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USAFRICOM

- Nigeria: Nigeria battles meningitis vaccine shortage during outbreak
- South Sudan: Cholera stalks ‘refugee islands’ in swamplands of South Sudan
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- Iraq: General - 2nd gas attack on Iraq troops in as many days
- Pakistan: Pakistan’s chikungunya outbreak tops 1,000 cases
- Qatar: Second case of MERS confirmed in Qatar
- Turkmenistan: Turkmenistan to become tobacco-free country by 2025

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- Europe: Measles prompts travel advisory for Belgium, Italy and Germany
- Portugal: In Portugal, drug use is treated as a medical issue, not a crime
- United Kingdom: Britain doubles funding to fight tropical diseases

USNORTHCOM

- U.S.: ALA - Overall air quality improved but pollution hotspots persist
- U.S.: Black U.S. babies still more likely to die than white infants
- U.S.: CDC notes Shigella strains with reduced susceptibility
- U.S.: FGM charge for Detroit doctor Jumana Nagarwala in U.S. first
- U.S.: Income inequality and determinants of health in the U.S.
- U.S.: Is yellow fever knocking at our door?
- U.S.: Mentally ill accessing less U.S. health care
- U.S.: Millions of Americans risk hearing loss from jobs and guns
- U.S.: OSHA resumes announcing health/safety violators after 3 month pause
- U.S.: Secret data on hospital inspections may soon become public
- U.S.: Texas mumps cases reach 20-year high
- U.S.: U.S. preparedness index finds sluggish, uneven progress
Army veterinarians: How did we get here?

Historically, horses were a very important part of our nation’s defense, and in 1792 congressional legislation assigned each troop of cavalrymen to have one farrier to care for the ailments of horses. In the Civil War, there were large losses of horses due to disease, and one veterinary surgeon became authorized for each cavalry regiment. In the Spanish-American War, post commanders instructed veterinarians to conduct inspections of locally purchased beef to ensure the food was safe to eat.

Joining these two missions of equine care and food protection, the National Defense Act of June 3, 1916 commissioned the Army Veterinary Corps. Cavalry units gave way to mechanized tanks and the government owned animal mission shifted largely to military working dogs. The food mission expanded to include many aspects of public health.

USPACOM

- China: HIV test kits on sale in university vending machines
- India: PHFI launched by Manmohan Singh accused for violating law by lobbying MPs, media on tobacco control
- Philippines: AIDS in the archipelago - How the Philippines can tackle its HIV epidemic
- Sri Lanka: More than double the dengue cases from 2016

USSOUTHCOM

- Brazil: Brazil’s response to a huge yellow fever outbreak: Kill the monkeys
- PAHO: More cases in Brazil lead to another big jump in chikungunya

U.S. MILITARY

Belvoir Hospital first in DoD to perform new vision correction procedure

13 April - Fort Belvoir Community Hospital’s surgeons performed the first small incision lenticule extraction (SMILE) procedure in the Department of Defense, the latest advancement in laser eye surgery, March 16. ... The FDA recently approved the very fast and short pulsed femtosecond laser to be used to perform SMILE vision correction. In the procedure, the laser creates a thin disc within the cornea which is removed by the surgeon through a cut created on the corneal surface. The procedure lasts approximately 15-20 minutes with the laser activated for approximately 90 seconds per eye. Once the tissue is removed, the cornea reshapes to correct nearsightedness. As there is no flap created in the SMILE procedure, visual recovery is accelerated. Both eyes can be treated in the same session. Health.mil

DARPA demonstrates on-site chemical warfare agent neutralization

19 April - DARPA has demonstrated a field-deployable system for on-site neutralization of bulk stores of chemical warfare agents -- a novel, waterless soil-scrubbing technology that safely neutralized toxic chemicals simulating sarin, soman, and mustard agents, the department’s public affairs unit reported April 14. Created under the agency’s Agnostic Compact Demilitarization of Chemical Agents (ACDC) program, it says the technology demonstrated greater than 99.9999 percent removal of the simulated chemicals without creating hazardous waste byproducts. Occupational Health & Safety


March 2017 - From 2001 through 2016, there were 1,519 incident diagnoses of exertional hyponatremia among active component service members (incidence rate: 6.9 cases per
100,000 person-years [p-yrs]). The incidence rate in 2016 (6.6 cases per 100,000 p-yrs) represented a decrease of 23.3% from 2015. ... Rates of exertional hyponatremia were higher among females, those aged 19 years or younger, and recruit trainees. The overall incidence rate during the surveillance period was highest in the Marine Corps, intermediate in the Army and Air Force, and lowest in the Navy. Overall incidence rates were lowest among black, non-Hispanic service members and highest among white, non-Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander service members. Medical Surveillance Monthly Report

Is mustard gas buried at Ravenna Arsenal? Army Corps, Ohio EPA investigating

10 April - Three former employees of the Ravenna Army Ammunition Plant have identified a plot of land where they say they helped to bury containers of a banned chemical weapon -- mustard gas -- shortly after the end of World War II. ... For about 40 years prior to 1969, the U.S. Army produced a diluted form of mustard gas to train soldiers in the safe handling and identification of the chemical agent. However, most of the stockpiles were destroyed or locked up in storage units. There are no documents of mustard gas being used in training at the Ravenna military facility, or of being buried there, prior to its closing in 1972. ... In 1985, the Ohio EPA conducted extensive tests on soil and water in the area, but found no evidence of mustard gas. The former employees subsequently directed the search to two additional areas. Nine separate soil and water tests were conducted from 1996 to 2011, and detected the presence of metal underground -but no evidence of mustard gas. ... In 2015, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers prepared a site inspection report in which they determined the probability of finding mustard gas at the site as "remotely possible," without ruling out the potential for buried bottles of the poisonous material. Cleveland.com

Most post-9/11 veterans report doing well at work and at home

April 2017 - ... According to a new study ... most servicemembers who were discharged from the military this century apparently are doing well with their careers and family life, despite exposure to war zones. ... [Survey results] indicated that only 3% of the men reported being unemployed and seeking work. Among employed men, 90% reported working full-time with a median income of $50,000-75,000, and more than 80% of men reporting that they were somewhat or very satisfied with their jobs. While about a fourth of the men said they had some impairment in their occupational functioning, only 2% said it got in their way occurred often or always. Women, meanwhile, were more likely than men to report being unemployed (6%) and somewhat less likely to report working full-time if they were employed, at 83%. The female veterans reported a median salary range of $35,000-50,000, and, like men, about a fourth reported sometimes experiencing impairment. Still, more than 75% said they were somewhat or very satisfied with their jobs. U.S. Medicine
Toxic armories cleanup must be priority in Pentagon budget, 10 senators say

12 April - Cleaning up lead dust in the National Guard’s toxic armories needs to be a priority in the Pentagon’s 2018 budget, a group of 10 senators ... said Wednesday. Otherwise, the senators said, the neurotoxin will continue to pose dangers to the soldiers and communities who use the buildings. ... "Scarce local readiness funding will only help manage the problem, not solve it," the senators wrote. "State Guards do not have the money to cover the costs of ideal lead abatement options like permanent remediation." That’s been a problem across the country. The Guard has converted hundreds of indoor firing ranges into offices, locker rooms, storage areas, gymnasiums, classrooms and other uses without thoroughly cleaning the rooms first. The Oregonian

Trump extends program allowing some veterans to use local doctors, hospitals

19 April - President Donald Trump on Wednesday moved a step closer to fulfilling his campaign promise to reform the troubled Veterans Affairs department, but some veterans groups are concerned that the administration may be working toward privatizing their healthcare. Trump signed a law extending the pilot "Veterans Choice" program, which allows some veterans to receive healthcare from local doctors and hospitals closer to their homes than the VA’s 150 hospitals and nearly 1,000 outpatient clinics. The law eases procedures for reimbursing private providers and creates a system for sharing medical records with them. Reuters

VA may top other hospitals in quality but not patient satisfaction

18 April - Veterans Affairs (VA) hospitals in the U.S. may deliver higher quality care than other medical centers but still get lower marks on patient satisfaction, a new study suggests. Researchers examined data for 129 VA and 4,010 non-VA hospitals nationwide and found the VA had lower rates of six complications tied to quality: pressure ulcers, deaths of surgical patients with serious treatable conditions, care-related lung injuries, clots in the vein in surgical patients, catheter-related bloodstream infections, post-operative bloodstream infections and post-operative surgical wound ruptures. ... But when it came to several measures of patient satisfaction like doctors’ and nurses’ communication skills and pain management, the VA lagged behind. ... The patient experience scores in the current study appear to be consistent with reports of treatment delays at the VA in recent years. Reuters

When active-duty service members struggle to feed their families

19 April - ... In July 2016, the Government Accountability Office concluded that the...
Department of Defense was not fully collecting or analyzing data on how many service members were in need of food assistance or enrolled in federal programs such as SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (also known as food stamps), and WIC, the program for Women, Infants and Children. At the same time, the GAO found troubling signs that some military families were in need. For example, nearly 1 in 4 children at DOD schools are eligible for free meals, a program that’s based on income. … [N]early a year later, [the Pentagon] still hasn’t changed how it tracks the issue. “This particular issue crosses multiple offices within the DOD in terms of policy responsibility,” says Johnny Michael, a Pentagon spokesman. … He declined to comment on whether specific offices, such as the Defense Health Agency or the Defense Manpower Data Center, both cited in the GAO report, have made specific changes or had changes underway in response to the report. NPR

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GLOBAL

Compound protects nerve cells targeted by diseases

14 April - Harvard scientists find evidence that ALS and SMA could be treated with a common drug. Harvard Stem Cell Institute (HSCI) researchers have identified a compound that helps protect the cells destroyed by spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), the most frequent fatal genetic disease in children under 2 years of age. SMA is a neurodegenerative disease targeting motor neurons, the long nerve cells that relay messages from the brain to the muscles and that are, consequently, responsible for bodily movements, including walking, swallowing, and even breathing. … Because of a dysfunctional gene, many motor neurons in SMA patients are unable to produce adequate amounts of a protein called survival of motor neuron (SMN). … [T]he Harvard team has identified a compound that helps stabilize the SMN protein both in human neurons in a dish and in mouse models. Harvard Gazette

CRISPR technology used to create highly sensitive diagnostic tool

17 April - SHERLOCK (Specific High-sensitivity Enzymatic Reporter unLOCKing) is a new technology revealed by collaborators at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) that uses a CRISPR protein to target RNA instead of DNA. This makes it a highly sensitive and inexpensive diagnostic tool, with far-reaching implications for public health, the authors of a new study said. SHERLOCK was able to detect Zika virus in serum, urine, and saliva at low titers and could identify specific bacterial pathogens. Researchers say the technology would be a useful tool in battling antimicrobial resistance, as it would help identify antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria and aid in antibiotic prescribing. … SHERLOCK is designed as a paper-based test that does not require refrigeration, which makes it suitable for use in field hospitals or in clinics with limited access to advanced
Fine particles in traffic pollution tied to lower ‘good’ cholesterol

18 April - People who live near sources of heavy traffic exhaust may be at higher risk of heart disease because the fine particles in this type of pollution lower levels of “good” cholesterol needed for healthy blood flow, a U.S. study suggests. High-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol helps curb the odds of heart disease by purging blood vessels of debris and lowering levels of triglycerides - dangerous fats that can make blood thicker, stickier and more prone to clots. Researchers studied 6,654 adults and found people exposed to higher levels of fine and ultrafine particles in traffic pollution tended to have lower levels of HDL cholesterol in their blood. Reuters

Gates backs Big Pharma push to wipe out tropical diseases

19 April - The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Western countries and drug companies pledged fresh support on Wednesday to wipe out diseases that blind, disable and disfigure millions of poor in tropical areas each year and urged new donors to join the fight. ... Gates, who has supported the initiative for over a decade with $1 billion, pledged $335 million over the next 4 years. ... GlaxoSmithKline, Novartis and Sanofi are among major donors, WHO says. Merck said on Tuesday it was developing a children’s formula of its drug to treat schistosomiasis. ... [T]he UK government was committing an additional 250 million pounds ($321.35 million) to NTD programs. Belgium's deputy prime minister Alexander de Croo pledged 25 million euros ($26.81 million) through 2025 to eradicate African sleeping sickness. Reuters

Huge genome study dissects Ebola outbreak’s spread

14 April - The largest genome sample ever analyzed for a human epidemic reveals that the West Africa epidemic unfolded with small, overlapping outbreaks as the virus spread over short distances and that urban settings amplified the spread. ... In a massive international collaboration, 93 scientists from 53 institutions in 16 countries contributed to the analysis of 1,610 Ebola virus genomes from the outbreak, composing 5% of all known cases. ... Surprisingly few infected travelers sparked new outbreaks, and the ones that did mainly spread the disease short distances, sparing other countries in the region ... from severe impact. Gytis Dudas ... said ... “We calculated that 3.6% of cases traveled, basically meaning that if you were able to focus on those mobile cases and reduce their mobility, you might have had a disproportionate effect on the epidemic.” CIDRAP
NIOSH highlights noise exposure of wildland firefighters

18 April - NIOSH’s Science Blog this week highlighted the risk of hearing loss that faces wildland firefighters. ... The article discusses a three-year study done by the U.S. Forest Service Technology and Development Program in partnership with NIOSH to measure wildland firefighters’ noise exposures during training and fire suppression tasks and to identify jobs that put them at increased risk for hearing loss. ... Overall, 85 of the 174 measurements were above the NIOSH maximum allowable daily dose, and some firefighters exposed to a TWA of 105-106 dBA would exceed their maximum daily limit in just four to five minutes, and a bulldozer operator exceeded the 100 percent noise dose in 56 seconds.

Occupational Health & Safety

‘Pacemaker’ for the brain can help memory, study finds

20 April - Well-timed pulses from electrodes implanted in the brain can enhance memory in some people, scientists reported on Thursday, in the most rigorous demonstration to date of how a pacemaker-like approach might help reduce symptoms of dementia, head injuries and other conditions. The report is the result of decades of work decoding brain signals, helped along in recent years by large Department of Defense grants intended to develop novel treatments for people with traumatic brain injuries, a signature wound of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. ... Zapping memory areas when they are functioning poorly improves the brain's encoding of new information. But doing so when those areas are operating well — as they do for stretches of the day in most everyone, including those with deficits — impairs the process. The New York Times

Spotting the vaccine-preventable diseases that are back in the waiting room

17 April — ... The World Health Organization (WHO) currently lists 26 infectious global diseases as vaccine-preventable or potentially preventable. Many of the diseases listed are seldom, if ever, encountered by physicians in high-income countries. Some of the most common and serious ones have, however, recently made a comeback. ... In the United States and Europe, resurgences have been recorded for three diseases for which vaccines are universally recommended in childhood: measles, mumps, and pertussis (or whooping cough). Other diseases such as tuberculosis (TB) are reappearing as multidrug-resistant (MDR) forms. ... Spotting these diseases can, in some cases, be quite a challenge for family practitioners and other primary care physicians (PCPs). Medical News Today
Swansea University smart bandage trials 'within 12 months'

16 April - Bandages which can detect how a wound is healing and send messages back to doctors could be trialled within the next 12 months, scientists have said. The bandages would use real-time 5G technology to monitor what treatment is needed and also keep track of a patient’s activity levels. The work is being led by Swansea University’s Institute of Life Science. ... "It would connect that wound to a 5G infrastructure and that infrastructure through your telephone will also know things about you - where you are, how active you are at any one time. "You combine all of that intelligence so the clinician knows the performance of the specific wound at any specific time and can then tailor the treatment protocol to the individual and wound in question."

BBC News

World’s first 'menstrual cycle in a dish' simulates female body

28 March - After decades of drug testing on mostly men, a new device may help tailor treatments for different genders. ... The device looks much like a Japanese bento box, but instead of dividers for sushi, each compartment contains living tissues. One has a bit of mouse ovary; others hold pieces made from a human uterus, cervix, vagina, fallopian tubes, and liver. The team named the device the EVATAR. Now, scientists report that the device has replicated a full menstrual cycle for the first time. The tissues produced hormones that coursed through the miniature reproductive system, their levels rising and falling over 28 days. The EVATAR, described this week in Nature Communications, is designed to help scientists better understand how medicines and toxins affect women differently from men.

National Geographic

ZIKA VIRUS

‘They’re just hiding’: Experts say Puerto Rico may be underreporting Zika-affected births

18 April - The number of babies born in Puerto Rico with microcephaly and other birth defects caused by the Zika virus appears to be unexpectedly low — so low that experts are beginning to question whether the actual count is being significantly underreported by authorities on the island. As Zika surged across the Americas last year, US health authorities warned that Puerto Rico was facing a perfect storm — and braced for a large number of pregnancies affected by the virus. But, to date, Puerto Rico has reported only 16 cases of
congenital defects associated with Zika, even though more than 3,300 pregnant women are known to have contracted the virus and several times that number are believed to have been infected. By contrast, U.S. states and the District of Columbia, where the threat posed by Zika was thought to be much lower overall, have registered congenital defects in 63 fetuses or newborns among 1,300 pregnant women who have contracted the Zika virus.

STAT

Zika RNA found in Asian tiger mosquitoes (Ae albopictus) in Brazil

14 April - Zika RNA— but not live virus— has been found in Brazilian Aedes albopictus, or Asian tiger mosquitoes, a species that is more widespread in the United States than is Aedes aegypti, the chief transmitter of the virus, according to a new study. Researchers ... tested adult Ae albopictus mosquitoes that emerged from eggs collected in the wild in Bahia, Brazil. ... "Detecting Zika RNA fragments without finding live Zika virus suggests that either the female parent was not itself infected with live Zika virus or it was not able to transfer live Zika virus to her eggs," said Florida’s Chelsea Smartt, PhD, in an ESA news release. "Our results mean that Aedes albopictus may have a role in Zika virus transmission and should be of concern to public health," Smartt says. CIDRAP News Scan (second item)

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INFLUENZA

AFHSB: DoD Seasonal Influenza Surveillance Summary

For Week 14:

- NORTHCOM: Influenza activity remained minimal for the majority of the country.
- EUCOM: Influenza activity remained minimal across EUCOM, with the exception of Italy, which had low activity.
- PACOM: Influenza activity was low in Japan and the ROK and minimal in Guam and Hawaii.
- CENTCOM and AFRICOM: Influenza activity was minimal for locations with available data in CENTCOM and AFRICOM.
- SOUTHCOM: Influenza activity was minimal in Honduras this week based on DMSS data. DHA - Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch

APHC: U.S. Army Influenza Activity Report

For the week ending 8 April 2017 (Week 14)
Overall, there was a decrease in the number of positive influenza A and B specimens among Army military treatment facilities (MTFs). CDC estimates that this season’s overall vaccine effectiveness against influenza A and B is 48%.
- **ILI Activity:** Army ILI (influenza-like illness) outpatient visits in week 14 were 2% lower than the same week last year.
- **Influenza cases:** 13 hospitalized influenza-associated cases (includes influenza types A and B) were reported to APHC through DRSi in week 14: 3 AD Service Members and 10 non-AD beneficiaries.
- **Viral specimens:** During week 14, 290 of 1226 (24%) lab specimens tested positive for respiratory pathogens. Of 119 influenza A-positive specimens, RHC-A reported 79 (66.4%), followed by RHC-C (30, 25.2%), RHC-P (9, 7.6%), and RHC-E (1, 0.8%). CENTCOM did not report any positive influenza A specimens. APHC

**CDC: Flu View - Weekly U.S. Influenza Surveillance Report**

During week 14 (April 2-8, 2017), influenza activity decreased but remained elevated in the United States.

- **Viral Surveillance:** The most frequently identified influenza virus type reported by public health laboratories during week 14 was influenza B. The percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for influenza in clinical laboratories decreased.
- **Pneumonia and Influenza Mortality:** The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza (P&I) was below the system-specific epidemic threshold in the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) Mortality Surveillance System.
- **Influenza-associated Pediatric Deaths:** Five influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported, four that occurred during the 2016-2017 season and one that occurred during the 2010-2011 season. CDC

**China: Human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus**

20 April - On 14 April 2017, the National Health and Family Planning Commission of China (NHFPC) notified WHO of 15 additional laboratory-confirmed cases of human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus in mainland China. ... At the time of notification, of the 11 cases with information on the condition of the case, there were two deaths, eight cases were diagnosed as having either pneumonia (1) or severe pneumonia (7), and one case was mild. Twelve cases were reported to have had exposure to poultry or live poultry market and one case had exposure to live poultry sold by street vendors or the environment near the street vendor which might have been contaminated by avian influenza A(H7N9) virus. At the time of notification, there was no information available regarding poultry exposure for two cases. One cluster was reported. WHO

**ECDC: Flu News Europe**

**Week 14/2017 (3 – 9 April 2017)**

- Influenza activity across the region continued to be at low level with 39 countries of 41 reporting low intensity of influenza activity. However, only 10 of 42 countries
reported no geographic spread indicating that influenza viruses are still circulating.

- The proportion of influenza virus sentinel detections was 17%, similar to that of the previous week (16%).
- This was the fourth week during the season that the proportion of type B viruses exceeded the proportion of type A viruses in sentinel detections. However, the overall number of type B virus detections remained low.

European Center for Disease Prevention and Control/WHO

More details emerge on H7N9 cases in Tibet, Beijing

17 April - Provincial and local officials recently shared more information about recent H7N9 avian flu cases in Tibet and Beijing, two locations far from the epicenter of recent cases. ... Tibet had recently reported its first-ever H7N9 case, in a poultry seller from Sichuan province who had been working with live poultry [who] became ill in early April. A few days ago, Tibet ... reported two more cases, followed by a statement from Tibet officials that two more poultry sellers from the same market in Lhasa, the province's capital, became ill with flulike symptoms at about the same time as the first case-patient. ... The government said all three patients shared common exposure to the H7N9 virus. ... In a statement today, the Beijing Center for Disease Control said seven H7N9 cases have now been confirmed this season, and three were local cases involving people who had exposure to live poultry, a known risk factor for the disease. The group includes a two-person cluster, and both had a common exposure history. One patient died and the other is hospitalized in stable condition. ... China has now reported at least 613 cases during the fifth wave, at least 179 of them fatal. CIDRAP

Mucus from colorful frog could contain powerful flu fighter

19 April - ... A study published in the journal Immunity details how scientists tested secretions from an Indian frog known as Hydrophylax bahuvistara and found that one distinct peptide was able to kill certain strains of the influenza virus without simultaneously decimating human red blood cells, as well as protect mice from the H1N1 strain. That molecule, called urumin, is named after the Indian “urumi” sword. ... The molecule doesn’t appear to be a flu panacea—it didn’t effectively fight off a current strain called H3N2, for example—but the researchers note its “potential to contribute to first-line anti-viral treatments” in an increasingly drug-resistant environment. Fox News

NHRC: Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update

For the week ending 2017 Week 14 (through 8 April 2017):

- Influenza: Ten cases of NHRC laboratory-confirmed influenza (7 influenza A/H3 and 3 influenza B) among US military basic trainees. New cases presented for care 1-28 March. None had been vaccinated more than 14 days prior to illness.
- FRI surveillance at all eight U.S. military basic training centers indicated FRI rates were elevated at CGTC Cape May. Naval Health Research Center
USA FSAM & DHA: DoD Global, Laboratory-Based, Influenza Surveillance Program

During 26 March - 8 April 2017 (Surveillance Weeks 13 & 14), a total of 323 specimens were collected and received from 45 locations. Results were finalized for 273 specimens from 42 locations. During Week 13, 41 influenza A(H3N2) and 51 influenza B viruses were identified. During Week 14, two influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 23 influenza A(H3N2), one influenza A(H3N2) & influenza B coinfection, and 23 influenza B viruses were identified. Approximately 44% of specimens tested positive for influenza during Week 13. Approximately 43% of specimens tested positive for influenza during Week 14. The influenza percent positive for the season is currently 36%. US Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine & Defense Health Agency

WHO: Influenza Update

17 April - Influenza activity in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere continued to decrease. Influenza activity remained low in the temperate zone of the southern hemisphere. Worldwide, influenza A(H3N2) and B viruses were predominant, with an increased proportion of influenza B viruses detected in recent weeks. WHO

VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

First Chicken & Rice Guys E. coli lawsuit filed by Pritzker Hageman law firm

18 April - An E. coli lawsuit, believed to be the first, was filed April 18, 2017 in the Massachusetts Superior Court against Chicken & Rice Guys, LLC by attorneys Brendan Flaherty and Ryan Osterholm of Pritzker Hageman, a national food safety law firm. Their client was diagnosed with an E. coli O157:H7 infection after allegedly eating food prepared by the restaurant chain that operates in the Boston area. At least 15 people have been sickened in the outbreak, according to the Boston Public Health Commission. Ten patients in this outbreak, which is a very high percentage, have been hospitalized because they have been so sick. Food Poisoning Bulletin

Incidence and trends of infections with pathogens transmitted commonly through food and the effect of increasing use of culture-independent diagnostic tests on surveillance

21 April - The incidence of infections transmitted commonly through food has remained
largely unchanged for many years. Culture-independent diagnostic tests (CIDTs) are increasingly used by clinical laboratories to detect enteric infections. Compared with the 2013–2015 average annual incidence, the 2016 incidence of confirmed Campylobacter infections was lower, incidences of confirmed Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli (STEC), Yersinia, and Cryptosporidium infections were higher, and incidences of confirmed or CIDT positive—only STEC and Yersinia infections were higher. However, CIDTs complicate the interpretation of surveillance data; testing for pathogens might occur more frequently because of changes in either health care provider behaviors or laboratory testing practices. A large proportion of CIDT positive specimens were not reflex cultured, which is necessary to obtain isolates for distinguishing pathogen subtypes, determining antimicrobial resistance, monitoring trends, and detecting outbreaks.

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Update

Oysters recalled in Washington after norovirus outbreak

14 April - The Washington State Department of Health is recalling oysters and closing harvest areas after a norovirus outbreak. Over the past few weeks reports of illness in people who have eaten raw oysters from several areas in the state have been received. Small harvest closures and recalls have been ordered over the past few weeks. The largest closed area is in Hammersley Inlet in Mason County. In that area, a recall has been issued for any shellfish harvested there since March 15, 2017. The three-mile stretch of commercial shellfish growing beds is harvested by 31 shellfish companies and is shipped to many areas around the word. The Department of Health is working with shellfish growers, officials in other states, and local health department to trace all of the product and recall it to make sure it is not available for sale. Food Poisoning Bulletin

WELLNESS

Alphabet's Verily unit launches study to track health data

19 April - Verily, Alphabet Inc's life sciences business, said it was launching a four-year study with about 10,000 participants to understand how people transition from being healthy to becoming sick, and to identify additional risk factors for diseases. Verily [will] enroll participants from varying backgrounds at sites in California and North Carolina within the next few months. ... The sites will gather data from participants through repeat clinical visits, a wristwatch that monitors heart rate and activity levels, as well as participation in surveys and polls. Reuters
Anti-depressant use before, during pregnancy tied to autism risk

17 April - Antidepressant use right before and during pregnancy may be linked with a higher risk of an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in children, hints a new analysis of past research. But pregnant women on antidepressant medications should not stop taking them, because the data that tie their use in pregnancy to ASDs are weak, said the study’s senior author. Additionally, there could be consequences to not treating depression during pregnancy. Reuters

Navy bans e-cigarettes fleet-wide

14 April - The Navy has banned electronic cigarettes and vaping devices throughout the fleet, citing concerns that the battery-powered gadgets can explode and injure sailors. The new rule "suspends the use, possession, storage, and charging of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems aboard ships, submarines, aircraft, boats, craft and heavy equipment," according to a Navy press release Friday. Navy Times

Not getting enough sleep? NIOSH wants to help

19 April - ... [H]ealth care made the top-5 list of occupations whose workers are getting too little sleep, according to a study by The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) researchers. The researchers analyzed data from 179,621 working adults who responded to the 2013 or 2014 Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System annual surveys. Among the 22 major occupation groups, health care support (40.1%) and health care practitioners and technical (40.0%) ranked second and third in "short sleep duration," after production (42.9%). Among the occupational subgroups, nursing, psychiatric, and home health aides had a high adjusted prevalence of short sleep duration. ... To help people get more sleep or improve the quality of the sleep they get, NIOSH offers training and resources about sleep, shiftwork, and fatigue for a variety of audiences including health care workers and emergency responders. Free downloadable materials are available at www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/work schedules/education.html. Federal Practitioner

Organic Herbal Supply recalls dietary supplements for undeclared drugs

19 April - Organic Herbal Supply is recalling all lots of their male and female sexual enhancement dietary supplements because FDA analysis found the products contain Tadalafil. That is an FDA-approved drug that is used under prescription. Organic Herbal Supply is also recalling Zrect for Women and LabidiaMAX because they contain Flibanserin, an FDA approved drug for Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder in women. No illnesses have been reported to date in connection with these issues. Food Poisoning Bulletin
Records found in dusty basement undermine decades of dietary advice

19 April - ... [Christopher] Ramsden, of the National Institutes of Health, unearthed raw data from a 40-year-old study, which challenges the dogma that eating vegetable fats instead of animal fats is good for the heart. The study, the largest gold-standard experiment testing that idea, found the opposite, Ramsden and his colleagues reported on Tuesday in BMJ. ... Although the study is more than just another entry in the long-running nutrition wars—it is more rigorous than the vast majority of research on the topic—Ramsden makes no claims that it settles the question. Instead, he said, his discovery and analysis of long-lost data underline how the failure to publish the results of clinical trials can undermine truth.

Scientific American

The link between opioids and unemployment

18 April - In 2015, more Americans died from drug overdoses than from car accidents and gun homicides combined. ... A new study suggests unemployment might be one of the factors behind that dramatic rise. The paper, published by NBER last week, finds that as the unemployment rate increases by one percentage point in a given county, the opioid-death rate rises by 3.6 percent, and emergency-room visits rise by 7 percent. ... The authors suspect that the increased use of painkillers is a “physical manifestation of mental-health problems that have long been known to rise during periods of economic decline.” ... In another recent paper, the Princeton University labor economist Alan Krueger found that nearly half of “prime age” men who aren’t in the labor force take pain medication daily. And past studies have found that the unemployed are more likely to use illegal drugs than full-time workers.

The Atlantic

USAFRICOM

Nigeria: Nigeria battles meningitis vaccine shortage during outbreak

18 April - Nigeria is in the midst of a cerebrospinal meningitis type C outbreak, but a vaccine shortage is limiting the country’s efforts to vaccinate its population, The Guardian reported yesterday. Nigeria needs 1.3 million doses of vaccine against meningitis type C strain, but only 500,000 doses have been delivered to the country. According to the article, the World Health Organization said the International Coordinating Group on Vaccine Provision global emergency stockpile currently has approximately 1.2 million doses of meningitis C–containing vaccines left. The vaccine is currently being phased out because it is a polysaccharide vaccine, which is slowly being replaced by more effective and long-lasting conjugate vaccines. CIDRAP News Scan (fifth item)
South Sudan: Cholera stalks ‘refugee islands’ in swamplands of South Sudan

10 April - ... Once a commercial trading island with only 200 inhabitants, Tayar is now home to 2,300 internally displaced people who have sought refuge from South Sudan’s three-year civil war. They live with no toilets or running water, openly defecating in the island’s surrounding swamplands. This same filthy water is then used for cooking, bathing and drinking. Thus, cholera has become rife in this makeshift community. ... A UN study found that more than 4,000 cholera cases were reported between June 2016 and January 2017 in 10 counties in South Sudan, of which 83 were fatal, although the true figures are likely much higher due to unreported deaths. The disease has spread to more locations and lasted longer than the previous two years. On Tayar island 10 people have died from the disease since October and 37 have died in surrounding areas, according to community leaders. PRI

Togo: Elephantiasis is no longer a public health problem in Togo

14 April - After over a decade of persistent efforts, Togo has eliminated lymphatic filariasis—also known as elephantiasis—as a public health problem. The announcement follows a formal validation by the World Health Organization (WHO) which congratulated the Togolese government for this historic achievement. ... Togo joins 5 countries in the Western Pacific Region (Cambodia, Cook Islands, Marshall Islands, Niue and Vanuatu) and two countries in the Southeast Asia Region (Maldives and Sri Lanka) recently acknowledged for eliminating lymphatic filariasis as a public health problem. Currently 33 other endemic countries in the African region still require efforts to achieve the same status. ReliefWeb

Iraq: General - 2nd gas attack on Iraq troops in as many days

16 April - The spokesman for the Joint Operation Command in Iraq says the Islamic State group has attacked government troops with some type of gas in western Mosul — the second such attack in as many days. Brig. Gen. Yahya Rasool tells The Associated Press that six soldiers suffered breathing problems from the attack on Sunday and were treated in a nearby field clinic. An investigation was launched to determine what type of gas was used. The attack comes a day after an Iraqi military officer said ISIS militants launched a gas attack in the al-Abar neighborhood in western Mosul. Two army officers say masks and other equipment have been distributed to the forces in case of future gas attacks. They spoke
Pakistan: Pakistan's chikungunya outbreak tops 1,000 cases

18 April - The World Health Organization’s Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (WHO EMRO) said late last week that Pakistan has now reported 1,018 suspected chikungunya cases in various districts in Karachi division, an increase of 315 cases since its last report on Feb 27. ... No deaths have been reported. WHO officials are working with Pakistan’s health ministry and its partners to respond to the outbreak.

Qatar: Second case of MERS confirmed in Qatar

18 April - Qatar has identified its second MERS case this month, according to a statement translated by Avian Flu Diary (AFD), an infectious disease tracking blog, today. The patient did not travel outside of the country in the past 2 weeks or have direct contact with camels, according to Qatar’s Ministry of Public Health. This is only the 20th case of MERS-CoV (Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus) in Qatar since the disease first appeared in humans in 2012. Seven of the 20 patients have died from the virus. The patient was identified as a 25-year-old male Qatari national who is in stable condition after presenting with symptoms of MERS-CoV. In addition to a lack of travel or contact with camels, the patient had no known contact with other MERS-CoV patients.


10 April - HeRAMS (Health Resources Availability Mapping System) is a standardized approach supported by a software-based platform that aims at strengthening the collection, collation and analysis of information on the availability of health resources and services in humanitarian context. ... This report provides a summary of the analysis of the available health resources and services in Syria, the report is produced with the data provided mainly by Turkey hub health cluster members national and international non-governmental organizations as well as health authorities.

Turkmenistan: Turkmenistan to become tobacco-free country by 2025

17 April - Turkmenistan’s President Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov is pushing ahead with his plan to make the country tobacco-free by 2025, Turkmen state media reported. State-
run newspaper Neitralny Turkmenistan said on April 15 that the president had signed a program ordering measures to be taken over the next five years to push his initiative. Berdymukhammedov has been a proponent of healthy living and has made it a key aspect of his autocratic rule. ... The country has taken comprehensive pathway towards enhancement of the national public health by reducing tobacco prevalence of smoking among the adult population to the lowest global rate of 8%. The country aims to become the first tobacco-free country in the European Region with the smoking rate at 5% or less by 2025. The Times of Central Asia

Europe: Measles prompts travel advisory for Belgium, Italy and Germany

17 April - Measles has been reported in increased numbers in several European counties, most notably Romania. ... In Belgium, through Mar. 31, Wallonia reported 266 measles cases. ... Nearly 40% were hospitalized. No deaths have been reported. ... [S]ince the beginning of 2017 and as of 4 April 2017, Italy reported 1,333 cases of measles, with 131 cases among healthcare workers. The cases are reported from 19 of the 21 regions in Italy. ... Most of the cases are above 15 years and 88% of the cases were not vaccinated. ... [S]ince the beginning of 2017 and as of 12 March 2017, Germany reported 272 cases. In the same period in 2016, Germany reported 18 cases. CDC recommends that travelers to Belgium, Italy and Germany protect themselves by making sure they are vaccinated against measles.

Portugal: In Portugal, drug use is treated as a medical issue, not a crime

18 April - ... By the 1990s, 1 percent of Portugal’s population was hooked on heroin. It was one of the worst drug epidemics in the world, and it prompted Portugal’s government to take a novel approach: It decriminalized all drugs. Starting in 2001, possession or use of any drug — even heroin — has been treated as a health issue, not a crime. ... [D]rug dealers are still sent to prison. But anyone caught with less than a 10-day supply of any drug ... gets mandatory medical treatment. ... [G]overnment sociologists ... decide whether to refer them to drug treatment centers. ... [A] team of 10 counselors handles all of Lisbon's roughly 2,500 drug cases a year. It may sound like a lot, but it's actually a 75 percent drop from the 1990s. Portugal's drug-induced death rate has plummeted to five times lower than the European Union average. ... Drug-related HIV infections in Portugal have dropped 95 percent. NPR
U.S.: ALA - Overall air quality improved but pollution hotspots persist

19 April - U.S. air quality has improved considerably in recent years, although four in 10 Americans still live in areas where the air is unhealthy, according to a new report from the American Lung Association. ... The ALA's 2017 "State of the Air" report showed continued nationwide progress in ozone and year-round particle pollution from 2013 to 2015, with some of the biggest improvements seen in areas where pollution levels are traditionally highest, including California. ... Los Angeles remained the city with the worst ozone pollution -- a title it has held most years since the ALA began the reports 18 years ago. But ozone levels in the city were also the lowest they have been in the history of the "State of the Air" report. MedPage Today

U.S.: Black U.S. babies still more likely to die than white infants

14 April - Even as infant mortality rates are declining nationwide, there are some U.S. states where black babies are much more likely to die than white infants, a recent study suggests. Overall, infant mortality rates decreased 13 percent in the U.S. from 2000 to 2013, the study found. By the end of this period, however, the black infant mortality rate was 11.1 deaths for every 1,000 live births, compared with just 5.1 deaths for every 1,000 white newborns. Reuters

U.S.: CDC notes Shigella strains with reduced susceptibility

19 April - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is warning clinicians and public health officials of emerging strains of Shigella bacteria with reduced susceptibility to ciprofloxacin, one of the main antibiotics used to treat shigellosis. In a health advisory issued yesterday, the CDC said it has identified an increase in Shigella isolates in the United States with minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) values of 0.12 to 1.0 microgram per milliliter (mcg/mL) for ciprofloxacin. ... [T]he advisory notes that under the current interpretive criteria of the Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI), Shigella isolates with a ciprofloxacin MIC of 1.0 (mcg/mL) or less are considered susceptible to ciprofloxacin. CIDRAP

U.S.: FGM charge for Detroit doctor Jumana Nagarwala in U.S. first

14 April - A doctor in the US city of Detroit has been charged with carrying out female genital mutilation (FGM) on young girls in what is believed to be the first case of its kind in
the country. Prosecutors said Jumana Nagarwala had been performing the practice on girls aged between six and eight for 12 years. She was investigated after the authorities received a tip-off. If found guilty, she faces a maximum sentence of life in prison. FGM was made illegal in the US in 1996. In a voluntary interview with investigators earlier this week Dr Nagarwala denied being involved in any such procedure, local media reported. BBC News

U.S.: Income inequality and determinants of health in the U.S.

19 April - ... One consequence of widening income inequality is in access to healthcare. Prior to the Affordable Care Act, 39% of below-average income Americans reported not seeing a doctor because of cost. This is almost 5.5 times more than low-income Canadians (7%), and 39 times higher than those in the UK (1%). Even within the US there are wide disparities, with low-income adults in Southern states being twice as likely to face cost-related barriers compared to those in Maine and Massachusetts. These barriers not only have impact in them seeking care to begin with, it can also impact their ability to continue and sustain treatment. ... Many Americans pay for their own care, and are faced with an impossible choice between healthcare or putting food on the table, and 19% of adults in the US who received prescriptions in 2014 could not afford to fill them. PLOS Blogs

U.S.: Is yellow fever knocking at our door?

14 April - ... The [yellow fever] outbreak started in December and has swelled to about 600 confirmed cases and more than a thousand suspected cases, the Brazil Ministry of Health reports. So far, the disease is still isolated to a rural area, Fauci says. And it’s spreading only among mosquitoes that live in the forest and not in mosquitoes that thrive in cities, called Aedes aegypti. But that scenario could change quickly, Fauci says, if Aedes aegypti picks up the virus from infected people. “If Aedes aegypti mosquitoes start spreading yellow fever in Brazil, there’s a possibility that you might have an outbreak in very populous areas in Brazil, such as Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo,” Fauci says. "Whether that's going to happen, I don't know. But if it does, we're going to get a lot of travel-related cases in the U.S.,” he says, "which means physicians here have to be aware of it." NPR

U.S.: Mentally ill accessing less U.S. health care

17 April - More than 8 million American adults suffer from serious psychological distress, and they’re less likely to access healthcare services than other people, a U.S. study suggests. People with serious psychological distress, which includes any mental illness severe enough to require treatment, are three times more likely to be too poor to afford care and 10 times more likely to be unable to pay for medications, the study found. “Adults with serious psychological distress are more likely to experience delays in healthcare, insufficient money for needed healthcare, change their place of health care, and change their place of healthcare due to insurance,” said lead study author Judith Weissman. Reuters
U.S.: Millions of Americans risk hearing loss from jobs and guns

13 April - Many people are exposed to dangerously loud sounds at work and at play, and most of them don’t wear ear plugs or take other steps to prevent hearing loss, a recent U.S. study suggests. Almost 49 million adults work in very noisy conditions, and more than one-third of them never use hearing protection, the study found. Among leisure pursuits, firearms pose a particular risk and just 59 percent of the 35 million U.S. gun users represented in the study wear hearing protection all the time. … [R]esearchers examined 2014 survey data representing 240 million people. Overall, 22 percent were exposed to “very loud” sounds at work requiring them to shout to be heard at arm’s length. The exposures were for at least four hours a day, several days a week. Roughly one in five people were exposed to loud sounds outside of work, and 62 percent of them didn’t use hearing protection. … Lawn mowers were the most common source of non-occupational noise exposure. Reuters

U.S.: OSHA resumes announcing health/safety violators after 3 month pause

17 April - Federal health and safety regulators announced this week that it is proposing $1.5 million in penalties against a Boston company after two workers were killed in a trench collapse. The announcement marked the first time in nearly three months that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration issued a press release about an employer for alleged health and safety violations. The agency, which has for years routinely issued press releases after citing employers for violations, has been criticized by workplace safety experts for staying quiet on the problems it is uncovering. OSHA routinely announced any citation with penalties greater than $40,000 during the Obama Administration, according to Jordan Barab, the deputy assistant secretary of labor for OSHA for the past eight years. Chron

U.S.: Secret data on hospital inspections may soon become public

18 April - … The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services wants to require that private health care accreditors publicly detail problems they find during inspections of hospitals and other medical facilities, as well as the steps being taken to fix them. Nearly nine in 10 hospitals are directly overseen by those accreditors, not the government. There’s increasing concern among regulators that private accreditors aren’t picking up on serious problems at health facilities. Every year, CMS takes a sample of hospitals and other health care facilities accredited by private organizations and does its own inspections to validate the work of the groups. In a 2016 report, CMS noted that its review found that accrediting organizations often missed serious deficiencies found soon after by state inspectors. NPR
U.S.: Texas mumps cases reach 20-year high

15 April - Texas health department officials announced a 20-year high in mumps cases, including possible exposures on South Padre Island, a popular spring break destination. State health officials said 221 cases of mumps have been reported so far this year, the most since 1994 when there were 234 cases. UPI

U.S.: U.S. preparedness index finds sluggish, uneven progress

20 April - At the national level, preparedness for health emergencies improved slightly, but an annual index to track progress found worrying discrepancies at the state level that create a widening gap in the years ahead, especially in low-income areas and those that are vulnerable to public health emergencies. The National Health Security Preparedness Index (NHSPI) was released today by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), which funds the effort. ... On a 10-point scale, it gave the United States an overall score of 6.8 for 2016, up from 6.7 last year and from 6.4 in 2013, when the index began. ... Of six main dimensions—ranging from mobilizing resources after health incidents to involving stakeholders during crises—the nation as a whole improved except for one area: the ability to prevent health impacts from environmental or occupational hazards. That area is the only one showing decline from 2013. CIDRAP

China: HIV test kits on sale in university vending machines

16 April - Students at a Chinese university woke up Sunday to find a surprising new adding to their vending machine. On sale alongside their beloved instant noodles and soft drinks were HIV test kits. ... The machine is designed with a deposit drawer, but looks just like any other and, alongside the kits, sells snacks, cup noodle, and drinks. ... [A] test-taker buys the kit, collects his urine sample, and drops it back to the deposit drawer. Staff at the provincial CDC will be notified by a sensor wired to the drawer. They come to retrieve the sample, do the testing, and post it online, he added. Only the test taker can view the results once they log on the center’s website and enter a specific code number. Xinhuanet

India: PHFI launched by Manmohan Singh accused for violating law by lobbying MPs, media on tobacco control

20 April - The government has revoked the registration of Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), an NGO funded by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, under the Foreign
Contributions (Regulation) Act over alleged misuse of foreign funds for anti-tobacco lobbying, in violation of FCRA norms. ... According to a home ministry official, PHFI received around Rs 43 crore for tobacco lobbying, which it misrepresented as ‘research grants’ in its FCRA returns. The officer added that an NGO was not permitted to lobby for tobacco control, which could only be done by an entity as a public relations company that must pay due taxes. ... After the NDA government came to power in May 2014, FCRA licenses of around 20,000 NGOs have been cancelled by the Home Ministry. Of these, the FCRA licenses of over 9,500 NGOs were cancelled in 2015. India Samvad

Philippines: AIDS in the archipelago - How the Philippines can tackle its HIV epidemic

17 April - ... [I]n the Philippines ... rates of HIV are soaring. ... In June 2016, 841 new cases were reported – the highest number in a single month in the Philippines since tracking began in 1984 and a nine percent uptick from June 2015. ... Today, HIV in the Philippines remains concentrated to a few subgroups of the population. Men who have sex with men make up the vast majority of cases, and HIV incidence among youths and drug users is also rising at a startling rate. ... Four key factors drive the epidemic. First, the age of first sexual contact is younger than previous generations. ... The low rate of condom use among the broader Filipino population also drives the epidemic. ... Another risk factor in the epidemic is the high prevalence of misconceptions about HIV, which dilute the efficacy of education programs. ... Finally, the stigma and discrimination that those who have HIV experience discourage acknowledgement of the health crisis. Brown Political Review

Sri Lanka: More than double the dengue cases from 2016

17 April - During the first three months of 2017, Sri Lankan health officials reported 30,486 dengue fever cases. This compares to 13,849 during the same period in 2016. That is a 2.2 times increase year to year. More than 6900 cases were reported in the Colombo area alone. In all of 2016, 55,150 dengue fever cases were reported and only 29,777 in 2015. Concerning prevention of dengue, while a number of countries have approved the use of the vaccine, Dengvaxia, the Sri Lanka Ministry of Health is carrying out investigations on the vaccine to determine if it is suitable to use in the country. Outbreak News Today

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Brazil: Brazil’s response to a huge yellow fever outbreak: Kill the monkeys

15 April - A yellow fever outbreak is tearing through Brazil leaving thousands [of monkeys] dead in its wake. ... The epidemic, the worst Brazil has seen in decades, has killed more than 200 people so far. But it’s also threatening to wipe out some of the country’s most endangered primates. Not only are monkeys susceptible to yellow fever, but local residents have begun pre-emptively killing monkeys, incorrectly assuming that they help spread the disease. As the epidemic advances, rural towns are littered with monkey corpses falling from trees, terrifying villagers. ... But, contrary to local lore, these primates don’t transmit the disease. In fact, they play a crucial role in preventing its spread. A dead monkey is often the first sign yellow fever has reached a new town, which can serve as an alarm bell for authorities directing vaccination campaigns. It’s a warning sign that allows health officials to monitor the disease before it hits humans. The Washington Post

PAHO: More cases in Brazil lead to another big jump in chikungunya

17 April - Brazil, reporting thousands of new chikungunya cases, almost single-handedly produced another big jump in cases in the Americas for the second straight week, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) reported late last week. PAHO reported 9,522 new confirmed and suspected cases in its Apr 14 update, after logging 7,231 new cases the week before. The case count for 2017 has now reached 29,841, PAHO said. Brazil, reporting just 2 weeks’ of catch-up data, noted 9,329 new cases and 26,854 for the year, or 90% of the total. Brazil also reported another death, bringing its 2017 total to seven. No other country has reported chikungunya-related fatalities. CIDRAP News Scan (first item)
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