

11 July 2014

Army Public Health Weekly Update

U.S. Army Public Health Command



The Army Public Health Update is a collection of articles taken verbatim from public sources to offer awareness of current health issues and the media coverage given to them. The articles do not necessarily represent US Army Medical Department opinions, views, policy, or guidance, and should not be construed or interpreted as being endorsed by the US Army Medical Department.

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Performance Triad App

Members of the U.S. Army Public Health Command, the Performance Triad Team at the Office of the Surgeon General and the Combined Arms Support Center Sustainment Center of Excellence Mobile (SCoEMobile) team recently released the first version of the Performance Triad app for global distribution.

This app provides specific educational resources for squad leaders, Soldiers, spouses, Civilians, healthcare workers, pre-Retirees, and Retirees on how to optimize their performance and enhance their health.

Download the app for iPhones, iPads, Android devices, and Windows phones by searching for "Performance Triad."



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- U.S.: Sales of recreational marijuana begin in Washington State
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- Japan: Typhoon Neoguri slams in to Okinawa
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- El Niño news: Latin America better prepared
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**Love the Pets,
Not the Germs:
CDC Update on
Enteric Zoonoses**

Enteric illnesses are common, costly, preventable, and increasingly attributable to animal contact. Animals provide many benefits to people; however, even clean and healthy animals may be responsible for spreading germs such as Salmonella, E.coli O157:H7, and Cryptosporidium, some of the frequent causes of diarrheal illness in children and adults.

Date: Thursday, July 17th

Time: 2:00 - 3:00 pm ET

Join Webinar: Registration is not required.

Audio Dial In:

888-913-9971

(U.S. Callers)

212-547-0138

(International Callers)

Passcode: 7400152

U.S. MILITARY

A growing number of veterans struggles to quit powerful painkillers

10 July - During wartime, doctors and medics need to treat troops for pain, and often use prescription opiates to solve that problem. Americans in the military are prescribed narcotic painkillers three times as often as civilians. This year, the Department of Veterans Affairs is treating about 650,000 veterans by giving them opiates. And that can end up creating a new problem for patients with pain: addiction. Abuse of prescription drugs is higher among troops than civilians, and the rate soared throughout the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Both the Pentagon and the VA fear this drug use contributes to suicide and homelessness among the men and women who have served in the military... The VA set up the opiate safety program last year in response to alarming rates of drug dependency among veterans. The Pentagon also tracks substance abuse among troops, which tripled between 2005 and 2008. [NPR](#)

DOD, VA doctors share latest advances for amputees

8 July - As hundreds of warfighters with amputations return to civilian life, health care providers for both active-duty and retired service members are joining forces to ensure high-quality care for them as well as continued rapid progress in transplant and prosthetic technology. Leading experts from the departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs are sharing discoveries and best practices in caring for service members who have lost limbs at a three-day symposium that begins July 8 in Arlington, Virginia. "A greater percentage of warfighters with multiple amputations have survived [the recent wars] than any other conflict we've ever had," said Dr. Joseph Webster, national medical director for the VA's amputation system of care. A total of 1,646 warfighters lost limbs as a result of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, and 30 percent of them lost more than one, Webster said. Doctors and therapists now must figure out how to provide lifelong care for these service members, most still in their 20s and 30s. [Health.mil](#)

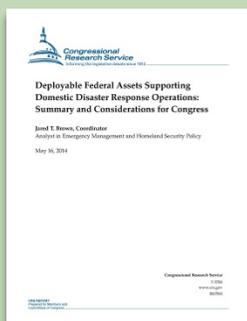
Probing brain's depth, trying to aid memory

9 July - The Department of Defense on Tuesday announced a \$40 million investment in what has become the fastest-moving branch of neuroscience: direct brain recording. Two centers, one at the University of Pennsylvania and the other at the University of California, Los Angeles, won contracts to develop brain implants for memory deficits. Their aim is to develop new treatments for traumatic brain injury, the signature wound of the wars in Iraq and in Afghanistan. Its most devastating symptom is the blunting of memory and reasoning. Scientists have found in preliminary studies that they can sharpen some kinds of memory by directly recording, and stimulating, circuits deep in the brain. [New York Times](#)

Deployable Federal Assets Supporting Domestic Disaster Response Operations

For most disasters across the nation, the affected local, state, or tribal governments have sufficient capabilities to respond to the incident. However, for disasters with consequences that require unique capabilities or that overwhelm the existing capabilities of a respective state or tribal government, Congress has authorized and appropriated a suite of deployable federal assets to support domestic disaster response operations.

This report reviews several key concepts about these federal assets, and highlights possible issues Congress may consider when evaluating their authorization and appropriation.



PTSD's 'secondary' victims: the children of veterans

9 July - ... The Veterans Administration reported that 21 percent of post-9/11 troops who sought help at the VA from 2004 to 2009 had PTSD, 2 percent had traumatic brain injury and 5 percent had both. Now that these veterans at home, their lives – and the lives of their families – are forever changed as young children face the stress of living with someone who, in many ways, is a new and sometimes unpredictable parent. Some call this secondary PTSD... Multiple studies in different countries have shown that kids are affected by having a parent who is a combat veteran with PTSD. For example, a 2008 Bosnia and Herzegovina study on kids of veterans with PTSD found that the father's PTSD may have "long-term and long-lasting consequences on the child's personality." [Al Jazeera](#)

VA rejects link between Gulf War service and cancers



7 July - The Department of Veterans Affairs has rejected a request from members of Congress and veterans advocates to make brain cancer, lung cancer and migraines presumptive conditions for Gulf War veterans. Officials said they cannot prove the high rate of these illnesses among Gulf War vets are related to military service. VA officials said the number of brain cancer deaths for soldiers

exposed to sarin gas was too low to be conclusive, though it was double the rate of soldiers not exposed. And the rate of lung cancer deaths, though 15 percent higher than those who did not serve in the 1991 Gulf War, is "inconclusive" because researchers did not know how many of the servicemembers smoke. [Army Times](#)

Reported gastrointestinal infections in the U.S. Air Force, 2000–2012

June 2014 - During 2000–2012, U.S. Air Force Public Health Offices reported 3,429 cases of gastrointestinal infection (GI) diagnosed at Air Force medical treatment facilities. The four most commonly reported specific etiologies of GIs accounted for 86.7% of all GI cases (n=2,972). Salmonellosis accounted for 41.4% (n=1,420) of all cases. The next most commonly reported events were associated with Campylobacter infection, shigellosis, and giardiasis. The majority of GI cases were reported among dependents, most notably among those aged 0–5 years. Campylobacter infections represented a significantly larger proportion of GI reported from locations outside the continental United States (OCONUS) (n=222, 33.7%) compared to continental U.S. (CONUS) locations (n=363, 13.1%). CONUS locations reported higher proportions of salmonellosis, shigellosis, and giardiasis infections compared to OCONUS locations. [Medical Surveillance Monthly Report](#)

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Classified Version of the Weekly Update

An Army Public Health Weekly Update is available with articles classified up to the **SECRET** level from the USAPHC SIPRNet site:

<http://phc.army.smil.mil>

Look under Hot Topics & Current Issues.

To access this version, you will need a **SECRET** clearance and a SIPRNet account.

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GLOBAL

Around the globe, mom's health key to newborn's size

7 July - Well-nourished, healthy and well-educated mothers who receive prenatal care have babies of similar size - regardless of differences in their race, ethnicity or where they live, a new study finds. Conversely, poor nutrition and health seem to be the main culprits behind large differences in the growth of babies during pregnancy and the average size of newborns around the world, according to new research, the team of scientists report.

"Currently, we are not all equal at birth. But we can be," study author Dr. Jose Villar, of the Nuffield Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, University of Oxford, said in a university news release. "We can create a similar start for all by making sure mothers are well educated and nourished, by treating infection and by providing adequate antenatal care. Don't tell us nothing can be done. Don't say that women in some parts of the world have small children because they are predestined to do so. It's simply not true," said Villar.

[Medline Plus](#)

Blocking cells' movement to stop the spread of cancer

7 July - Insights into how cells move through the body could lead to innovative techniques to stop cancer cells from spreading and causing secondary tumours, according to new UCL research. Scientists discovered that cells can change into an invasive, liquid-like state to readily navigate the narrow channels in our body. This transformation is triggered by chemical signals, which could be blocked in order to stop cancer cells from spreading.

[EurekAlert](#)

HIV detected in 'Mississippi baby' who doctors thought was cured of virus

10 July - A toddler who scientists believed was "functionally cured" of HIV after receiving antiretroviral therapy within days of her birth has shown detectable levels of the HIV virus, according to the doctors who are treating her. The child, whose mother didn't know she was infected with HIV until she was in the delivery room, has been referred to as "the Mississippi baby" in order to protect her identity. Her case, published in a 2013 New England Journal of Medicine paper, was touted as an example of long-term HIV remission. The news dashed the hopes of scientists that early treatment with HIV drugs could reverse the course of the virus. [Al Jazeera](#)

HIV study leads to insights into deadly infection

8 July - Research led by the University of Adelaide has provided new insights into how the HIV virus greatly boosts its chances of spreading infection, and why HIV is so hard to combat. HIV infects human immune cells by turning the infection-fighting proteins of these cells into a "backdoor key" that lets the virus in. Recent research has found that another protein is involved as well. A peptide in semen that sticks together and forms structures

known as "amyloid fibrils" enhances the virus's infection rate by up to an astonishing 10,000 times. [EurekAlert](#)

New field tests may curb kissing bug disease

7 July - Six different rapid diagnostic tests have proved reliable in detecting Chagas disease without having to wait for laboratory confirmation, according to a study by the medical charity Doctors Without Borders and the World Health Organization. Such quick tests could be a breakthrough for controlling the disease, which infects up to eight million people in Latin America and has spread, through migration, to the United States, Europe, Asia and the Western Pacific. Chagas is caused by a parasite normally passed on by the bite of the kissing bug, also known as the reduviid bug or the triatomine bug. It has also been transmitted by blood and organ donations, to fetuses by mothers and, in rare cases, through food with crushed bugs in it. It may begin with a mild infection but prove fatal decades later when a weakened organ — usually the heart, esophagus or bowel — suddenly collapses. It kills about 12,000 people a year, according to the W.H.O. [New York Times](#)

Study paves way for simple blood test to predict Alzheimer's

8 July – British scientists have identified a set of 10 proteins in the blood that can predict the onset of Alzheimer's and call this an important step towards developing a test for the incurable brain-wasting disease. Such a test could initially be used to select patients for clinical trials of experimental treatments being developed to try to halt progression of Alzheimer's, the researchers said, and may one day move into routine use in doctors' clinics. [Reuters](#)

Study: Reactions to psychiatric drugs cause almost 90,000 ER visits a year

9 July - Bad reactions to psychiatric drugs result in nearly 90,000 emergency room visits each year by U.S. adults, with anti-anxiety medicines and sedatives among the most common culprits, a study suggests. A drug used in some popular sleeping pills was among the most commonly involved sedatives, especially in adults aged 65 and older. Most of the visits were for troublesome side effects or accidental overdoses and almost 1 in 5 resulted in hospitalization. The results come from an analysis of 2009-2011 medical records from 63 hospitals that participate in a nationally representative government surveillance project. [Al Jazeera](#)

WMO, WHO establish joint office for climate change, improve public health

10 July - A new World Health Organisation (WHO)/World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) Climate and Health office has been established under the auspices of the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) to promote the coordinated development and use of

climate services to improve public health. It will increase awareness, build capacity, and connect meteorological services with experts in the health sector in an active partnership for climate adaptation and risk management. The move comes in response to increasing demand from the health community for improved access to climate and weather products like regional climate predictions, hazard warnings and seasonal outlooks needed to understand and manage health risks related to weather and climate and to cope with a shifting burden of disease due to climate change. [Guardian](#)

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INFLUENZA

CDC: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report

During week 26 ending June 28, 2014, 5.5% of all deaths reported through the 122-Cities Mortality Reporting System were due to pneumonia and influenza. This percentage was below the epidemic threshold of 6.3% for week 26. [FluView](#)

Naval Health Research Center: Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update

For the week ending 5 July 2014:

- Influenza: No new cases of NHRC laboratory-confirmed influenza (A/H3) among US military basic trainees.
- FRI surveillance at all eight U.S. military basic training centers indicated FRI rates were moderately elevated at CGTC, Cape May. [NHRC Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update](#)

UK study finds low H3N2 vaccine protection in 2012-13

10 July - An analysis of flu vaccine effectiveness (VE) during the 2012-13 season in the United Kingdom found moderate protection against influenza B, good protection against the 2009 H1N1 virus, but very poor protection against H3N2. A research team from several European countries used a test-negative study design and surveillance data from five primary care sentinel sites, including swabbing results from 4,649 people... The researchers found that VE against H3N2 was only 26% (95% confidence interval [CI], -4% to 48%), for 2009 H1N1 it was 73% (95% CI, 37%-89%)—although data were based on only 127 cases—and for influenza B it was 51% (95% CI, 34%-63%). Also, partly because about three fourths of influenza A cases studied involved H3N2, VE for both influenza A strains was only 35% (95% CI, 11%-53%). In addition, the team found evidence, though not significant, that VE declined over time against H3N2. [CIDRAP Flu Scan](#) (first item)

WHO pandemic prep program to begin in 4 European nations

9 July - Four Eurasian countries are first in line in the WHO's European Region to benefit from the agency's Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP) Framework, according to a WHO announcement yesterday. The PIP Framework, adopted by the WHO's 64th World Health Assembly in May 2011, is "a unique partnership between industry, civil society and governments to improve pandemic preparedness and access to antiviral medicines and vaccines," says the notice... The European Region countries to benefit initially are Armenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The first step in implementing the PIP Framework will be to strengthen surveillance systems in the countries. Representatives from the four nations are currently working with WHO staff to make specific and detailed plans to accomplish this. Countries participating in the framework are responsible for sharing any influenza viruses considered to have pandemic potential with the WHO through national influenza centers. Among responsibilities of participating industries are yearly donations to the program. [CIDRAP Flu Scan](#) (second item)

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VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

Hungary: Five people monitored for suspected anthrax infection

4 July - An infection of deadly anthrax has been identified in beef in eastern Hungary and five people are being monitored in hospital for suspected symptoms of the disease, the health authority ANTSZ said on Friday. It said the disease was identified in frozen beef after two cattle were illegally slaughtered in a farm in Tiszafured, a town about 160 km east of Budapest. [Reuters](#)

Indonesia: Rabies

7 July - The Bali Animal Welfare Association [BAWA] on [3 Jul 2014] claimed a small victory for vaccinating dogs against rabies and educating the public in Singapadu Tengah village, Gianyar regency, Bali. Responding to a [26 Jun 2014] directive from Bali governor Made Mangku Pastia, public officials "were scheduled to eliminate stray dogs in the village on [30 Jun 2014]," BAWA posted to Facebook. "BAWA worked in the banjars [villages] for days prior to the scheduled elimination to ensure village dogs were safe," the BAWA posting recounted. When animal husbandry officers arrived on [30 Jun 2014], there were few stray dogs and the villagers were not welcoming. In response, the officers offered to vaccinate rather than eliminate any dogs they netted. [ProMED mail](#)

Is Foster Farms a food safety pioneer or a persistent offender?



9 July - Foster Farms, a chicken producer in California, just can't seem to stop bleeding bad news. On July 3, it recalled several batches of chicken products because a chicken breast from one of those batches is blamed for poisoning someone with salmonella bacteria. The recall came on top of an outbreak of salmonella that's been going on since

October 2013... But here's the paradox: Foster Farms may now be one of the country's cleanest, safest sources of chicken products. That's according to the USDA, which has been testing chicken parts that are processed at Foster Farms plants. After the USDA threatened to shut down the plants in October, the company called in food safety experts and set up new procedures to eliminate salmonella contamination. It's made a difference, the government says. At Foster Farms plants, fewer than 5 percent of chicken parts test positive for salmonella. At other companies, it's typically about 20 percent. [NPR](#)

Malaysia: Japanese encephalitis

8 July - Malaysia is stepping up measures to control Japanese encephalitis. The measures include better monitoring of pig movements and treatments to kill the mosquitoes that transmit the virus as well as vaccination of people who live in high-risk areas. The Veterinary Services Department with the cooperation of the Health Department will step up monitoring and fogging at pig farms to prevent any risk of Japanese encephalitis (JE).

[ProMED-mail](#)

USDA updates recall of tainted chicken to include military bases

8 July - U.S. military bases and military commissaries in five states that supply food to personnel and their families are among the outlets believed to have received salmonella-tainted chicken produced by Foster Farms, the U.S. Department of Agriculture said on Tuesday. U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine bases in Alaska, California, Hawaii, Nevada and Washington state may have received the chicken, according to an updated list of recipients of the poultry, which was recalled last week. The recalled products may have been sold to the bases themselves, as well as on-base commissaries, the agency said. [Reuters](#)

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WELLNESS

A healthy lifestyle adds years to your life

8 July – Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), cancer, diabetes and chronic respiratory disorders - the incidence of these non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is constantly rising in industrialised countries... Attention is focusing, amongst other things, on the main risk factors for these diseases which are linked to personal behaviour – i.e. tobacco smoking, an unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and harmful alcohol consumption. Against this backdrop Private Docent Brian Martin and his colleagues from the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine (ISPM) at the University of Zurich have examined the effects of these four factors – both individual and combined – on life expectancy. For the first time the consequences of an unhealthy lifestyle can be depicted in numbers. [EurekAlert](#)

Less exercise, not more calories, responsible for expanding waistlines

7 July – Sedentary lifestyle and not caloric intake may be to blame for increased obesity in the US, according to a new analysis of data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). A study published in the American Journal of Medicine reveals that in the past 20 years there has been a sharp decrease in physical exercise and an increase in average body mass index (BMI), while caloric intake has remained steady. Investigators theorized that a nationwide drop in leisure-time physical activity, especially among young women, may be responsible for the upward trend in obesity rates. [EurekAlert](#)

Research suggests gut microbes impact autism

8 July - New research suggests children with autism tend to have a less diverse population of gut microbes than other children. Scientists suspect modern practices, including eating processed foods and overuse of antibiotics, are feeding the problem. Autism is a developmental disability that affects a person's behavior as well as social and communication skills. People with autism are also more prone to digestive upsets. [VOA](#)

Seven ways to keep kids hydrated

8 July – Don't wait for your kids to tell you they're thirsty before offering them water, experts say. Instead, offer them water and other hydrating foods and beverages throughout the day, particularly in the summer when more liquids are needed to stay healthy. By the time children are thirsty, they're already at least 3 percent dehydrated. [Reuters](#)

Sibling composition impacts childhood obesity risk

8 July – It is well documented that children with obese parents are at greater risk for obesity. In a new study, researchers from Massachusetts General Hospital, Cornell University, and Duke University looked at how different kinds of family associations affect obesity,

specifically how sibling relationships affect a child's weight... "We found that obesity status of a younger child's older sibling is more strongly associated with a child's obesity than is the parent's obesity status," notes lead investigator Mark C. Pachucki, PhD, Mongan Institute for Health Policy, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA. [EurekAlert](#)

Study paves way for simple blood test to predict Alzheimer's



8 July - British scientists have identified a set of 10 proteins in the blood that can predict the onset of Alzheimer's and call this an important step towards developing a test for the incurable brain-wasting disease. Such a test could initially be used to select patients for clinical trials of experimental treatments being developed to try to halt progression of Alzheimer's, the researchers said, and may one day move into routine use in doctors' clinics. [Reuters](#)

Will today's children die earlier than their parents?

7 July – It's often said that today's children will have shorter average life spans than their parents, because so many suffer from obesity. But there is another view that says they will live longer - at the risk of spending their twilight years in poor health... It's true that the number of people who are obese now is higher than in the past. Figures published in the Lancet earlier this year put the figure at 2.1bn worldwide, up from 875 million in 1980. It's true that the number of people who are obese now is higher than in the past. Figures published in the Lancet earlier this year put the figure at 2.1bn worldwide, up from 875 million in 1980. [BBC News](#)

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USAFRICOM

Kenya: Simple solutions can save babies in Kenya

7 July – Kenya's high newborn death rate of 31 out of every 1,000 live births can be greatly reduced through simple solutions. These include cheap investments in quality care, according to a global action plan launched today at the Partners' Forum in Johannesburg. The Every Newborn action plan (ENAP), approved in May by the World Health Assembly, says investing just Sh100 (\$1.15) per person every year in 75 high burden countries would prevent three million deaths of women and babies. [allAfrica.com](#)

Liberia health workers said to flee after Ebola cases, deaths

10 July - Healthcare workers (HCWs) are said to be fleeing their assignments in Liberia after 12 Ebola infections among their ranks, 10 of them fatal, AllAfrica reported today. Dr. Peter Coleman, a Liberian senator from Grand Kru County and committee chair on health, cited the cases and deaths yesterday at Liberia's Capitol Building. He said HCWs are leaving clinics and hospitals in affected areas out of fear of infection with the deadly virus, which has infected 131 people in the country, killing 84, according to an update this week from the World Health Organization (WHO). [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (second item)

Ugandan farmers fighting for tobacco



4 July - The Ugandan parliament is considering a new tobacco control bill that would put strict limits on tobacco marketing and consumption. The measure is popular with health professionals, but the tobacco industry is up in arms, with small-scale tobacco farmers saying the bill will drive them out of business...But for Ugandan tobacco farmers, the future is less certain than they thought. The Tobacco Control Bill currently before parliament proposes strict limits on marketing and consumption, banning smoking in and around public buildings. It also prohibits advertising tobacco products, or even displaying cigarettes in shops. [VOA](#)

West Africa: Ebola virus disease – update

8 July - ... New cases and deaths attributable to Ebola virus disease (EVD) continue to be reported by the Ministries of Health in the three West African countries of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Between 3 and 6 July 2014, 50 new cases of EVD, including 25 deaths, were reported from the three countries as follows: Guinea, 0 new cases and 2 deaths; Liberia, 16 new cases with 9 deaths; and Sierra Leone 34 new cases and 14 deaths. These numbers include laboratory-confirmed, probable, and suspect cases and deaths of EVD. As of 6 July 2014, the cumulative number of cases attributed to EVD in the three countries stands at 844, including 518 deaths. [WHO](#)

West Africa: Fifty new Ebola cases and 25 deaths, WHO

8 July - Fifty new cases of Ebola and 25 deaths have been reported in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea since July 3, as the deadly virus continues to spread in families, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Tuesday. In a statement, the United Nations agency said that the latest figures from health ministries in the three countries showed a total of 844 cases including 518 deaths in the epidemic that began in February. [Reuters](#)

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Afghanistan: Taliban bans polio vaccine teams in Afghanistan province

8 July - The Taliban has banned polio immunization activities in southern Helmand province in Afghanistan because it suspects vaccination teams of spying for the government at a time when the insurgent group has clashed heavily with government forces, the Taliban said on its Web site... The newly announced ban is worrisome, because Taliban-affiliated groups have for years attacked and killed polio vaccine teams across the border in Pakistan but have as yet allowed the public health efforts in Afghanistan. The Taliban said Helmand, which borders Pakistan, has been off limits to vaccinators since February. So far this year Afghanistan has reported seven polio cases, according to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, compared with three during the same period last year. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (sixth item)

Afghanistan: UN-managed fund for urgent health and nutrition needs In Afghanistan

10 July - Around one million people in Afghanistan are expected to benefit from emergency health and nutrition projects due to the first grant allocations from a newly-established, United Nations-managed Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF). "This fund is part of our work to make humanitarian financing both more effective and more accountable," the UN's Humanitarian Coordinator for Afghanistan, Mark Bowden, said in a news release on Thursday. The CHF for Afghanistan was created this year. Its biggest donors so far are the UK Department for International Development and Sweden's International Development Cooperation. Other donations and commitments have come from Norway, South Korea, Australia and OCHA. [RTT News](#)

Kyrgyzstan: Incidence of intestinal infections, measles, typhoid and rubella increases in Bishkek

10 July - No cases of malaria registered in Bishkek for 6 months in 2014. The press service of the Maoyr's Hall reported with reference to the Department of Health. According to the data, cases of disease typhus, Brill's disease, Q fever, tick-borne encephalitis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, rabies and anthrax weren't registered in the capital. Compared with the same period in 2013 incidence of viral hepatitis types A, B, C and D, the primary brucellosis, syphilis, scabies, influenza, ascariasis and enterobiasis cases decreased. At the same time incidence of typhoid fever, salmonellosis, acute dysentery, acute intestinal infections, bacterial meningitis, measles, typhoid fever, whooping cough, rubella, scarlet fever, chicken pox and mumps has increased. [News Agency 24](#)

Saudi Arabia: Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) – WHO update

4 July - On 30 June and 1 July 2014, the National IHR Focal Point for Saudi Arabia reported an additional 3 laboratory-confirmed cases of infection with Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV), and a death in a previously reported case... Globally, 827 laboratory-confirmed cases of infection with MERS-CoV, including at least 287 related deaths have officially been reported to WHO. Based on the current situation and available information, WHO encourages all Member States to continue their surveillance for acute respiratory infections and to carefully review any unusual patterns. [WHO](#)

Saudi Arabia, UAE report more MERS cases

10 July – Saudi Arabia's health ministry said today the Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) has sickened one more person and that another patient has died from the disease, a day after neighboring United Arab Emirates (UAE) announced sparse details about two more cases there. [CIDRAP](#)

Syria/Lebanon: Ongoing epidemic of cutaneous leishmaniasis among Syrian refugees, Lebanon

October 2014 - In September 2012, a cutaneous leishmaniasis outbreak began among Syrian refugees in Lebanon. For 948 patients in whom leishmaniasis was not confirmed, we obtained samples for microscopic confirmation and molecular speciation. We identified *Leishmania tropica* in 85% and *L. major* in 15% of patients. After 3 months of meglumine antimonite therapy, patients initial cure rate was 82%. [Emerging Infectious Diseases](#)

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USEUCOM

Rapid spread of the novel respiratory syncytial virus A ON1 genotype, central Italy, 2011 to 2013

3 July - Respiratory infections positive for human respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) subtype A were characterised in children admitted to hospitals in Rome and Ancona (Italy) over the last three epidemic seasons. Different strains of the novel RSV-A genotype ON1, first identified in Ontario (Canada) in December 2010, were detected for the first time in Italy in the following 2011/12 epidemic season. They bear an insertion of 24 amino acids in the G glycoprotein as well as amino acid changes likely to change antigenicity. By early 2013, ON1 strains had spread so efficiently that they had nearly replaced other RSV-A strains...Improving RSV surveillance would allow timely understanding of the

epidemiological and clinicopathological features of the novel RSV-A genotype.

[Eurosurveillance](#)

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USNORTHCOM

Mexico: Cholera, diarrhea and dysentery update

7 July - After 6 months, cholera reappeared in Hidalgo [State], because in the last week [week ending 6 Jul 2014] there were 3 new cases, which were reported in La Huasteca [see comment], according to the latest report of the federal Secretariat of Health (SSH). The 3 cases are 2 men and a woman, who have been kept under observation and are in treatment...The SSH reported that, unlike in 2013, this time there is more awareness among the people regarding transmission of the infection. [ProMED-mail](#)

Mexico/U.S.: Crisis at the border mounts with surge in unaccompanied minors



7 July - ...According to reports, roughly 40 immigrants being detained at the San Diego-area facility have active cases of scabies. At least one Border Patrol agent from that sector has contracted the disease, which is caused by a mite that burrows into the upper layer of a person's skin, after they processed undocumented immigrants at a facility in Otay Mesa, Calif...

Ralph DeSio, a spokesperson for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's San Diego sector, could not confirm the scabies outbreak but said agents have taken "extraordinary measures" to care for the children being temporarily detained there and have controls in place to minimize any possible health risks. "We are conducting public health screens on all incoming detainees to screen for any symptoms of illnesses and contagious diseases of possible public health concern," DeSio said in a statement. "If any serious symptoms are present, individuals are referred to a medical provider or healthcare facility for treatment and medical clearance." [MSNBC](#)

U.S.: Alcohol remains a leading killer

7 July - Excessive alcohol consumption, including binge drinking, is responsible for 10 percent of deaths among working-age adults in the United States, according to a recent study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention... One in six adults from 20 to 65 reported binge drinking at least four times a month; the actual number is likely higher because subjects tend to underreport their drinking habits, the researchers said. The number of Americans who binge drink skyrocketed during the 1990s and leveled off in 2001, but the average frequency of binge drinking episodes is still rising. [New York Times](#)

U.S.: Drowsy driving and risky behaviors – 10 states and Puerto Rico, 2011-2012

4 July – Findings in published reports have suggested that drowsy driving is a factor each year in as many as 7,500 fatal motor vehicle crashes (approximately 25%) in the United States... However, limited information has been published on the association between drowsy driving and other risk behaviors that might contribute to crash injuries or fatalities. Therefore, CDC analyzed responses to survey questions regarding drowsy driving among 92,102 respondents in 10 states and Puerto Rico to the 2011–2012 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) surveys. The results showed that 4.0% reported falling asleep while driving during the previous 30 days [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

U.S.: More Americans turning 100 than ever before

7 July - An Arkansas woman who just celebrated her 116th birthday isn't as unusual as some might think. Gertrude Weaver -- officially the oldest living American and second-oldest person in the world -- belongs to a fast-growing segment of the U.S. population: people who are 100 years old or older. There are about 53,000 centenarians in the U.S. today... A just-released study that examines why some people live longer than others finds genetics and mobility play a role in longevity... "Researchers have found over time that brothers and sisters of centenarians tend to live long and healthy too, compared to their counterparts in the population, as do the children of these very old people," Rossi said. [VOA](#)

U.S.: NYU researchers find 18 percent of high school seniors smoke hookah

7 July – While cigarette use is declining precipitously among youth, evidence indicates that American adolescents are turning to ethnically-linked alternative tobacco products, such as hookahs, cigars, and various smokeless tobacco products, according to a recent report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)... "What we find most interesting is that students of higher socioeconomic status appear to be more likely to use hookah," said Joseph J. Palamar, PhD, MPH, a CDUHR affiliated researcher and an assistant professor of Population Health at NYU Langone Medical Center (NYULMC). "Surprisingly, students with more educated parents or higher personal income are at high risk for use. We also found that hookah use is more common in cities, especially big cities. So hookah use is much different from cigarette use, which is more common in non-urban areas." [EurekAlert](#)

U.S.: Opioid painkiller prescribing - where you live makes a difference

July 2014 – Each day, 46 people die from an overdose of prescription painkillers in the US. Health care providers wrote 259 million prescriptions for painkillers in 2012, enough for every American adult to have a bottle of pills. Ten of highest prescribing states for painkillers are in the South.

Health issues that cause people pain don't vary much from place to place—not enough to explain why, in 2012, health care providers in the highest-prescribing state wrote almost 3 times as many opioid painkiller prescriptions per person as those in the lowest prescribing state in the US. Or why there are twice as many painkiller prescriptions per person in the US as in Canada. Data suggest that where health care providers practice influences how they prescribe. Higher prescribing of painkillers is associated with more overdose deaths. More can be done at every level to prevent overprescribing while ensuring patients' access to safe, effective pain treatment. Changes at the state level show particular promise. [CDC Vital Signs](#)

U.S.: Report - Four out of five mentally ill people unemployed

10 July - More than 80 percent of mentally ill people in the United States are unemployed despite the fact that a majority of them want to find work, according to a study by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). The findings ([PDF](#)), published this week, found that the rate of employment among the mentally ill declined from 23 percent in 2003 to 17.8 percent in 2012. "Employment rates are inexcusably low and getting worse for people living with mental illness," the report said. Sita Diehl, the author of the report, told Kaiser Health News the problem was structural in nature, having less to do with the mentally ill themselves but the health of the economy and the sufficiency of mental-health support... The study noted significant disparity in the state-by-state unemployment rate of mentally ill people. Maine, with the highest, had an unemployment rate of 92.6 percent, while Wyoming, with the lowest, had 56.1 percent. Other states with high unemployment rates for the mentally ill include West Virginia, Hawaii, Pennsylvania and California — all above 90 percent. [Al Jazeera](#)

U.S.: Sales of recreational marijuana begin in Washington State

8 July – ...Washington's experiment with licensed, legal recreational marijuana began tentatively in a handful of places around the state on Tuesday, with limited supplies — because licensed growers have not had time to bring in a full crop, certified by the state to be Washington-grown — but with great enthusiasm and hoopla in the places where the sales occurred... Possessing marijuana in small amounts and consuming it at home has been legal in Washington for almost two years now, since voters passed Initiative 502 in 2012, and local law enforcement agencies had mostly backed off enforcing marijuana laws before that. It had not, however, been legal to sell it for recreational purposes until Tuesday. [New York Times](#)

U.S.: Smallpox vials, decades old, found in storage room at NIH campus in Bethesda

8 July - A government scientist cleaning out a storage room last week at a lab on the National Institutes of Health's Bethesda campus found decades-old vials of smallpox, the second incident involving the mishandling of a highly dangerous pathogen by a federal

health agency in a month. The vials, which appear to date from the 1950s, were flown Monday by government plane to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention headquarters in Atlanta, officials said Tuesday. Initial testing confirmed the presence of - smallpox-virus DNA. Further testing, which could take up to two weeks, will determine whether the material is live. The samples will be destroyed after the testing is completed. There is no evidence that any of the vials had been breached or that workers in the lab, which has been used by the Food and Drug Administration for decades, were exposed to infection. [Washington Post](#)

U.S., Texas: Case of mosquito-borne chikungunya confirmed in Central Texas

8 July - The state's first human case of the mosquito-borne virus chikungunya that's spreading rapidly in the Caribbean and parts of Latin America has been confirmed in Central Texas. A Williamson County resident who recently returned from the Caribbean has been diagnosed with the virus, the Texas Department of State Health Services said. [KWTX.com](#)

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USPACOM

India to provide four free vaccines, including rotavirus



4 July - India will provide four new vaccines free of cost as part of a programme to reduce child mortality, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said... The move brings to 13 the number of free vaccines provided against life threatening diseases... The four new vaccines will combat rotavirus, rubella, polio and Japanese encephalitis...

Though India was declared polio free in March, it will introduce an injectable polio vaccine to "provide long lasting protection to the population against the virus," the statement said. [BBC News](#)

Japan: Typhoon Neoguri slams in to Okinawa

8 July - The Japanese island of Okinawa was battered by high winds and heavy rain as it bore the brunt of powerful Typhoon Neoguri. The tropical island 1600 miles southwest of Tokyo was the first Japanese area to feel the effects of the storm, which was downgraded from a super typhoon but was still packing sustained winds of 180 kilometers per hour. Japanese officials had urged more than 100-thousand people to evacuate their homes, although Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said early damage reports were encouraging. [Reuters](#)

Myanmar: Flooding threat adds to woes of IDPs in Rakhine State

7 July – Recent heavy rain, coupled with the after-effects of a recent aid worker pull-out, is prompting health concerns in Myanmar’s western Rakhine State for the more than 140,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) mostly from the persecuted Muslim Rohingya minority. Riots in March amid tensions over perceived bias towards Rohingya Muslims in the area forced international humanitarian workers to pull out. Aid has trickled back but IDPs displaced by communal violence in 2012 remain in squalid camps. According to the UN, there are also 700,000 vulnerable people outside the camps who were receiving aid from multiple agencies. [IRIN](#)

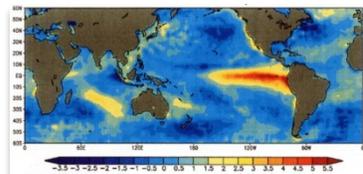
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USSOUTHCOM

Argentina: Tobacco use among youths — 2007 and 2012

11 July - ...The findings in this report show a decrease in current use of tobacco among adolescents in Argentina. Although the current use rates for both males and females were lower in 2012 than in 2007, cigarette smoking rates (one or more cigarettes in the past 30 days) remained at approximately 20%; without further prevention efforts these rates will result in avoidable tobacco-related morbidity and mortality in this generation. Although the differences were not statistically significant, the prevalence of frequent cigarette smoking likely was higher among females (5.0%) when compared with males (3.1%), and the prevalence of current smokeless tobacco use (any use in the previous 30 days) likely was higher among males (4.4%) when compared with females (3.0%). These findings suggest that sex-specific tobacco control approaches among youths might merit consideration in Argentina. In addition, the observation that youths had high exposure rates to SHS in enclosed public places, similar to what has been reported in other regions (8), shows the challenge of protecting youths from public SHS. Finally, over half of youths in Argentina reported exposure to SHS in their homes, suggesting the importance of public education regarding the dangers of SHS exposure. [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

El Niño news: Latin America better prepared



5 July - El Niño, a weather event that can have major impacts on economies across Latin America, has been forecast to rear its sometimes-unwelcome head this year, according to BN Americas. Previous instances of El Niño have crippled crop and fish yields across the region, but

a Moody's report said this time around, Latin America is much better prepared to deal with the system. Many of the countries that are impacted by El Niño -- including Brazil, Colombia, Panama, Peru, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay -- have decreased deficits and financing needs, Moody's Senior Vice President Gersan Zurita said, BN Americas reported. "Access to funds to combat heavy rains, as well as bilateral and multilateral loans, will help these national overcome damage to infrastructure and the costs of other emergencies that may arise from El Niño," Zurita said. [Latin Post](#)

Hispaniola hot spots boost chikungunya cases over 300,000

7 July – The number of new chikungunya infections in the Caribbean region grew at a brisk pace last week, with most of the activity centered in the Dominican Republic and neighboring Haiti, as travel to those destinations continues to be linked to a number of imported cases in other countries. The outbreak total climbed to 306,837 suspected and confirmed cases, an increase of 42,393 from the previous week, according to a Jul 3 update from the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)... The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) said today in its weekly communicable disease threat update that most of the affected areas continue to report more cases, but the situation is especially severe on Hispaniola. [CIDRAP](#)

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