



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
HEALTH

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Healthcare News At A Glance

National

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) data highlights surge in opioids sold— The Washington Post acquired data from the DEA's Drug Automation of Reports and Consolidated Order System (ARCOS) after a legal battle that lasted a year. The data shows that between 2006 and 2012, distribution of opioids increased by more than 50 percent and contributed to more than 100,000 deaths in the US. Roughly 90 percent of the sales were from generic drug manufacturers, and 75 percent of the pills were distributed by six companies including CVS, Walgreens, and Walmart. In similar news, new data indicates that the drug overdose death rate is beginning to decline for the first time since 1990.

Health and Human Services to distribute \$20 million through the Rural Residency Planning and Development Program—The program includes 27 organizations such as community health centers, medical schools, and Indian Health Services that are tasked with developing rural residency programs and receiving accreditation. The goal is to expand the rural physician workforce in areas such as family medicine, psychiatry, and internal medicine.

CVS testing in-home dialysis machine designed by the inventor of Segways— The \$35 billion market is currently dominated by two companies that provide equipment mainly for outpatient dialysis clinics. Roughly one in eight patients receive dialysis at home. The trial will consist of 70 people, and the companies hope to get HemoCare onto the market by 2021.

House passes Middle Class Health Benefits Repeal Act of 2019 to repeal "Cadillac tax"— The "Cadillac tax" was a provision in the Affordable Care Act that was set to go into effect in 2022 after being previously postponed in 2015 and 2018. The 40 percent tax would have been placed on employment-based health coverage options that exceed \$10,200 for individuals on an annual basis. One analysis finds that if this tax were to go through, 21 percent of employers would be affected. The repeal of the tax could mean the loss of \$191 billion in revenue over the next decade.

Highlighted Studies of the Week

1. Study from the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* finds that blood pressure and cholesterol levels during early adulthood heavily influence the chance of coronary heart disease and heart failure, independent of late adulthood exposures.
2. Study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Network Open* finds that there were no significant reductions in nonmedical prescription opioid use after medical marijuana laws were enacted.
3. Study in *JAMA Network Open* finds that an additional 2,337 births for Latina women may have been preterm due to stress induction from the political climate during 2016 and 2017.
4. Study released by the research institute at Harvard known as Opportunity Insights finds that there is a net return of \$0.47 for every federal dollar that is invested in the education and healthcare of low-income children.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Updates

Two people died, 122 have been hospitalized, and 664 others have been affected by a *Salmonella* outbreak that hit 48 states. One in four affected were children under the age of five. The CDC suspects that the main cause was contact with backyard poultry.

California

San Diego State University School of Nursing to start patient safety curriculum this year– The curriculum was designed by The Patient Safety Movement Foundation and incorporates the concepts of error prevention and patient safety. This innovative curriculum that focuses on technology, healthcare systems, and communication is only being implemented in three other nursing schools in the world.

California Food Policy Advocates finds that California is losing out on nearly \$2 billion by failing to enroll low-income families in CalFresh– CalFresh is entirely funded through the federal government and is available to low-income individuals who make less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level before taxes, or an annual income of \$57,768 for a family of four. The non-profit estimated that less than 75 percent of eligible Californians are enrolled in CalFresh. Nine states enroll almost all eligible persons. A California lawmaker has introduced a bill that would require every county to enroll at least 85 percent of eligible individuals by 2024.

University of California San Diego (UCSD) to use technology-based programs to address physician burnout– The T. Denny Stanford Institute of Empathy and Compassion is a new center at UCSD that focuses on utilizing technology to study brain activity that is associated with empathy and compassion. The findings will be used to create programs and methods to sustain empathetic behavior and reduce physician burnout through the School of Medicine's new medical curriculum that is currently being redesigned. The initiative costs \$2 billion.

Other States

New Hampshire pharmacies will now be required to place warning labels on opioids– The governor passed a bill that will require pharmacies to put an orange sticker and a warning about the risk of addiction on opioids sold. The pharmacies will also be required to provide informational flyers on the risk of overdose. According to a 2015 study by a national council, 30 percent of Americans who were prescribed painkillers did not know that their painkillers contained opioids. In other New Hampshire news, communities in the state have designated cooling stations in public areas such as the library and fire station given the heat advisories. These areas will be air-conditioned and will contain water for people who may not have access to air conditioners.

US District Judge approves legal settlement regarding setting limits on psychotropic drugs used on children in the foster care system– Reports found that one-third of the children were being given psychotropic drugs to control their behavior rather than mental health treatment or therapy that should be followed after trauma-inducing events. One child was trembling after being given five psychotropic drugs. The new settlement calls for strict monitoring and record-keeping of medications, procedures outlining informed consent, and more involvement of child psychiatrists.

Minnesota's Mall of America to offer walk-in clinic services for staff and customers– The clinic is in partnership with the University of Minnesota and its health system. It will contain five examination rooms, a pharmacy, and lab testing. The clinic will provide treatments for minor illness and injuries, physicals for schools, employer drug screenings, vaccinations, and more primary health services. The mall is near the airport and is expected to serve travelers as well.

Missouri moving to an electronic system for controlled substances– At the beginning of next year, all prescriptions for controlled substances will be sent electronically from the physician to the pharmacy in attempts to put an end to the theft of prescription pads from hospitals. Patients who need a paper prescription may request one. Kansas passed a similar mandate this year. The original version of the Missouri bill did not have the exemptions, but patients pushed for revisions to add them saying that a physical copy allows them to do price shopping between pharmacies.

Massachusetts becomes first state to have rules requiring physicians to document each time they enter and exit the operating room– The state medical board passed the rule recently after receiving preliminary approval for them three years ago. The rule was created after a series of news articles highlighted that surgeons at teaching hospitals often operate on more than one patient without their consent. The goal of the new rule is to increase transparency to allow patients and their family members to know who operated on them.

Wisconsin Office of Rural Health finds that 11 rural hospitals have stopped delivering babies since 2010– Out of the 35 hospitals that are still delivering babies, five are at risk of shutting down the obstetric units in the near future. The state is doing better than the national average as estimates indicate that 99 percent of women of child-bearing age are living within a 30-minute drive to a hospital with an obstetrics unit. Lack of on-call providers and low volume of patients have been cited as primary reasons for the closures.

Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) Report Highlights

In a recent report, KFF covered various measures that states took to make health insurance in the individual market more affordable, particularly for enrollees who did not qualify for market subsidies. States have been divided in their approach as some have taken measures to stabilize the marketplace through the ACA while others have looked for options outside of the ACA:

Approaches to Stabilize the Marketplace through the ACA

- Reinsurance programs
- Individual state health insurance mandates
- State-funded enhanced subsidies
- Public plan options

Approaches to Stabilize the Marketplace outside of the ACA

- Alternative coverage plans
- Farm Bureau plans
- Decreased regulation of short-term insurance plans and grandmothers plans

Newsbytes Relevant to Our Strategic Priorities

Have you checked out our latest resources?



Policy Brief: July 2019. Conscience Rule

Issue Brief: July 2019. Drinking Water Pollution in California

Blog: July 2019. Addressing the Organ Shortage Crises in America

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

Dentists and public health experts call attention to world-wide oral disease— In their publication in *The Lancet*, experts highlight that 95% of 12-year-old children in the Philippines, 70 percent of children in India, and 33 percent of all Brazilians suffer from tooth decay. They find that sugar companies are investing large amounts of money into emerging markets. Along with a push for better oral health systems, the experts call for a “united global movement against sugar.”

Hunger as a Health Issue

Declines in average daily participation of children in summer meal programs in Georgia accounted for 30 percent of total decline nationwide— The Georgia Department of Education has not yet pinpointed the cause. Between 2017 and 2018, nearly 48,500 fewer children participated in the program, signifying a 24.8 percent drop, which was the largest in the nation. Golden Harvest Food Bank will be setting up Summer Markets at various school sites in efforts to increase participation.

Mental/ Behavioral Health

Students in Oregon will now be able to take “mental health days”— Mental health days will be considered as part of an excused absence in efforts to treat mental health and physical health equally. Suicide is the second greatest cause of death among youth and young adults in the state. Last year, Utah passed a similar bill.

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