



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
HEALTH

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Healthcare News At A Glance

National

Walmart to stop selling handgun ammunition– The company will also institute a policy that prohibits customers from carrying firearms in Walmart and Sam’s Club stores around the country. Deer hunting rifles and shotguns will still be available for purchase. The company’s CEO anticipates that such a move will decrease the company’s share of the ammunition market from 20 percent to below 10 percent. In other news, a Walmart pilot clinic in Georgia will begin taking patients next week. The clinic will provide x-rays, counseling, labs, dentistry, and other services.

President’s administration seeking to divert \$271 million from disaster aid and relief to migrant detention centers– The funds are intended to be pulled from the Federal Emergency and Management Agency (FEMA), the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and the US Coast Guard. The administration is looking to create temporary facilities for its “Remain in Mexico” program.

US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) showing slight progress in processing marijuana cultivation applications for research– In 2016, the DEA changed its policies to broaden the number of marijuana cultivators for research purposes. After three years of inaction on the pending applications, a research organization filed a lawsuit. Currently, the University of Mississippi is the sole entity with the federal government contract to cultivate marijuana for research purposes. In similar news, the Surgeon General released an advisory against marijuana use for pregnant mothers and adolescents, stating that marijuana is not safe for developing brains. *To learn more, read our issue brief.*

Nearly 60 migrant detention facilities were struck by mumps since last year– Roughly 900 adult immigrants caught mumps at the facilities. Staff members were also affected.

US Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General report finds many issues with Indian Health Service (IHS)– In the last two decades, IHS has had issues with improper prescription of opioids, staffing problems, infrastructure conditions, and lack of funding which led to the shutdown of emergency rooms.

Highlighted Studies of the Week

1. Study from the *Lancet* finds that the use of menopausal hormone therapy increased the incidence of breast cancer by one out of every 50 users of the combination therapy.
2. Study from the *National Bureau of Economic Research* finds that hospital closures in rural areas increased mortality rates by around 6 percent in California between 1995 and 2011.
3. Study from the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* finds that roughly half of the people on public insurance with end-stage liver disease dropped out of the liver transplant wait-list compared to roughly one-third of patients with private medical insurance at the same site.
4. Study from *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* finds that leaders who expressed humility were often viewed as kind but less competent by those they were leading.
5. Study from *Science* finds that people who have engaged in at least one same-sex experience had five single points in common in their genome; genetics accounted for 8 to 25 percent of the behavior.
6. Study from *JAMA Pediatrics* finds that pediatric sepsis cases cost \$7.3 billion in 2016.

Federal Commissions and Task Force Updates

The Joint Commission has issued 13 new hospital requirements to increase safety standards in maternal care. [Click to view them.](#)

The US Preventative Task Force recommends that all adults be screened for hepatitis C virus infection.

California

All 33 passengers assumed dead after recreational scuba diving boat catches fire– A majority of those on the boat were residents from Santa Cruz. Only 20 victims' remains were found. Five of the six crew members survived by jumping off the top deck onto a lifeboat. Investigators do not yet know what caused the fire.

Senate Bill 343 requiring Kaiser Permanente to follow similar financial disclosure laws as other providers heads to Governor's desk– Authored by Senator Richard Pan, this bill calls on the organization to provide financial data on each of the 35 hospitals within the system as opposed to one figure for all the hospitals combined and segmented data on the revenue by payer and service.

Loma Linda University Health, Healthy Humor Inc. and Moose Toys launch Red Nose Docs program– Last week was the debut of the Red Nose Docs, a theatrical circus celebration with juggling, tricks, and crafts for outpatients and inpatients at the Children's Hospital. The program will continue in different units twice a week as a tool to speed up the recovery process for patients.

New collaboration among California Medical Association (CMA) and two other parties will provide independent physicians with tools and technology under value-based arrangements– Aledade, a health information technology company, and the CMA worked on creating physician-led accountable care organizations (ACOs) together under the Medicare shared-savings program. This new collaboration includes the healthcare services company Altas, which is financially supported by Blue Cross Blue Shield. The collaborative will identify payers to offer value-based arrangements to independent physicians that are offering quality care and will provide those physicians with tools such as predictive analytics to increase efficiency and reduce administrative burden.

Other States

Shooting in Texas leaves seven murdered and 22 injured– Over the Labor Day weekend, there was another mass shooting between two Texas cities: Odessa and Midland. Despite being flagged by law enforcement as a person with mental illness, the shooter acquired an assault rifle because of a loophole in the law that does not require private purchasers to conduct background checks. Several new laws were passed the following day that *decreased* restrictions on firearm laws. One bill prevents public school districts and charter schools from regulating firearm storage in cars in school parking lots; another bill requires places of religious worship to indicate if firearms are not allowed on the premises; and a third bill prevents residential lease agreements from including clauses that prohibit tenants from possessing firearms.

New York City's measles outbreak is finally over–The city's health officials made the formal announcement this week after 42 days of no additional infections. The city has also rescinded all emergency vaccination mandates. Since the emergency order was declared in April, an additional 15,500 people were vaccinated. Over 650 people in the city were diagnosed and 52 were hospitalized. Approximately eight out of ten measles patients were children.

Georgia investigating medical sterilizing facility for undisclosed leak of cancer-causing gas– Sterigenics, the company that runs the facility, stated that less than 10 pounds of ethylene oxide leaked and, therefore, they were not obligated to report the leak. The state's Environmental Protection Division will investigate how the company determined the precise amount. There are some census tract areas near the plant that have been flagged for higher risks of cancer from airborne toxic gas. In other Georgia news, while the number of child abuse reports to the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services increased by 89 percent, the proportion of those calls that were substantiated declined by 11.1 percentage points. Some advocates and experts fear that the decline indicates that there may be an issue with the way that the data is being coded or that a case is being evaluated.

New Jersey, Michigan, and Massachusetts see increase in mosquitos carrying Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE)– EEE is a virus that causes brain inflammation and possibly death with a lethal rate of 30 percent. There is no treatment. Some of the health departments have found the virus in multiple mosquito samples. The New Jersey Department of Health and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services have each confirmed one case and are investigating others while the Massachusetts Department of Public Health confirmed four. Officials are recommending individuals to take extra caution against mosquito bites.

Low-income neighborhoods have higher temperatures than their wealthier counterparts–The University of Maryland's Howard Center for Investigative Journalism and NPR analyzed UC census data and air temperature to map the neighborhoods with the greatest temperatures and to understand the differences between neighborhoods. In more than 75 percent of the cases, low-income neighborhoods were much hotter. The researchers stated that a cause for this association could be the lack of trees acting as barriers between the sun and the heat-trapping pavements.

Healthcare-Related Surveys and Polls

20%

Percentage of health system professionals that reported that their health system does not have an emergency preparedness plan in place according to a Medical Group Management Association poll.

58%

Percentage of the public that has a negative view of pharmaceutical industries according to a Gallup poll.

80%

Percentage of healthcare organizations throughout the world that have been cyberattacked in the last 12 months according to a survey conducted by the international software company Irdeto.

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

Researchers from Rutgers University find associations between poor oral health and cognitive decline in older Chinese Americans– Almost half of the older adults that were surveyed reported having oral health issues and one-quarter reported dry mouth. The first study found a strong association between cognitive decline and self-reported oral health problems. The second study found a strong correlation between stress and dry mouth.

Hunger as a Health Issue

Pennsylvania recognizes September as Hunger Action Month– To address the problem of food insecurity that afflicts more than 1.5 million Pennsylvanians, the York County Food Bank distributes 2 million pounds of food to residents every year. According to a study, 9 million more pounds is required to eradicate hunger in York County where 55,000 people are estimated to be food insecure. The Food Bank recently added a second center and doubled its distribution.

Mental/ Behavioral Health

California students' ID cards now contain suicide prevention contact information due to suicide prevention law that went into effect– The law applies to all students between seventh and twelfth grade. School districts can add additional resource information such as contact information for campus police or local suicide prevention hotlines. The law was developed in response to a 2017 survey that indicated that more than 7 percent of high school students attempted suicide.

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