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Suicide Prevention In The Workplace – Reserve Your Spot Today

NAMI Chicago, the Extension for Community Health Outcomes (ECHO)-Chicago program at the University of Chicago, and UChicago Medicine's Urban Health Initiative are hosting a five-session ECHO series to provide employers with the skills, tools and resources they need to be more aware of mental wellness in the workplace and recognize when someone may be experiencing a suicidal episode. This training series will help employers develop a basic toolkit for intervening and helping refer their employees to treatment. In addition to hearing from subject matter experts, participants will be able to share their challenges and stories and get feedback from the panel of experts and their peers. The free Zoom series runs on Wednesdays from noon-1 p.m. CT. [Click here](#) to register. For more information contact Isa Rodriguez at irodriguez@bsd.uchicago.edu.

IDPH Adopts New CDC Respiratory Virus Guidelines

The Illinois Dept. of Public Health (IDPH) [announced](#) today that it is adopting [updated guidance](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that streamlines and simplifies recommendations for dealing with the range of respiratory viruses, including COVID-19, flu and RSV, and is focused on protecting those most at risk of serious illness. The CDC said that COVID "remains an important public health threat, but it is no longer the emergency that it once was" with health impacts that "increasingly resemble those of other respiratory viral illness, such as influenza or RSV.

The CDC has now combined guidance for respiratory illness rather than COVID-19-specific guidance, and now states that people with respiratory virus symptoms that "are not better explained by another cause" can resume normal activities if their symptoms are improving and they have been fever-free for 24 hours without medication. Notably, the CDC no longer recommends people with COVID-19 isolate for five days before returning to work or other activities, and instead focuses on isolation until symptoms improve—which could be shorter or longer than five days. The CDC said the recommendation "addresses the period of greatest infectiousness and highest viral load for most people, which is typically in the first few days of illness and when symptoms, including fever, are worst."

ISHMPR to Host Networking Event in O'Fallon, Deadline Today

If you are looking for an opportunity to connect and share ideas with your fellow healthcare marketing and public relations experts, consider attending the Illinois Society for Healthcare Marketing and Public Relations (ISHMPR) March Networking Meet Up.

The event will be held on Thursday, March 7, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. CT at SIHF Healthcare in O'Fallon. Attendees will have the chance to collaborate and learn about the following topics and more:

- U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services guidance changes regarding protected health information and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 and the impact on digital marketing;
- Employee engagement; and
- Community education.

To learn more about ISHMPR or to become a member, [click here](#). To register for the event, [click here](#). The deadline to register is today, March 1.

CMS Issues Final Guidance for New Medicare Prescription Payment Plan

As part of the ongoing implementation of the federal prescription drug pricing law, yesterday the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) [announced](#) the release of the [final part one guidance](#) for the new Medicare Prescription Payment Plan. CMS said the guidance seeks to ensure that Medicare Part D plan sponsors can successfully implement the Medicare Prescription Payment Plan and effectively build the necessary infrastructure to provide a seamless experience for people enrolled in a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan who elect to participate in this program.

Recall: Olympus Bronchofiberscopes and Bronchovideoscopes

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has [identified](#) the recall of certain Olympus Corporation of the Americas' bronchofiberscopes and bronchovideoscopes, which are used to examine or treat a person's airways during an endoscopy and endoscopic surgeries. The FDA said use of the affected products may cause serious adverse health consequences, including critical burns in a person's airways or lungs, airway bleeding, trouble breathing, apnea, loss of consciousness, or death. Injuries may lead to prolonged procedures, additional medical care, extended hospitalization, ICU care and death. The FDA noted it is aware of seven medical device reports specifically reporting thermal-related injuries associated with these devices.

New Sustainability Toolkit for Healthcare Executives

A new [toolkit](#) from the American Hospital Association and its American Society for Health Care Engineering seeks to help prepare hospital and health system leaders to navigate the complex landscape of sustainability and decarbonization within the healthcare field. The [Health Care Leader's Guide to Sustainability and Decarbonization](#) provides tangible action items for CEOs, boards and trustees, sustainability teams, chief operating officers, and chief financial officers, demonstrating how each can lead the charge in environmental stewardship.

CDC Urges Tetanus Shot Conservation Due to Shortage Concerns

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is [encouraging](#) healthcare providers to conserve their supply of tetanus shot after one of the nation's two tetanus shot manufacturers announced plans to discontinue production of its tetanus and diphtheria (Td) vaccine. While the second manufacturer, Sanofi, is taking steps to augment its available U.S. supply of Td vaccine, Tenivac, the FDA said "it's anticipated that the supply of Td vaccine in the U.S. market will be constrained during 2024."

In response, the CDC has issued the following guidance, saying the limited supply of Td vaccine needs to be preserved for those with a contraindication to receiving pertussis-containing vaccine. The CDC recommends:

- Transition to use of Tdap vaccine in lieu of Td vaccine whenever possible while Td vaccine supplies are constrained.
- Tdap vaccine is an acceptable alternative to Td vaccine, including when a tetanus booster is indicated for wound management.
- Tdap vaccine isn't an acceptable alternative only when a person has a specific contraindication to pertussis-containing vaccines, which is very rare.

This guidance will remain in place until the period of temporary ordering controls for Td vaccine ends.

COVID-19 Information

The Illinois Dept. of Public Health (IDPH) has launched a weekly [Infectious Respiratory Disease Surveillance Dashboard](#) that will be updated weekly on Friday. This report provides the public with the latest data on hospital visits, seasonal trends, lab test positivity and demographic data.

[Click here](#) to visit the IDPH COVID-19 resources webpage. IDPH will continue to report the weekly number of people with COVID-19 admitted to hospitals from emergency departments, deaths and vaccinations, with COVID-19, influenza and respiratory syncytial virus information also reported through the dashboard of the [Illinois Wastewater Surveillance System](#).

Briefly Noted

The 2023-2024 flu vaccine reduced flu-related medical visits and hospitalizations across all age groups, [according to](#) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Specifically, flu vaccination has reduced the risk of flu medical visits by about two-thirds and flu-related hospitalization by about half for vaccinated children and flu medical visits by half and hospitalization by about 40% for vaccinated adults.

AXIOS [reported](#) that more than 1 billion people worldwide are obese, with global and U.S. obesity rates more than doubling over the past three decades, [according to](#) a new study in *The Lancet*. The study found that global female obesity rates grew from 8.8% to 18.5% between 1999 and 2022, while male obesity rates nearly tripled, from 4.8% to 14% during that same time period.

Leading the News

CDC updates Covid isolation guidelines for people who test positive

[NBC News](#) reports (3/1), "People who test positive for Covid no longer need to isolate for five days, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Friday. The CDC's new guidance now matches public health advice for flu and other respiratory illnesses: Stay home when you're sick, but return to school or work once you're feeling better and you've been without a fever for 24 hours."

110 rural hospital and health system CEOs to know | 2024

[Becker's Hospital Review](#) reports (2/29), "Rural hospitals allow patients from remote areas to receive care without traveling long distances or sacrificing quality. The CEOs leading these necessary institutions take on a variety of responsibilities to ensure rural communities have access to top-tier healthcare."

Change Healthcare confirms ransomware attack, hackers claim massive data haul

[Becker's Hospital Review](#) reports (2/29), "Optum's Change Healthcare confirmed Feb. 29 that it was hacked by a ransomware gang after the group claimed to have stolen massive amounts of data."

Is the 8 a.m. meeting coming back?

[Becker's Hospital Review](#) reports (2/29), "Early morning meetings were never a fan favorite, but they've become a greater source of contention post-pandemic, according to a recent report from Korn Ferry."

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