



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
HEALTH

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Healthcare News At A Glance



National

Surgeon General highlights main parts of Health and Human Services (HHS) HIV program— To reach the goal of decreasing HIV incidence by 90 percent by 2030, the initiative will be focused on the 48 counties and seven states with the highest rates of HIV. HHS plans to identify those who are infected and at risk and get them started on antiretroviral therapy (ART) and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), respectively.

American College of Cardiology and American Heart Association revise aspirin guidelines— Researchers found that the risks that are associated with taking aspirin for people over the age of 70 who have never had a stroke outweigh the benefits. The organizations now recommend that older adults should not take a daily dose of aspirin if they have never had a heart condition.

National Institutes of Health (NIH) declare support for global moratorium on gene editing— Researchers and ethicists are calling for the moratorium on gene editing of human sperm, eggs, and embryos until they can devise an international standard with guidelines on how and when this new technology can be used.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved new generic blood pressure medicine due to shortage caused by recalls— The FDA had been recalling the generic blood pressure medication valsartan after some tests detected traces of carcinogenic impurities. The new generic medicine has been tested to ensure that it is safe. In other FDA-related news, the FDA fast-tracked the approval process for an opioid antidote by Purdue Pharmaceuticals that lasts longer than the current opioid reversal drug naloxone.

Amazon customers can use health savings account to make medically-related purchases on Amazon— A health savings account (HSA) is a savings account in which people transfer a portion of their salary to be used for out-of-pocket healthcare expenditures. Customers can use their HSA debit cards directly via Amazon to purchase medical supplies such as glucometers and medicines. In other Amazon-related news, the company is now selling MedModular patient rooms (referred to as “hospital room in a box”) to hospitals and medical schools; the boxes are reported to be 20 percent cheaper than constructing a hospital room.

Highlighted Healthcare Studies and Reports

1. Study in *Applied Clinical Informatics* finds that nurses were more than twice as likely to report dissatisfaction with electronic health records if they felt they were working in a poor hospital environment compared to those who reported working in better conditions.
2. Study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* finds that while the number of opioid prescriptions decreased by 13 percent from 2006 to 2017, the average duration per opioid prescription increased from 13 days to 17.9 days. The percentage of opioids that were prescribed for a 30-day period grew by 3 percent annually during this time.
3. Study in the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* finds that the rates of symptoms of major depression have increased by 63 percent in young adults over the last decade. Smartphone and social media use is a contributing factor.
4. Report by *Navigant* finds that a mid-sized, nonprofit hospital system could see between a \$158 million and \$330 million decline in revenue depending on whether “Medicare for All” is passed and how it is structured.
5. Report in the *Harvard Business Review* finds that 54 percent of Walmart employees who sought care at a Center for Excellence (a hospital identified as a quality hospital by Walmart) did not need additional surgery, leading to savings for the company.

California

Governor appoints pediatrician and public health expert to head California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS)– Mark Ghaly has been appointed as the CHHS Secretary and will oversee 12 departments that provide healthcare services, social services, public health services, and income assistance. Under the governor's direction, the role will entail efforts to decrease prescription drug costs, expand Medi-Cal coverage to undocumented migrants, and prepare the state for a single-payer system. Dr. Ghaly has been working on providing healthcare access to underserved communities in Los Angeles. The governor's selection awaits Senate approval.

San Bernardino County's Department of Behavioral Health receives \$17 million through Prop 63 to implement the Innovative Remote Onsite Assistance Delivery (InnROADs) program– The five-year program will include a mobile multidisciplinary team that will access rural areas to shift homeless individuals into supportive housing and provide treatment for mental and behavioral health conditions.

San Francisco General Hospital opened Ward 86 earlier this year to care for homeless HIV patients– Through a program known as Positive-health Onsite Program for Unstably-housed Populations (POP-UP), 23 homeless individuals have been enrolled and provided with HIV treatment and other healthcare services.

Other States

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services grants Ohio approval to move forward with Medicaid work requirements– In order to receive Medicaid, low-income Ohioans will have to show that they have a job or perform community service at least 20 hours a week. There are exemptions for those who are over the age of 49, receiving unemployment, receiving substance abuse treatment, going to school part-time, working as a caregiver for a disabled household member, and pregnant women. The state needs to develop an implementation plan in the next few months that must receive federal approval before implementing the changes.

Connecticut Supreme Court rules that parents may sue the gun manufacturer for the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in 2012– The lawsuits will focus on the marketing practices, specifically the manufacturer's strategy for advertising semiautomatic weapons.

Kansas lawmakers introduce bill to allow Kansans to specify that their donated organs will only go to other Kansans– The bill will give the donor discretion over who should receive the organs as long as it is not discriminatory. Some legislators are concerned about the ethical and moral implications of the bill while others are concerned that the details have not been properly addressed such as whether an out-of-state person could be eligible if they receive care in the state. The bill is an effort to ward off potential federal policies that could require organs to be donated from the Midwest and Southern states to the Coastal states that are experiencing a shortage.

Maryland looks to innovative measures to improve healthcare access– The state is considering identifying the nearly 120,000 uninsured residents through a question on state tax returns that would ask if they had health insurance, and referring those individuals to the Medicaid program or the health exchange. Maryland is also considering legislation that would educate students about organ donation before they are eligible to receive their driver's licenses as well as legislation that would allow an organ donor to take 60 days of unpaid leave for recovery.

Multiple agencies in Philadelphia providing opioid awareness and reversal training– The trainings are free and open to the public. Individuals are taught about the biology of an opioid overdose followed by step-by-step instructions on how and when to administer naloxone. The organization Prevention Point, which also serves as a needle exchange, prepares approximately 1,500 people per month. The Philadelphia City Council underwent training as well.

New York City Council passes bill mandating testing of school buildings for lead poisoning– The mandate will apply to all school buildings that were built before 1978 as the city officially banned lead paint that year. Schools that have traces of lead are required to inform parents and rectify the issue within 45 days. The bill is awaiting the mayor's signature. In other news, a federal judge has ruled that a county in New York has the authority to prevent the 44 unvaccinated children from attending school amidst the measles outbreak.

Grocery and convenience stores in Utah may be able to sell beer with an alcohol content of four percent if a bill is passed– The cap on the maximum alcohol content allowed for sale in grocery and convenience stores has been 3.2 percent (applicable to most light beers) because of Utah's predominant faith. The new limit would allow Budweiser, Coors, and Miller Genuine Draft to sell their non-lite beers.

Healthcare-Related Survey Statistics

21%

Percentage of patients who reported finding an error in their electronic health records. These included errors in medical history, lab results, and medication information.

34%

Percentage of physicians who reported feeling appreciated for their work, mainly by their patients and peers. Nearly 30 percent reported that they had never received any formal recognition.

45%

Percentage of physicians who reported that there is a noncompete clause in their contracts that prevents them from taking patients with them if they go to a new or competing practice.

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

Kaiser Family Foundation brief finds that nearly two-thirds of Medicare beneficiaries do not have dental coverage– The report also finds that individuals who are covered receive their benefits through Medicare Advantage, Medicaid, or private dental plans. Nearly 20 percent of elderly individuals spent more than \$1,000 out of pocket for oral health care in 2016. There are also racial and socioeconomic disparities in accessing the dentist. The brief calls attention to the missed opportunities to provide preventive oral health care for the population of older Americans.

Hunger as a Health Issue

Central California Alliance for Health and Valley Children's Healthcare sponsor prescription program for hunger– In California's Merced County, physicians have started prescribing food for patients who have been screened for food insecurity. The prescription is a voucher that the patient can use to receive a 30-pound box of groceries every month for up to 12 months from the county's food bank.

Mental/Behavioral Health

FDA approves first postpartum depression drug in the history of the US– One in nine mothers are reported to suffer from postpartum depression after childbirth. The drug, brexanolone, has shown success in the clinical trials and is reported to work quickly. In order to receive the therapy, women must be enrolled in the Zulresso REMS Program, must be administered a 60-hour injection by a care provider, and must remain under supervision throughout the course of the treatment.