the ten states with the lowest rates of youth suicide is 32.5 percentage points. [Click here to read our brief on youth suicide.](#)
2. Report from the Texas A&M Transportation Institute finds that the average American spends 42 hours in rush-hour traffic every year; the average person in the Los Angeles/Long Beach/Anaheim area spends 80 hours a year. This could lead to high levels of stress.
3. Report from the Public Interest Research Groups finds that recalls for hazardous meat and poultry increased by 83 percent in the last five years.
4. Study by the Health Care Cost Institute finds that the cost of insulin increased by 99 percent between 2012 and 2016; insulin cost nearly \$15 a day for an average dose in 2016.

CDC Updates

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released the Antibiotic Resistance Investment Map with data from Fiscal Year (FY) 2018. The map includes state-specific information about detection, response, containment, prevention, and innovation when it comes to antibiotic resistance. It also indicates how over \$350 million were spent on investments in local health departments and public health innovation to fight antibiotic resistance.

California

Pediatrician Dr. Nadine Burke Harris will be California's first surgeon general– Dr. Burke founded the Center for Youth Wellness in San Francisco. She was appointed to the San Francisco Citizens' Committee for Community Development under Gavin Newsom when he was the mayor of San Francisco. Her swearing-in ceremony will take place on February 11, 2019, and she will be focusing on tackling the root causes of poor health.

As Coast Guard members' paychecks get put on hold, food banks in the Bay Area work to provide produce and enroll members in Cal Fresh– Nearly 400 people in the Hamilton neighborhood will receive food supplies on Saturday. Food banks in California are also stepping in to help furloughed government employees.

Kaiser Permanente provides funding for an apartment complex in East Oakland– The health care company provided \$5.2 million to lower the rent costs for 50 residents in an effort to prevent homelessness. The apartment company will also be working to establish a fund for affordable housing projects and plans to house 500 homeless individuals near Kaiser Permanente hospitals.

Los Angeles Unified School District teachers reach an agreement to end the nine-day strike– Among many other things, the teachers were fighting for more nursing staff. In some schools, there was only one nurse that worked once a week and teachers were often required to perform temperature readings and send children home or call a paramedic. The deal will bring 150 full-time nurses to every school in the district to provide care for five days a week.

Other States

Kentucky residents are fighting the re-approval of the Medicaid waiver after a federal judge blocked the first approval last year– The Medicaid waiver would allow the state of Kentucky to enact work requirements through Medicaid so that able-bodied individuals would be required to work, volunteer, or take courses for at least 20 hours every week in order to receive Medicaid benefits. The program would also remove dental and vision benefits for many and require low-income individuals to pay premiums. Around 16 individuals are now suing the federal government in hopes to block the waiver once again.

Virginia lawmakers create new caucus to focus on foster care– According to the legislators, the system has been falling behind in its efforts to place children in permanent homes, the caseworkers are overworked, and the system does not have any oversight. The Foster Care caucus will work to find funding and pass legislation to improve the system. One of the goals is to ensure that as many of the 110 unaccredited institutional homes receive accreditation in order to qualify for federal funding. An oversight report was created to address the issues and provide recommendations for the next steps.

Hospitals in New York try "meatless Mondays" in efforts to promote physical health and environmental health– Around 11 acute care hospitals started providing plant-based, meat-free options for inpatients on Mondays. This effort is in coordination with schools in the area that are also partaking in the program to create a "healthier Big Apple" that is encouraged by government institutions.

Maryland's "red flag" law may be saving lives– The new law allows courts to temporarily restrict access to firearms for people who pose a danger to themselves or people around them. According to a sheriff, 302 orders were filed; five of the orders were related to schools and 80 percent of them were consequential. Half of the orders resulted in guns being removed for one year from the person at risk. Currently, 13 states, including California, have the "red flag" laws in place. More than 55 percent of the orders were sought by family members rather than law enforcement.

Federal appeals court decides that Texas can remove Planned Parenthood from Medicaid program– Planned Parenthood provides cancer screening, birth control access, and non-abortion-related health services to 11,000 low-income women through Medicaid. Anti-abortion groups created a video implying that Planned Parenthood seeks to acquire "better specimens" from abortions for medical research. A lower court found that the video did not provide sufficient evidence for the state to ban Planned Parenthood from providing services through Medicaid. A federal appeals court found that the video shows that Planned Parenthood is not a "qualified" provider under the medical and ethical standards of Medicaid.

Health-Related Statistics of the Week

27%

Percent increase in the number of new drug shortages between 2017 and 2018 according to researchers from the University of Utah Health Care.

77%

Percentage of people who favor expanding Medicare to people between the ages of 50 and 64 according to a Kaiser Family Foundation Poll. In the same poll, 56 percent of people said they support Medicare-for-all.

66%

Percentage of Ebola-infected people who are women. Researchers believe this is because females are more likely to care for the sick. Over 60 percent of all the Ebola cases have resulted in death so far.

Newsbytes Relevant to Our Strategic Priorities



To bring focus to our work, the Institute for Health Policy and Leadership has identified three strategic priorities: oral health, mental health and hunger as a health issue. This segment highlights news articles relevant to these priorities.

Oral Health

The University of Missouri-Kansas City dental school partners with local churches to promote oral health to families in need on Martin Luther King Jr. Day– The volunteers passed out 1,000 dental hygiene kits that included toothbrushes, floss, and information on where to receive low-cost cleaning.

Hunger as
a Health
Issue

Research from the EAT-Lancet commission based in Norway determines a new diet plan to aid in better nutrition and less hunger – A team of 37 scientists have determined that if every person went on the planetary diet/flexitarian diet, 11.6 million premature deaths from chronic disease, heart disease, and diabetes would be prevented. The diet consists of 2,500 calories per day and includes a specified amount meats, vegetables, dairy, and legumes.

Mental/
Behavioral
Health

Scientists find a link between high lead blood levels in childhood and mental health illness in adulthood – The study in *JAMA Psychiatry* finds that some children who were exposed to leaded gasoline continue to suffer from mental illness as adults. The results indicate that toxic levels of lead have long-lasting effects.