23 June 2017

Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center

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Epi-Tech Training: Reportable Medical Event Changes

The next scheduled Epi-Tech Training will discuss "Reportable Medical Event Changes."

Class registration through Continuing Medical Education is required for ALL attendees.

Date: Tuesday, 27 June 2017
Times: 0900, 1500, 1700 EDT
Log-in: COMM: (210) 249-4234
DSN: 421-3272
Overseas DSN: (312) 421-3272
Conference Access Code: 78031#
DCS Link

USPACOM
- China: China bans more synthetic opioids blamed for U.S. drug deaths
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U.S. MILITARY

Air Force: As many as 135 patients may have been exposed to HIV, hepatitis at Al Udeid clinic

19 June - Improperly-cleaned medical equipment at the clinic at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar may have exposed as many as 135 patients to blood-borne diseases such as HIV and Hepatitis B and C over an eight-year period. The Air Force Surgeon General said Monday that Air Force Medical Service found that endoscopes used for upper and lower gastrointestinal procedures "were cleaned in a manner inconsistent with sterilization guidelines" between April 2008 and April 2016. During that period, 135 patients had procedures using those medical tools. ... [T]he surgeon general's office said that blood-borne diseases that patients may have been exposed to could include HIV and the two kinds of hepatitis. The Air Force Medical Service is now notifying patients who may have been exposed. ... Larine Barr, a spokeswoman for the surgeon general, said that the risk of infection is "very small, particularly in a deployed environment," since all service members are required to have a negative HIV test before they deploy. The Air Force also tests service members for Hepatitis B, Barr said. Air Force Times

Army Public Health Center audiologist selected to lead American Tinnitus Association

15 June - Dr. LaGuinn Sherlock, a research audiologist with the U.S. Army Public Health Center stationed at the National Military Audiology and Speech Pathology Center at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, was recently elected to serve as Chair of the Board of Directors of the American Tinnitus Association. She previously served on the board for two years. The ATA is the largest national nonprofit organization working towards a cure for tinnitus, and works towards educating the public on the condition. Army.mil

Army scientists hope to unlock clues to bone healing in space experiment

20 June - Scientists at the U.S. Army Center for Environmental Health Research (USACEHR) are hoping to determine how bones heal in microgravity, based on an experiment that
Women’s Health Portal

The web-based women’s health portal, developed by the U.S. Army Public Health Center, provides information on women’s health topics. This portal gives women and healthcare providers access to health-related resources and support that facilitate health and readiness in both the deployed and garrison settings.

The women’s health portal has been designed to help meet the unique needs by providing female service members, leaders and family members with up-to-date information about a variety of women’s health topics.

Women’s Health Portal

launched to the International Space Station aboard SpaceX in February and returned to earth aboard SpaceX’s Dragon cargo craft in March. ... The primary goal of this research project is to translate new discoveries in bone regeneration for osteoporosis, fracture healing and other bone disorders. Between 2002 and 2009, extremity injury accounted for up to 79 percent of reported trauma cases from theater. Improvised explosive devices and high-energy explosions can cause extremity trauma so severe that often amputation is the only treatment. Army.mil

Army testing potentially lifesaving foam device

19 June - The U.S. Army Medical Materiel Agency, a subordinate organization of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command, is supporting a pivotal clinical trial to test the safety and effectiveness of a self-expanding foam device that would stop massive intracavitary abdominal bleeding. The device received an Investigational Device Exemption in early 2017 from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Throughout the next year, the device developer will select the clinical trial sites and complete pre-study approvals. ... "Right now, we are looking at this device as a potential stop-gap for patients awaiting surgical care," said Leigh Anne Alexander, USAMMA product manager. Army.mil

Bill would give terror victims care at military hospitals

15 June - Two New England senators are sponsoring a bill that would allow victims of terrorism to be treated at certain military health care facilities. Democrat Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Republican Susan Collins of Maine on Thursday filed the proposal that is named for Jessica Kensky and Patrick Downes, a young married couple who each lost legs in the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing. The couple was given a designation from the U.S. Secretary of Defense to receive specialized treatment at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. Kensky and Downes have since advocated for giving similar access to other civilians injured in terrorist attacks. Warren and Collins say military hospitals are experienced in treating people who have suffered traumatic blast injuries — expertise not common among most civilian doctors and hospitals. Military Times

New program helps keep Army Reserve soldiers from losing vital medical skills

16 June - Army Reserve soldiers in medical specialties often do something completely different in their civilian jobs, and with only a few days a year to use their medical skills, they’re at risk of seeing their skills degrade, officials say. ... A new program that officials are calling the first of its kind was launched June 5 to begin to remedy the need for training. Reserve soldiers are spending two weeks working alongside their counterpart medical professionals at a civilian medical center in New Jersey. The program is called Operation Hackensack S.M.A.R.T., or Strategic Medical Asset Readiness Training, a partnership between the Army Reserve and Hackensack University Medical Center. ... During the two weeks of training at the medical center, soldiers shadow their civilian counterparts, rotating through the hospital to ensure they have the most advanced training possible. Army Times
‘There was no escaping it’: Iraq vets are becoming terminally ill and burn pits may be to blame

20 June - ... Sen. Amy Klobuchar, a Democrat from Minnesota ... teamed up with Republican Sen. Thom Tillis of North Carolina to sponsor legislation that would require the VA to establish a center of excellence to study and improve the diagnosis and treatment of burn pit-related illnesses. ... To date, 34 members of the House and Senate have added their names to the Senate bill, S. 319, Helping Veterans Exposed to Burn Pits, and its companion House bill, H.R. 1279, in support. Veterans have long reported health issues thought to be related to combat deployments, and Congress has discussed the associated health risks at 30 hearings since 2009. In 2013, the legislators even ordered the VA to establish a registry to track veterans who believe they are sick as a result of exposure to burn pits or other environmental factors in Iraq and Afghanistan. But as with everything involving burn pits and deployment-related health conditions — from the lack of air quality data to the dearth of research on potential health consequences and even questions over who is responsible for what was burned — VA’s Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry has drawn its share of criticism. Task and Purpose


May 2017 - Tinea pedis, also known as athlete’s foot, is a chronic fungal infection of the feet and toes and is the most common dermatophyte infection among adults. ... The prevalence of tinea pedis among military personnel in these studies ranged from 12% to 70%. These reports highlighted risk factors for infection such as high-intensity training, heavy sweating, protracted shoe/boot wearing, and less frequent sock changes. ... During the 17-year surveillance period, there were a total of 193,432 medical encounters for tinea pedis. Of these total encounters, 91.0% were ambulatory visits and 8.8% were TMDS encounters. Hospitalizations accounted for the remaining 0.2% of the encounters. The overall prevalence of tinea pedis among active component service members was 71.7 per 10,000 service members. The annual prevalence of tinea pedis ranged from 44.3 per 10,000 service members (6,770 service members affected) in 2001 to 93.1 per 10,000 service members (14,390 service members affected) in 2008. The overall incidence rate of tinea pedis was 84.0 cases per 10,000 personyears. Medical Surveillance Monthly Report

U.S. military seeks partners to help warfighters, families

16 June - ... The military is actively seeking private-sector partners to support the health and healing of U.S. warfighters and their families. ... [Vice Admiral Raquel] Bono leads a joint, integrated combat support agency enabling the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps medical services to provide a medically ready force and ready medical force to combatant commands in both peacetime and wartime. ... Bono said some of the best opportunities for partnering include: Health information technology ... Security ... R&D and medical logistics: ... Medical devices ... Training and education ... [and] Biodefense. WRAL Tech Wire
A good news story about diarrhea – with one surprising exception

19 June - … [T]wo trends are clear, says an author of a new report: The number of deaths from diarrheal diseases is dropping dramatically in low-income countries – and ticking upward in wealthy nations. … In 2005, about 1.6 million people died from diarrhea-related diseases, and roughly 770,000 of them were kids under 5. But that number has been steadily dropping, as a new study points out. … [T]he study shows diarrhea-related deaths have declined about 20 percent from 2005 to 2015 for all ages to 1.3 million people, and 35 percent for children under 5 to about 500,000 children during the same time period. NPR

A tale of two anti-Ebola drugs

16 June - … In August 2014, when Ebola virus was wreaking havoc in West Africa, the People’s Liberation Army’s (PLA’s) Academy of Military Medical Science (AMMS) announced that it had successfully developed jk-05, China’s first drug for treating EVD. … Not surprisingly, jk-05 was approved as a special drug for military needs and for emergency use only. That has not deterred Sihuan Pharmaceutical, originally affiliated with AMMS and now one of China’s leading generic pharmaceutical companies, from announcing in October that it had purchased the rights to commercialize jk-05 and would develop it into a broad-spectrum antiviral drug. Meanwhile, the Chinese military shipped thousands of doses of jk-05 to West Africa for treating potential infections of Chinese health workers and potentially conducting clinical trial. But according to the WHO, jk-05 was likely a copycat product of favipiravir (T-705), an anti-influenza drug developed by Fujifilm Holdings Corp. of Japan. … [F]avipiravir appears to be effective against EVD in a mouse model, but its efficacy against human Ebola infection is unproved. Council on Foreign Relations

By 2100, deadly heat may threaten majority of humankind

19 June - A new study has found that 30 percent of the world’s population is currently exposed to potentially deadly heat for 20 days per year or more—and like a growing forest fire, climate change is spreading this extreme heat. Without major reductions in emissions of greenhouse gases such as CO2, up to three in four people will face the threat of dying from heat by 2100. However, even with reductions, one in two people at the end of the century will likely face at least 20 days when extreme heat can kill, according to the analysis, published on Monday in Nature Climate Change. … In the last two weeks, dozens have died in India and Pakistan’s current heatwave, with temperatures spiking to a record 128 degrees Fahrenheit (53.5 degrees Celsius). And there have been heat-related deaths already in the U.S. this summer. National Geographic
Getting buy-in for predictive analytics in health care

20 April - New predictive analytics tools in health care promise the reduce waste and improve care by forecasting the likelihood of an event — for example, that a patient will be readmitted to hospital or develop a life-threatening infection – and allowing providers to tailor treatments and services accordingly. But despite the tools’ power to improve care, most health care institutions are not yet using them. A study of key figures from leading US health systems, policy makers and predictive analytics vendors finds that success depends less on the tool itself than on getting buy-in at all levels from the start.

Harvard Business Review

Glutamine suppresses herpes in mice and guinea pigs

16 June - Glutamine supplements can suppress reactivation of herpes simplex virus (HSV) in mice and guinea pigs, according to findings recently published. ... Prior research demonstrated the importance of HSV-specific T cells for controlling recurrent HSV outbreaks, and that activated T cells require increased metabolism of glutamine (an amino acid produced by the body and found in food). ... [S]cientists infected mice with HSV-1 and guinea pigs with HSV-2 and randomly assigned the animals to different treatment groups. Two weeks after infection, some animals received an oral glutamine supplement and others did not. Results showed that mice that received glutamine were less likely to have HSV-1 reactivation than those that did not, and similarly, guinea pigs that received glutamine were less likely to have recurrent outbreaks of HSV-2 than those that did not receive the supplement. NIH

Inspired by war zones, balloon device may save civilians from fatal blood loss

19 June - ... The device, called an ER-Reboa catheter, was born on the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan, the brainchild of two military doctors who saw soldiers die from internal bleeding that medical teams in small field hospitals could not stop. Their invention, made by Prytime Medical and cleared by the Food and Drug Administration in 2015, is gradually being adopted in civilian trauma centers around the country and has recently been used by the military. But medical teams need rigorous training to use it: Mishandled, it can be dangerous. The New York Times

Psychologists open a window on brutal C.I.A. interrogations

21 June - Fifteen years after he helped devise the brutal interrogation techniques used on terrorism suspects in secret C.I.A. prisons, John Bruce Jessen, a former military psychologist, expressed ambivalence about the program. He described himself and a fellow military psychologist, James Mitchell, as reluctant participants in using the techniques, some of which are widely viewed as torture, but also justified the practices as effective in getting resistant detainees to cooperate. ... The two psychologists — whom C.I.A. officials have
called architects of the interrogation program, a designation they dispute — are defendants in the only lawsuit that may hold participants accountable for causing harm.  
The New York Times

Safety in numbers

21 June – [A] new U.S. News analysis underscores a crucial factor that can tip the balance between life and death: where the surgery is performed. The analysis of four years of data from hospitals across the country indicates that 26 percent of deaths – more than 1 out of every 4 – that occur following surgery for the most severe heart defects could be prevented by having the operation performed at hospitals where surgical teams do the greatest numbers of procedures. In 4,000 of the most complex procedures performed, U.S. News found that 104 of 395 deaths could have been prevented if the patients – most of whom in such surgeries are children – had their operations in high-volume centers that treat 250 or more patients needing congenital heart surgery in a year. U.S. News and World Report

Study shows Neuro Kinetics' I-Portal® devices objectively track concussion signs

21 June - Neuro Kinetics, Inc. (NKI), the global leader in clinical eye tracking and neural functional assessments, has co-authored a study indicating that a battery of OVRT (oculomotor, vestibular, and reaction time) tests, in combination with NKI's I-Portal® devices, can accurately measure mTBI (concussion) symptoms both initially and during convalescence. ... Neuro Kinetics OVRT protocol ... was determined to have exceptionally high sensitivity and specificity. ... Because these tests are based on outliers to population norms, they offer the considerable advantage of not requiring baseline testing for objective documentation. Analysis of the study's longitudinal data suggests that a reliable, objective metric for monitoring the progression of a given concussion is now available. EurekAlert!

The Florence Statement on Triclosan and Triclocarban

June 2017 - The Florence Statement on Triclosan and Triclocarban documents a consensus of more than 200 scientists and medical professionals on the hazards of and lack of demonstrated benefit from common uses of triclosan and triclocarban. These chemicals may be used in thousands of personal care and consumer products as well as in building materials. Based on extensive peer-reviewed research, this statement concludes that triclosan and triclocarban are environmentally persistent endocrine disruptors that bioaccumulate in and are toxic to aquatic and other organisms. Evidence of other hazards to humans and ecosystems from triclosan and triclocarban is presented along with recommendations intended to prevent future harm from triclosan, triclocarban, and antimicrobial substances with similar properties and effects.  
Environmental Health Perspectives

The high-tech device that’s like a bouncer for mosquitoes

19 June - Dotted around Houston, hidden in overgrown backyards and piles of old tires, are
what look like 10 tiny models of Hollywood’s iconic Capitol Records building. ... These high-tech devices catch mosquitoes — though not in big batches, like typical traps. They catch them one by one, each in its own compartment, after inspecting each mosquito’s wing beats to be sure it’s a species that researchers want. ... The new traps, made by Microsoft, overcome one of the most frustrating aspects of insect surveillance: There are 56 species of mosquitoes in this buggy bayou city, and conventional traps suck in nearly all of them. Entomologists want only a few disease-carrying types, including Aedes aegypti, which carries Zika and dengue, and Culex quinquefasciatus, which spreads West Nile virus. The Microsoft trap, by contrast, has 64 compartments, arrayed like studio apartments in a skyscraper. ... Each compartment also records and uploads to a website the time, temperature, humidity and ambient light — data that records when each species hunts for blood, which is a good time to spray. The New York Times

Two-drug combo may improve traumatic brain injury therapy

21 June  Traumatic brain injury is in great need of better therapies. ... Bruce Chandler May, a physician from Santa Barbara ... discovered synergy between two existing molecules, levocetirizine, which is the top antihistamine in the world, and montelukast, an asthma drug which is the top leukotriene modulator in the world. We plan to combine the two molecules as a ‘First Response’ injectable for the military. It will be the first new therapeutic in over 30 years, a safe and effective treatment for traumatic brain injury and blast injury. ... We have established proof of concept for multiple diseases. The next stage is to manufacture the compound in various forms, initially as a lyophilized powder (freeze-dried) or autoinjector delivery system for the military. San Diego Union-Tribune

United States rejects U.N. call for access to safe abortions

22 June - The United States on Thursday rejected a United Nations resolution on violence against women because it called for access to safe abortion for all women in countries where legal. The administration of President Donald Trump said last month it was vastly expanding the scope of a policy blocking U.S. assistance to foreign groups that perform or provide information about abortions. U.S. First Secretary to the U.N. in Geneva Jason Mack said, after a resolution from Canada on eliminating violence against women was adopted by consensus, that the U.S. "must dissociate from the consensus" specifically on access to safe abortions. Reuters

ZIKA VIRUS

Data on Zika in mosquitoes suggest early presence in Rio

20 June - ... A study published yesterday in Emerging Infectious Diseases describes deep gene sequencing performed on more than 400 Aedes aegypti mosquitoes captured in the Manguinhos neighborhood in Rio de Janeiro during the height of the Zika outbreak, from
February 2014 to June 2016. The results of the genetic analysis suggest the insects were infected with the virus at least 2 years before the first human case appeared in the city. ... In related news, a study published yesterday on the pre-publication server bioRxiv shows that five different mosquito species—Ae aegypti, Ae vexans, Culex quinquefasciatus, C coronator, and C tarsalis—contained Zika virus in their salivary glands. Mexican researchers collected the insects in Mexico, and the findings suggest that each species is capable of Zika transmission. CIDRAP

**Evaluation of placental and fetal tissue specimens for Zika virus infection — 50 states and District of Columbia, January–December, 2016**

23 June - Diagnosis of Zika virus infection is challenging because of serologic cross-reactivity with other related flaviviruses and limited duration of viremia. Zika virus RNA can be detected in placental and fetal tissues, which can provide an opportunity to diagnose maternal Zika virus infection and can be considered when maternal serologic testing is not definitive or is negative outside the optimal testing window. In the 50 U.S. states and District of Columbia, placental testing provided a confirmed diagnosis of recent maternal Zika virus infection for 10% of live births with possible maternal exposure to Zika virus that lacked definitive evidence of a maternal or congenital Zika virus infection. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report

**More U.S. counties are finding mosquitoes that can spread Zika**

20 June - With the summer mosquito season in full swing in many states, a new report shows a significant increase in U.S. counties across the South that have reported mosquitoes capable of spreading Zika and related viruses. ... Based on updated data collected through 2016, research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 38 additional counties — primarily in Texas but as far north as Illinois — documented the presence of Aedes aegypti mosquitoes, Zika’s main vector. That's an increase of 21 percent compared with an earlier 2016 survey. ... [R]esearchers say the latest findings highlight the need for continued and improved mosquito surveillance. The Washington Post

**Study: First Zika microcephaly wave in Brazil was outlier**

22 June - About 70% of all Zika-related microcephaly cases in Brazil resulted from the first wave of infections in 2015, according to a study yesterday in The Lancet by Brazilian researchers who describes the two major waves of Zika infections and the ensuing microcephaly incidence. The study is based on data obtained through the Brazilian Ministry of Health’s surveillance systems from Jan 1, 2015, to Nov 12, 2016, and shows two distinct waves of Zika infections: An initial wave in late 2015 in the northeastern part of Brazil was linked to 70.4% of microcephaly cases documented in 2015 and 2016, while a second wave
Study to examine effects of Zika infection in Guatemalan infants and children

19 June - A large natural history study examining the neurologic, neurodevelopmental and other clinical outcomes of Zika virus infection in infants and young children has begun in rural Guatemala. It will focus on those infected with Zika virus after birth rather than those infected congenitally. ... "This natural history study of Zika among Guatemalan children promises to yield valuable insights into acute and longer-term outcomes of infection,” said NIAID Director Anthony S. Fauci, M.D. ... Researchers hope to compare the neurodevelopmental, neurologic, and clinical outcomes of Zika virus-infected children with those who remain uninfected. Participants will be screened for microcephaly, encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), Guillain-Barré syndrome (a rare nervous system disorder), seizures, neurodevelopmental delays, hearing loss, eye problems, and other neurologic issues. NIH

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

2016-2017 Influenza Season Week 23 ending June 10, 2017 - Pneumonia and Influenza (P&I) Mortality Surveillance: Based on National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) mortality surveillance data available on June 15, 2017, 5.8% of the deaths occurring during the week ending May 27, 2017 (week 21) were due to P&I. This percentage is below the epidemic threshold of 6.6% for week 21. CDC

HHS unveils updated pandemic flu plan

16 June - The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) yesterday released a major update to its pandemic influenza plan, designed to guide preparedness activities over the next decade. The plan reflects lessons learned during the 2009 H1N1 pandemic, acknowledges preparedness gaps, and sets a broader vision that incorporates new technology and changes to healthcare delivery. ... The original plan was geared toward a more severe scenario and set a goal of delivering pandemic vaccine within 6 months of a pandemic declaration. The new document incorporates lessons learned from the 2009 H1N1 pandemic, which resulted in a less severe event. It also spells out the goal of having the first vaccine doses ready within 3 months of pandemic strain emergence, along with approved broad-spectrum antivirals. CIDRAP
Recombinant flu vax matches standard drug

21 June - A recombinant influenza vaccine was as protective as a standard, egg-grown drug during the 2014-2015 flu season, when circulating and vaccine antigens were mismatched, and might have even been better, researchers reported. The Flublok quadrivalent vaccine met a prespecified non-inferiority benchmark in a randomized, double-blind clinical trial involving adults ages 50 and older, according to Lisa Dunkle, MD, of Protein Sciences, and colleagues. ... There are two advantages to the drug, including the speed with which vaccines can be produced, Dunkle explained. It takes several months to grow vaccines using the standard egg-based methods, but the recombinant technology can do the job in 3 to 6 weeks. ... As well, Dunkle noted, the proteins made in the recombinant process are genetically more faithful to the original vaccine strains than those coming from eggs, where mutations are often introduced. MedPage Today

Survey finds words, graphics shape flu perceptions, intent to vaccinate

22 June - Flu threats involving strains having more exotic names, compared with scientific and animal-origin nomenclature, were more likely to raise concerns and motivate people to be vaccinated. ... A team ... recruited adults from the United States and 10 European countries and asked them to read a mock news article from a health organization about the spread of a pandemic strain in their country. ... They tested three different versions of the materials, each with a different hypothetical influenza name: H11N3, "horse flu," or Yarraman flu. ... [T]he team found that the exotic-sounding and scientific names elicited greater worry and intent to vaccinate than did the strain named after an animal reservoir. As part of the survey, the same group also examined perceptions of graphics that depict the spread of infectious diseases. Heat maps showing hot spots were more likely to generate concern than bar graphs or dot maps. CIDRAP Flu Scan (third item)

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VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY

Hummus recalled over possible listeria contamination

21 June - A Tennessee company has issued a voluntary recall for select hummus products sold nationwide and in Canada over concerns of possible listeria contamination. House of Thaller said the affected products involve 10 ounce packages of Hummus with Pine Nut Topping marketed under three different names. Consumers who purchased Fresh Foods Market Artisan Hummus – Pine Nuts with

Spillover beasts: Which animals pose the biggest viral risk?

21 June - ... [A new study] estimates how many "missing" viruses are out there in the world — viruses that we know are in animals and can possibly jump into people, only we haven’t detected them yet. To do that, [Kevin Olival] and his team scoured studies and databases to create a list of all known viruses in mammals on Earth. They ended up with nearly 600 unique viruses found in about 750 species. About a third of the viruses had the ability to jump from mammals into people. These are called zoonotic viruses. Bats, primates and rodents carry the largest proportions of zoonotic viruses, the study found, with bats edging out primates for the No. 1 slot. NPR

U.S. bans fresh Brazil beef imports over safety concerns

22 June - The United States halted imports of fresh Brazilian beef on Thursday, the U.S. Department of Agriculture said, after a high percentage of shipments failed to pass safety checks. The USDA had “recurring concerns about the safety of the products intended for the American market,” after increasing tests on Brazilian beef in March, according to a statement. The agency raised scrutiny on Brazilian beef and ready-to-eat products as a precaution following an investigation into corruption involving Brazil’s health inspectors that targeted meat companies JBS SA (JBSS3.SA) and BRF SA (BRFS3.SA). Reuters

U.S. Marshals seize food from professional warehouse and distribution in MN

20 June - The U.S. FDA has announced that on June 15, 2017, U.S. Marshals seized food held at Professional Warehouse and Distribution in St. Paul, Minnesota. Those products are worth about $73,000 and include barley flour, spices, pasta, dried beans, tea, and cookies. A complaint filed by the U.S. Department of Justice was filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota alleged the foods are adulterated under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. The storage conditions inside the warehouse were “simply unacceptable,” according to the FDA. Melinda K. Plaisier, FDA’s Associate Commissioner for Regulatory Affairs said, “The FDA plays a key role protecting public health and ensuring not only that food is properly manufactured and labeled, but that it is handled and stored correctly as well.” Food Poisoning Bulletin

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A low BMI could lengthen healing time, according to study on athletes with fractures

16 June - [An] Ohio State University study led by Timothy L. Miller ... spent three years examining the relationship between stress fractures and time to return to running on a Division 1 team. They concluded that the lower the athlete’s body mass index (BMI), the longer the healing period. The OSU study identified 24 tibial stress fractures in 18 women from 2011 to 2014. ... In the study, the team found that the average time to return to running for those with a Grade V injury was 17 weeks, compared with 13.7 in grades II and III. The researchers also compared the women’s BMIs with those of uninjured teammates and found that the women with BMIs lower than 19 were at a higher risk to develop stress fractures. ... His suggestion following his research is that these runners add lean muscle mass to support and offload the bones. The Washington Post

Defense Health Agency to assume oversight of DoD HIV/AIDS Prevention Program

22 June - Navy Vice Adm. Raquel Bono, director, Defense Health Agency (DHA), visited the Naval Health Research Center (NHRC) June 8, to discuss the transition of oversight for the Department of Defense (DoD) HIV/AIDS Prevention Program's (DHAPP) from Navy Medicine to the DHA. ... Bono’s visit provided the opportunity for her to learn more about DHAPP operations, the level of administrative support NHRC provides for the directorate, and meet with staff before the transition is complete in late August. ... Bono went on to say that having DHAPP align under DHA's leadership will enable broader opportunities for the organization to expand its interagency partnerships and work more closely with the DoD's combatant commands (COCOMS). Health.mil

Exercise may stave off postpartum depression

16 June - Physical activity during and after pregnancy improves psychological wellbeing and may protect against postpartum depression, according to a new analysis of existing research. ... The studies included a total of 932 women and all examined the severity of postpartum depression as well as including basic information about the length, frequency, type and intensity of the exercise. The exercises used in the various studies included stretching and breathing, walking programs, aerobic activity, Pilates and yoga. Compared to women who didn’t exercise, those who did had lower scores on depression symptom tests during the postpartum period, the researchers found. The apparent benefit of having fewer depression symptoms was seen even among women who did not meet the cutoff for a depression diagnosis. Reuters
Most U.S. teens have sex by 18, but pregnancies down: CDC study

22 June - More than half of American teens have had sex by age 18, but teenage pregnancy and birth rates extended their 2-1/2-decade decline because of increased contraceptive use, according to a U.S. government study released on Thursday. Most of the 55 percent of teens who have had sex by 18 used some type of protection, typically a condom, the study of more than 4,000 teenagers by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Center for Health Statistics showed. Some 80 percent of teenagers employed a contraceptive method during their first sexual encounters, according to the study. The study measured sexual activity, defined as vaginal intercourse between a female and a male, by teens aged 15 to 19 from 2011 to 2015. The greater use of protection helped lower the rate of births by teenagers to 22 per 1,000 females in 2015 from 62 per 1,000 in 1991. Reuters

Occasional smokers who vape smoke more cigarettes

19 June - … [A] report in Preventive Medicine found that young adults who occasionally smoked conventional cigarettes smoked more of them if they also used e-cigarettes – battery-powered gadgets that heat liquid nicotine into vapor. … [Neal] Doran and his team studied 319 Californians, ages 18 to 24. At the start, participants did not smoke daily but had smoked at least one cigarette in the prior six months. During the study, they reported their frequency of cigarette and e-cigarette use five times at three-month intervals. Those who vaped more also reported smoking 18 percent more cigarettes, the study found. “In the larger scheme of things, e-cigarettes could be good, bad or neutral,” Doran said. “I don’t think we know the answers yet. This is one of the ways in which they could be bad – by people increasing their cigarette use if they’re using both.” Reuters

Services use vitamins, nutrition to boost female grunts' performance

15 June - As the military services moved to admit women into previously closed special operations and ground combat jobs in 2016, Army officials were tasked with looking for ways to get the best performance out of female troops in order to minimize injury and boost their opportunities to succeed. And they discovered one unlikely culprit that was holding some women back: chronic iron deficiency. … In February 2016, the Army announced it would begin providing iron-rich multivitamins to female soldiers. And, McConnell said, the move has made a difference. "The statistic we have is that the iron supplements can actually shave two minutes off the two-mile run time," he said. Military.com

Six experts resign from president’s HIV/AIDS Advisory Panel in protest

19 June - Six members of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (PACHA) resigned
in protest of the Trump administration, which they allege "has no strategy to address the on-going HIV/AIDS epidemic." Scott Schoettes, Counsel and HIV Project Director at Lambda Legal, explained in a Newsweek op-ed Friday that he and five colleagues decided to leave their posts on the council for a number of reasons. But their largest expressed gripe was that the Trump administration has not sought input from the council when formulating HIV policy. ... "We will be more effective from the outside," he added, "advocating for change and protesting policies that will hurt the health of the communities we serve and the country as a whole if this administration continues down the current path." NBC News

Sleeping-in on weekends linked to lower body weight

16 June - Catching up on lost sleep over weekends may help people keep their weight down, according to a study in South Korea. ... Sleeping in may be better than napping, as the sleep may be deeper and follows the body’s sleep-wake rhythms more closely, [Chang-Ho] Yun said. ... [R]esearchers used data from a nationwide survey of more than 2,000 people who ranged in age from 19 to 82 years old. ... About 43 percent of people slept longer on weekends by nearly two hours than they did on weekdays. People who slept-in on weekends tended to sleep shorter hours during weekdays, but slept more hours overall across the week. The researchers’ analysis found that those who slept-in on weekends had average BMIs of 22.8 while those who didn’t engage in catch-up sleep averaged 23.1, which was a small but statistically meaningful difference. In addition, the more catch up sleep a person got, the lower their BMI tended to be. Reuters

Therapy for everybody

22 June - [Thomas] Bishop is part of a unique new breed of psychologists who plant themselves directly in medical offices. In clinics like [East Tennessee State University’s], the therapists eschew the familiar couch-and-office setup. Instead, they pop right into in-progress medical appointments and deliver a few minutes of blitz psychotherapy. ... Integrated psychologists can help patients manage their pain at home so they, for example, don’t run to the emergency room at the slightest twinge. ... Savings like these are especially important to the perennial American quest to cut health-care costs. An estimated 5 percent of the U.S. population accounts for 50 percent of all medical costs, and mood disorders are one of the most common conditions these high spenders suffer from. Some types of psychotherapy can make patients more likely to adhere to a doctor’s medical advice or to follow-through on weight-loss plans, saving a medical practice time and money in the long run. The Atlantic

To train an athlete, add 12 minutes of meditation to the daily mix

21 June - If athletes practice meditation for a few minutes a day, they may become better able to withstand the mental demands of hours of strenuous physical training, according to an interesting new study of Division I college football players. ... The researchers ... divided 100 of the athletes into two groups. One began a program of supervised relaxation training,
during which they listened to calming music and learned to systematically relax their muscles. The other group was taught mindfulness meditation, which involves paying close attention to breathing and to the present moment. ... The more an athlete in the relaxation group had practiced relaxing, the less his mood had tended to decline, the researchers found. And those in the meditation group, if they had practiced often, showed considerable mental resilience, with higher scores than the other athletes in either group on the measures of both attention and mood. The New York Times

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USAFRICOM

Kenya: Kenya cholera outbreak hits dozens at health conference

22 June - Nearly 50 people have contracted cholera while attending a health conference in Kenya’s capital. The infected delegates were among hundreds who had gathered for the four day forum organised by the Ministry of Health at a Nairobi hotel on Tuesday. They have been isolated in a city hospital, but health officials say the number of people infected may rise. It is unclear how they caught the disease, which has led to five deaths in the past month. BBC News

South Sudan/Uganda: South Sudan refugee crisis strains Uganda’s health system

19 June - It is estimated Uganda has one doctor for every 24,000 citizens. The nurse-to-population ratio is not much better, one for every 11,000 people, and much of that staff is concentrated in urban areas. Now add 1.2 million refugees. The massive influx of South Sudanese refugees into northern Uganda during the past year has strained the country’s already overburdened health care system. Health centers near refugee settlements in the country’s Adjumani district are overwhelmed, especially those providing maternity care. The United Nations says Uganda took in more refugees than any other part of the world in 2016 as civilians fled conflict and hunger in South Sudan, and the influx continues. ... Aid agencies and the government have worked to set up temporary health center structures in the refugee settlements to serve the huge female population of reproductive age, particularly pregnant women. VOA

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Afghanistan: Opium use booms in Afghanistan, creating a ‘silent tsunami’ of addicted women

19 June - ... Drug addiction in Afghanistan, once mostly limited to men who spent years as laborers or war refugees in Iran, has exploded into a nationwide scourge that affects millions of people, including a growing number of women and children. ... In 2010, U.N. experts estimated that there were about 1 million regular drug users in Afghanistan. ... By 2015, they reported, the number of addicts in the country had soared to 3 million. ... The most startling aspect of the drug boom, though, is still largely hidden from sight. Tens of thousands of Afghan women, confined to their homes by tradition and often dependent on addicted men, are succumbing, too. This has created a growing phenomenon of drug-centered households where family relations, economic stability and social traditions can easily collapse. The Washington Post

Middle East: Meta-analysis finds self-medication a 'massive' problem in Middle East

20 June - Self-medication, including with antibiotics, is a major problem in the Middle East, a new review of 72 studies has found. ... Investigators identified research published from 1990 through 2015. Misused medicines included codeine-containing products, topical analgesics and corticosteroids, antimalarial drugs, and antibiotics. Self-medication was widespread, and pharmacists, friends, and parents were the main sources of drugs. One study determined that in Syria 87% of 200 pharmacies agreed to sell antibiotics without a prescription. The figure increased to 97% when those seeking the drugs insisted. Another study found that pharmacies in Iran sold 57% of prescription items without a prescription. In Saudi Arabia, only one pharmacist refused to dispense medications without a prescription. CIDRAP Stewardship/Resistance Scan (sixth item)

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

19 June - Between 11 and 15 June 2017, the national IHR Focal Point of Saudi Arabia reported 14 additional cases of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) infection including one fatal case among previously reported cases. ... Thirteen of the 14 newly reported cases are associated with clusters 1 and 3 in the Disease Outbreak News published on 13 June 2017. Seven of the 13 newly reported cases are health care workers. WHO

Syria: Polio paralyzes 17 children in Syria, W.H.O. says

20 June – At least 17 children in eastern Syria have been paralyzed from a recently confirmed outbreak of polio, the World Health Organization said Tuesday, punctuating the
health risks to a population ravaged by more than six years of war. It is the second outbreak of the crippling disease to hit Syria since the war began, and largely reflected the inability of health workers to immunize all children caught in conflict zones where access is difficult and sanitation is poor. … Unlike Syria’s first polio outbreak in 2013, caused by a wild strain that paralyzed 36 children before it was brought under control, the new outbreak derived from the polio vaccine itself, Mr. Jasarevic said. The New York Times

**Yemen: Weekly update - cholera in Yemen**

22 June – The Ministry of Public Health and Population of Yemen has recorded a total of 37,079 suspected cholera cases and 196 associated deaths during the period 13 June to 19 June 2017. A cumulative total of 185,301 suspected cases of cholera and 1233 associated deaths have been recorded as of 21 June during this outbreak, which started in October 2016. The overall case-fatality rate is 0.7%; however, it is higher among people aged over 60. … WHO and the King Salman Centre for Humanitarian Aid and Relief recently agreed to provide around US$ 8.3 million through health partners to support 7.3 million people in 13 priority governorates with life-saving health services, medical supplies and cholera case management efforts. WHO

**USEUCOM**

**Portugal: Portuguese wildfires - government declares three days of mourning**

19 June - More than 1,500 firefighters in Portugal are still battling to control deadly wildfires that raged across a central region of the country over the weekend, killing at least 62 people and injuring dozens more. The government has declared three days of national mourning as it awaits the arrival of more water-dropping planes from Spain, France and Italy. The EU and UN have also pledged to provide any necessary assistance. The fire, which broke out on Saturday in the municipality of Pedrógão Grande and is thought to have been caused by a lightning strike, spread quickly in several directions. Many of the victims died in their cars as they tried to flee the flames. More than 60 people were injured, with 18 taken to hospitals in Lisbon, Porto and Coimbra. Five of them, four firefighters and a child, are in a critical condition. The Guardian

**United Kingdom: Fall in new HIV diagnoses among men who have sex with men**

22 June - Since October 2015 up to September 2016, HIV diagnoses fell by 32% compared
with October 2014–September 2015 among men who have sex with men (MSM) attending selected London sexual health clinics. This coincided with high HIV testing volumes and rapid initiation of treatment on diagnosis. The fall was most apparent in new HIV testers. Intensified testing of high-risk populations, combined with immediately received anti-retroviral therapy and a pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) programme, may make elimination of HIV achievable. *Eurosurveillance*

**United Kingdom: Medicine information leaflets 'too scary', say experts**

20 June - There is too much focus on the potential side-effects of medicines on information leaflets inside packs and not enough on their benefits, says the Academy of Medical Sciences. Its new report calls for them to be rewritten to give a more balanced view. A survey by the academy found the public was confused by information on medicines and did not trust scientific research. Scientists said clear communication with patients was a priority. The side-effects listed on patient information leaflets (PILs) are often very long and off-putting, the report says. They make people unduly anxious about taking medicines and could be the reason why fewer than 50% continue with drugs they have started taking. The likelihood of the side-effects occurring is also rarely explained - instead they are labelled "possible" or "serious". And the benefits of the medicines are usually understated, taking up much less space on the leaflet than potential harms. *BBC News*

**USNORTHCOM**

**U.S.: CDC – U.S. *Candida auris* cases rise to 86**

20 June - In its latest update on infections involving *Candida auris*, an emerging multidrug-resistant fungus, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said it has received reports of 9 more illnesses, raising the total to 86. One of the new cases is in Florida, raising the number of affected states to eight. That case involved a *C. auris* sample that was collected in April. According to the CDC update, posted Jun 16, New Jersey and New York both have new cases with positive samples collected in May. *CIDRAP Stewardship/Resistance Scan* (fifth item)

**U.S.: FDA approves new antibiotic to treat serious skin infections**

19 June - The U.S. Food and Drug Administration on Monday approved a new treatment for patients with acute bacterial skin infections, made by privately held Melinta Therapeutics. The drug, Baxdela, or delafloxacin, is designed to treat skin and skin structure infections
caused by a range of bacteria, including methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus, or MRSA. Baxdela belongs to a common class of broad-spectrum antibiotics known as fluoroquinolones, which are typically given by infusion. Baxdela can be given both by infusion and in oral form. The drug was shown in clinical trials to be no less effective than a combination of vancomycin, the go-to drug for serious gram-positive infections, and aztreonam, a drug to treat gram-negative infections, both of which are available in generic form. Reuters

U.S.: In just one year, nearly 1.3 million Americans needed hospital care for opioid-related issues

20 June - The coast-to-coast opioid epidemic is swamping hospitals, with government data published Tuesday showing 1.27 million emergency room visits or inpatient stays for opioid-related issues in a single year. The 2014 numbers, the latest available for every state and the District of Columbia, reflect a 64 percent increase for inpatient care and a 99 percent jump for emergency room treatment compared to figures from 2005. Their trajectory likely will keep climbing if the epidemic continues unabated. The report, released by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), puts Maryland at the very top of the national list for inpatient care. The state, already struggling with overdoses from heroin and prescription opioids, has seen the spread of the synthetic opioid fentanyl, which can be mixed with heroin or cocaine and is extraordinarily powerful. Gov. Larry Hogan (R) this year declared a state of emergency in response to the crisis. The Washington Post

U.S.: Nonmedical vaccine exemptions linked to pertussis outbreaks

21 June - A study yesterday in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences used geospatial data to show that U.S. counties with more kindergartners with nonmedical vaccine exemption status have higher rates of pertussis outbreaks in the United States. The data come from 2012, when the national incidence rate for pertussis was 15.4 per 100,000 people, the highest since 1955. The researchers compared reports of nonmedical vaccine exemption statuses of kindergarteners during the 2011-12 and 2012-13 academic years with statistically significant geographic clusters of pertussis cases in 2012 for two different age-groups (5 years and younger and 10 to 14 years), reported at the county level. They found that relative risk for pertussis outbreaks increased in counties that had more unvaccinated kindergartners. CIDRAP News Scan (third item)

U.S.: NYC officials probe Legionnaires' cluster in Lennox Hill

19 June - Health officials in New York City recently announced that they are investigating a cluster of Legionnaires' disease cases in the Lennox Hill section of Manhattan. ... In a June 16 statement, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) said seven illnesses have been confirmed
over the past 11 days. Four people are recovering in the hospital, two have been discharged, and one person in his or her 90s with underlying health conditions has died. Authorities are sampling and testing all cooling tower systems within a half-kilometer radius of the affected area of Lennox Hill. The health department is urging New Yorkers who have respiratory symptoms such as fever, cough, and chills to promptly seek medical care. In a typical year, about 200 to 400 Legionnaires’ cases are reported in New York City. CIDRAP

U.S.: Ricin vaccine candidate received more funding

21 June - The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) is providing additional money for animal testing of the novel ricin poison treatment and vaccine, RiVax, according to a company news release. The NIAID will provide Soligenix, the maker of RiVax, with approximately $2 million in additional funding, bringing the total amount awarded to date under this contract to $18.7 million, according to the release. The company specializes in making products that treat rare diseases. If all contract options are exercised, the total award of up to $24.7 million will support preclinical, manufacturing, and clinical development. ... There are no current treatments for ricin poisoning, but RiVax acts as a medical countermeasure to prevent the effects of ricin exposure. CIDRAP News Scan (fourth item)

U.S.: Survey findings show workers are unprepared for cardiac emergencies

22 June - ... Two new surveys from the American Heart Association (AHA) show that most U.S. employees are not prepared or trained to handle the 10,000 cardiac emergencies that annually occur in the workplace. ... The association surveyed more than 3,000 workers with various job roles between February and April 2017. This included 2,000 workers in hospitality, education and industry/labor as well as more than 1,000 safety managers in industries regulated by OSHA. The results revealed most workers do not have access to CPR and first aid training, and half of those surveyed could not locate an automated external defibrillator (AED) at work. Cardiac arrests occur when the heart suddenly stops beating, and survival chances outside the hospital can double or triple when CPR immediately is performed by a bystander, according to the AHA. EHS Today

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USPACOM

China: China bans more synthetic opioids blamed for U.S. drug deaths

19 June - China said Monday it would ban a designer drug called U-47700 and three others, following U.S. pressure to do more to control synthetic opioids blamed for fast-rising
overdose deaths in the United States. In China, U-47700 has until now been a legal alternative to fentanyl and potent derivatives like carfentanil. Its usage has been growing among U.S. opioid addicts. Last year, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration listed U-47700 in the category of the most dangerous drugs it regulates, saying it was associated with dozens of fatalities. ... The DEA has long said that China is the top source country for synthetic opioids like fentanyl and its precursors. ... However, as soon as one substance is banned, chemists create slightly different and technically legal alternatives and then market them online. STAT

Nepal: Nepal court demands quick compensation for acid attack victims

16 June - ... Nepal’s Supreme Court, in response to a petition by rights group Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD), last month ordered the government to amend the law to ensure victims of acid attacks and burning receive immediate compensation and critical care. ... There are about 40 reported cases of burns and acid attacks every year in Nepal, with nearly three-quarters of the victims women, according to New York-based charity Donor Direct Action, citing non-profit Burns Violence Survivors Nepal. Under current Nepali law, anyone found guilty of such a crime can be sentenced to up to eight years in jail and a fine or victim compensation of up to 300,000 Nepali rupees ($2,900). In reality, only a small amount is given to a victim, and never before a final decision is made, which can take years. Meanwhile, victims may not be able to afford the medical care they need, and risk permanent damage, Shrestha said. Reuters

Haiti: With little money to combat cholera in Haiti, U.N. names new fundraising chief

20 June - A former top State Department official and head of the United Nations’ World Food Program has been tapped to develop a comprehensive fundraising strategy to finance the U.N.’s plan to clean up cholera in Haiti — a disease introduced there by U.N. peacekeepers. Josette Sheeran’s appointment as a high-level envoy for Haiti was announced Tuesday by U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres. The announcement comes two days before a planned U.N. Security Council visit to the country on Thursday so members can see firsthand how the 13-year U.N. Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) is continuing its withdrawal of peacekeeping battalions and foreign police units ahead of the mission’s permanent closure in October. Miami Herald
PAHO alert for conjunctivitis

19 June - the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) late last week published an alert on increased conjunctivitis cases in five nations: the Bahamas, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Guadeloupe, and Martinique. Four of the five countries reported fewer than 1,000 new cases, but the Dominican Republic has had 66,126 cases so far this year, PAHO said. That represents a 62% increase compared with the same time in 2016. “Outbreaks of conjunctivitis in other countries of the Region are under investigation,” the agency reported.

CIDRAP Stewardship/Resistance Scan (third item)

PAHO reports small rise in chikungunya cases

19 June - It its regular update on chikungunya in the Americas, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) on Jun 16 reported 599 more cases, most of them in Bolivia. The latest total reflects a jump from 165 new cases reported the previous week, but is below other recent weekly totals, which have ranged as high as 38,282 cases, depending on how frequently countries with large disease burdens such as Brazil update their numbers. Other countries reporting small numbers of new cases include Colombia, Peru, Costa Rica, Guadeloupe, Martinique, St Barthelemy, and the French part of St. Martin. No new fatalities were reported, keeping that total steady at 13. CIDRAP News Scan (fourth item)

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