

8 April 2016

# Army Public Health Weekly Update

Army Public Health Center

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## Veterinary Connections

Veterinary Connections is a quarterly publication written by Army Veterinary Services personnel for Service members, beneficiaries, and retirees about Animal Health, Food Safety, and One Health. One Health is the intersection and overlap between animals, humans, and the environment.

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## U.S. MILITARY

### Assistant secretary of defense for health affairs to step down

5 April - The Pentagon's top civilian health official is stepping down after more than five years on the job — an expected move as the Obama administration enters its final months. Dr. Jonathan Woodson, assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, has submitted his resignation effective May 1. He is expected to return to the private sector. ... Woodson was confirmed as assistant secretary in December 2010. Under his tenure, the military health system embarked on major reform efforts designed to contain the Defense Department's \$50 billion health budget. Those initiatives include: creating a Defense Health Agency responsible for overseeing all military medical support, training, education and administrative services within the department. [Military Times](#)

### Correlation between antimicrobial resistance in *Escherichia coli* infections in hospitalized patients and rates of inpatient prescriptions

March 2016 - ... This analysis aimed to identify inpatient *E. coli* infection trends and correlations between prescriptions and antimicrobial resistance observed among hospitalized Department of Defense beneficiaries during 2010–2014. A descending trend was observed for *E. coli* infection incidence during 2010–2013, with an upward trend noted during the last year of the study. Despite quarterly fluctuations, descending trends were noted among prescription rates and stable trends were observed for resistance rates throughout the study period. A statistically significant moderate and positive correlation ... was noted between levels of ciprofloxacin prescriptions and ciprofloxacin resistance for *E. coli* isolates. [Medical Surveillance Monthly Report](#)

### DoD releases 2014 suicide report

March 2016 - According to the DoD's 2014 Suicide Event Report, 20 active-duty members per 100,000 committed suicide in 2014, along with 22 reserve and 19 U.S. National Guard members. The suicides include 269 deaths among active-duty members, compared with 259 deaths by suicide in 2013. There were 169 deaths by suicide among the selected reserve members, compared with 220 deaths in 2013. ... The largest demographic differences between suicide and suicide attempt were in the prevalence of females (27% for suicide attempts vs 6% for suicides) and rank status (69% E1-E4 for suicide attempts vs 43% for suicides). Most often, the suicide was committed by a white man, aged < 30 years, a high school graduate, enlisted, and married. The most frequently cited psychosocial stressors were failed relationships and administrative/legal issues. [Federal Practitioner](#)

## National Public Health Week

Build a nation of safe, healthy communities

Help all young people graduate from high school

The relationship between increased economic mobility and better health

Social justice & health

Give everyone a choice of healthy food

Preparing for the health effects of climate change

Provide quality health care for everyone

Strengthen the public health infrastructure

Healthiest Nation 2030  
April 4 - 10, 2016



## Military children use website to cope with stress, connect with each other

1 April - Children deal with all types of growing pains and learning experiences that leave lasting impressions, and military children often have additional stressors. The [Military Kids Connect](#) (MKC) website and online communities, created by the Department of Defense National Center for Telehealth & Technology (T2), offer interactive resources that help combat mental health issues. The site helps military young people connect with one another, learn coping skills and share their unique experiences. [Health.mil](#)

## The military's transgender policy, stalled

6 April - Defense Secretary Ashton Carter announced last July that the Pentagon intended to allow transgender people to serve openly in the military within six months, calling the decades-long ban "outdated" and an impediment to attracting and retaining top talent. ... A task force Mr. Carter convened last year to establish an inclusive policy has drafted regulations addressing how the Defense Department should handle cases of service members who transition after joining the military. But questions remain. Some officials have recommended that transgender troops who transition soon after enlisting should be discharged, but have given no legitimate reasons for this proposal. In any case, such an approach would be discriminatory. There is also some debate over the criteria to use in evaluating whether people who are undergoing transition-related medical treatment are fit for duty. [The New York Times](#)

## VA commission divided on privatization proposal

4 April - ... Last week, seven members of the 15-person VA Commission on Care floated a 34-page preliminary "strawman document" recommending granting all VA beneficiaries immediate access to private care services while gradually closing all VA facilities, beginning with those that are obsolete or little-used, according to the *Military Times*. The department itself would eventually become a Medicare-like payer entity. Numerous veterans' groups, however, have denounced the proposal, according to the article, writing in a letter to Commission Chairwoman Nancy Schlichting that not only did the drafting process lack transparency, the proposal demonstrated an "utter lack of consideration that veterans would want to improve and expand the VA healthcare system." [FierceHealthcare](#)

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## GLOBAL

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## DEET seen as safe for pregnant women despite limited studies

4 April - ... Health officials are urging people to use insect repellents with DEET to avoid

**Updated Interim  
Zika Clinical  
Guidance for  
Reproductive Age  
Women and Men,  
Sexual Transmission  
of Zika, and the U.S.  
Zika Pregnancy  
Registry**

**Objectives**

- Describe current CDC guidance for clinicians caring for women and men of reproductive age with possible Zika exposure
- Explain the purpose and scope of the US Zika Pregnancy Registry and clinicians' role in ensuring its success
- Interpret pediatric testing guidance in newborns and infants with possible Zika virus infection

**Date:** Tuesday, April 12

**Time:** 2:00 - 3:00 pm  
(Eastern Time)

**Join by Phone:**  
888-769-8519  
(U.S. Callers)

1-517-308-9276  
(International Callers)

**Passcode:** 1002827

**Join by Webinar**



being bitten [by mosquitoes]. The mounting evidence that the [Zika] virus is strongly linked with birth defects makes this a priority for pregnant women. But is it safe to use repellents containing DEET with a baby on the way? Although the scientific evidence is a bit thinner than some experts would like, most say the answer is yes, as long as you do not overapply. Few published studies address the effects of DEET, short for N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide, in mothers-to-be and their offspring. None involved pregnant women in the first trimester, the period when most birth defects occur. ... DEET can cross the placenta and reach the fetus, the researchers found. But DEET was detected in the blood of the umbilical cord in just four of 50 users. Importantly, "the newborns weren't affected in terms of growth or development from DEET exposure," said Dr. Rose McGready. [The New York Times](#)

## Diabetes cases reach 422 million as poorer countries see steep rises

6 April - The number of adults with diabetes has quadrupled worldwide in under four decades to 422 million, and the condition is fast becoming a major problem in poorer countries, a World Health Organization study showed on Wednesday. ... It found that between 1980 and 2014, diabetes has become more common among men than women, and rates of diabetes rose significantly in many low and middle income countries, including China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Egypt and Mexico. ... The study found that northwestern Europe has the lowest rates of diabetes among women and men, with age-adjusted prevalence lower than 4 percent among women and at around 5 to 6 percent among men in Switzerland, Austria, Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands. [Reuters](#)

## Global study lays groundwork for daily statin usage to prevent heart disease

3 April - In an effort to reduce cardiovascular disease, which causes 18 million deaths globally per year and affects more than 1 billion adults worldwide, researchers are suggesting the daily usage of cholesterol lowering drugs, called statins, according to a study released in the New England Journal of Medicine. In a trial spanning six continents, 21 countries and 12,705 ethnically diverse participants. ... Over 5.6 years, 3.7% of those who got 10 milligrams of the statin had heart attacks, strokes or heart-related deaths compared with 4.8% of those taking a placebo, or dummy pill. That was a 24% reduction in risk. [CNN](#)

## Global warming linked to public health risks, white house says

4 April - Global warming could lead to an increase in allergies and asthma, deaths by extreme heat and the proliferation of insect-borne diseases such as the West Nile virus, according to a scientific report released Monday by the White House. The conclusions of the report on the health effects of climate change in the United States are not new. But Obama administration health officials, including Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, the surgeon general, said the study, which was reviewed by the National Academies of Science, offered the

## Webinar - Navy Preventive Medicine and the Management of the STI Patient

### Outline:

STI Case Standards of Care

Idealized STI Patient Flow / Tasks

Preventive Medicine Department Challenges

STI Case and Risk Behavior Reporting via DRSi

Collaboration with Your Local Public Health Department

STI Patient Management Resources

**Date:** Wednesday, 27 April

**Time:** 1200 EDT

No registration needed.

**Log-in** at show time (CAC required)

**Audio:** 877-885-1087

**Passcode:** 1357291372



strongest evidence to date that links climate change to health risks. A number of scientific reports have suggested that a warming planet may exacerbate certain health problems. Even so, scientists have cautioned that no connections had been proved, given the multitude of variables that influence health. "The scientific information in this report adds considerably to what was known before," said John P. Holdren, President Obama's top scientific adviser, in a briefing Monday morning. [The New York Times](#)

## MCR-1 gene detected in Spanish hospital patients

In one of the few reports of the MCR-1 antibiotic resistance gene detection in humans, Spanish researchers yesterday reported on findings from a collection of Escherichia coli isolates collected between 2012 and 2015 from a single hospital in Barcelona. ... The MCR-1 gene disables the antibiotic colistin, an older drug that is often used in raising food animals. However, the drug is considered a last-line treatment in the battle against multidrug-resistant infections. ... [Researchers] looked at 10,011 E coli clinical specimens collected from a teaching hospital. Colistin resistance was found in 53 (0.5%), with the MCR-1 found in 15 samples. ... The researchers emphasized that urgent global actions are needed to curb veterinary use of the drug to guard its usefulness for treating MDR gram-negative bacteria. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (fourth item)

## Promising lab-grown skin sprouts hair and grows glands



1 April - Scientists in Japan have successfully transplanted mice with lab-grown skin that has more of the organ's working parts in place than ever before. Starting with stem cells made from a mouse's gums, they managed to craft skin with multiple layers - as well as hair follicles and sweat glands. When implanted into

a "nude mouse" with a suppressed immune system, it integrated well and sprouted hairs. Researchers say this success will take 5-10 years to translate into humans. But eventually, the team hopes their system will lead to perfectly functioning skin that can be grown from the cells of burns victims and transplanted back on to them. [BBC News](#)

## Scientists say it's time to end 'parachute research'

2 April - Critics call them "parachute researchers": Scientists from wealthy nations who swoop in when a puzzling disease breaks out in a developing country. They collect specimens, then head straight back home to analyze them. They don't coordinate with people fighting the epidemic on the ground — don't even share their discoveries for months, if ever. Sometimes it's because they want to publish their results — and medical journals prefer exclusives. And sometimes it's because they can make a lot of money by coming up with copyrighted treatments for the disease. Now there's concern that parachute research could make it harder to stop the Zika outbreak. In response scientists and global health officials have launched an unprecedented worldwide effort to curb the practice. [NPR](#)

### **Classified Version of the Weekly Update**

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

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

Look under Hot Topics & Current Issues.

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

## **Study: Women more likely than men to receive antibiotic prescriptions**

4 April - Women are 27% more likely to be prescribed antibiotics in their lifetime when compared to men. ... A team of researchers from German and Swedish institutions reviewed 11 studies of antibiotic prescription practices in primary care practices. Studies were published between 1976 and 2013; obtained surveillance data from pharmacy, insurance, or national healthcare systems; and represented 44,333,839 people. The number of antibiotics prescribed to women ages 35 to 54 was 40% higher than men in the same age group, and women ages 16-34 had a 36% higher rate of antibiotic prescriptions compared to their male peers, the authors said. Researchers observed especially high gender differences in the cephalosporin and macrolide antibiotic classes. ... The authors said that more research is needed into the reasons behind gender differences in antibiotic prescription practices, as well as into any potential gender inequality in antibiotic resistance rates. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (second item)

## **The forgotten health crisis**

4 April - Sexual and reproductive health problems remain the leading cause of death and disability among women, worldwide. In times of crisis, assault, violence and ill-health increase, yet all-too-often these issues are ignored. New research by PhD candidate Kristen Beek is set to improve how aid workers in crisis zones prevent sexual and gender-based violence and promote better maternal and newborn health. ... "When there is a breakdown in services and social structures caused by a humanitarian emergency, women and girls are especially vulnerable. Increases in maternal and newborn deaths and ill-health; sexual violence; sexually transmitted infections; unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions; and the spread of HIV are all possible. ... [The] the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) ... includes five objectives – identifying a coordinator or a coordinating body, preventing sexual and gender-based violence in emergencies and providing assistance for survivors, reducing the transmission of HIV and other STIs, preventing maternal and newborn death and disability, and integrating SRH services into primary health care. [Medical Xpress](#)

## **U.N. rethinks global sleep standards for helicopter pilots**

6 April - A U.N. aviation task force is updating global standards to ensure commercial helicopter pilots get enough sleep, at a time of broader industry efforts to manage crew fatigue, a technical specialist for the group said Wednesday. The Montreal-based International Civil Aviation Organization is working to bring sleep standards for helicopter pilots in line with existing recommended practices for commercial airline crew, said Michelle Millar, ICAO's technical specialist, human performance. [Reuters](#)

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## ZIKA VIRUS

### Brain scans of microcephalic babies suggest Zika disrupts development

6 April - Brain scans of 23 Brazilian infants with the birth defect microcephaly showed widespread and severe abnormalities suggesting that Zika may invade fetal nerve cells and disrupt brain development. The findings ... are based on a large trove of computed tomography, or CT images, done in infants whose mothers are believed to have had Zika infections during pregnancy. ... Scientists in the study ran several tests on the mothers to try to rule out other possible causes of microcephaly, including toxoplasmosis, cytomegalovirus, parovirus, HIV and rubella. All were all negative. All of the mothers had symptoms during their pregnancies - such as fever and rash - that were consistent with Zika infections. Testing on spinal fluid from seven of the infants was positive for Zika antibodies.

[Reuters](#)

### CDC Zika summit draws attention to preparedness, need for emergency funds

1 April - A 1-day summit to help state and local health officials fine-tune their Zika response plans drew more than 300 people to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) headquarters in Atlanta and came with strong pleas for Congress to approve emergency funding to support the efforts. ... President Obama's February 8 emergency funding request of \$1.9 billion support the domestic and international response is stalled in Congress, with some Republican members demanding that funds be shifted from already approved Ebola money. Federal health officials for months now have warned that they expect limited illness clusters in some parts of the country. The CDC said the goal of the Zika Action Plan (ZAP) summit is to arm public health officials with the latest information and help them identify any preparedness gaps. It also released several tools for health departments, including Zika preparedness and response guidance and action plan template forms, which are available on the summit Web site. [CIDRAP](#)

### Obama administration to transfer Ebola funds to Zika fight

6 April - In an effort to break the two-month deadlock over funding to fight the encroaching Zika virus, Obama administration officials announced on Wednesday that, as congressional Republicans had demanded, they would transfer \$510 million originally intended to protect against Ebola to the Zika battle. Officials from the Office of Management and Budget, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the State Department said they would move a total of \$589 million to efforts to contain Zika. In addition to funds moved from the Ebola budget, an additional \$79 million would come from several other accounts, including money previously allotted to the national strategic stockpile of vaccines and other emergency supplies for epidemics, said Sylvia Mathews

Burwell, the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. Despite the transfers, "these repurposed funds are not enough to support a comprehensive Zika response and can only temporarily address what is needed," said Shaun Donovan, director of the Office of Management and Budget. [The New York Times](#)

## WHO details maternal-fetal Zika findings in Martinique microcephaly case

4 April - The World Health Organization (WHO) on Apr 1 shared more information about **Martinique's** first probable Zika-related microcephaly case. ... A series of serology tests in December, January, and February confirmed flavivirus and other infections in the Martinique mother. In the second test in January she was positive for immunoglobulin G (IgG) against flavivirus and chikungunya and for IgM antibodies against Zika virus. The microcephaly diagnosis was made at just over 22 weeks gestation on Mar 10. A week later, amniotic fluid and fetal blood samples were positive for Zika virus. ... Details of the case help shed light on maternal and fetal Zika virus infection, suggesting that the risk is high during early pregnancy.

Rash was the most common Zika symptoms that sent patients to doctor's offices, according to a retrospective case series of 57 **Brazilian** patients. ... Rash was reported by 98% of patients. Other common symptoms included headache (67%), low-grade fever (67%), joint pain (58%), and muscle pain (49%). Conjunctivitis and retro-orbital eye pain were also seen in more than a third of the cases.

Finally, the CDC today posted a "level 2" Zika virus travel notice for **Fiji**, which means travelers should practice enhanced precautions such as avoid mosquito bites.

[CIDRAP News Scan](#) (first item)

## Zika mosquito's habits force new strategy by U.S. cities, states



1 April - U.S. states and cities need to adopt a different mosquito-fighting strategy to battle the species carrying the Zika virus as an outbreak that started in Brazil heads north with warmer weather in the coming weeks, health officials said on Friday. ... The mosquito species responsible for spreading the virus by biting people lives in and around

homes, making traditional evening insecticide fogging campaigns from sprayers mounted on trucks an ineffective option, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention officials said. CDC Director Dr. Thomas Frieden said health departments need to take a "four corners approach," targeting the *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes indoors and outdoors as well as focusing on killing both larvae and adult insects. ... Most mosquito abatement efforts in U.S. states target nuisance mosquitoes, those that bite at dusk and ruin picnics and barbecues but pose little public health threat. But *Aedes aegypti* is a daytime biter that dines exclusively on humans, biting several people in a single blood meal. [Reuters](#)

## Zika mystery deepens with evidence of nerve cell infections

6 April - Top Zika investigators now believe that the birth defect microcephaly and the paralyzing Guillain-Barre syndrome may be just the most obvious maladies caused by the mosquito-borne virus. Fueling that suspicion are recent discoveries of serious brain and spinal cord infections - including encephalitis, meningitis and myelitis - in people exposed to Zika. ... The newly suspected disorders can cause paralysis and permanent disability - a clinical outlook that adds urgency to vaccine development efforts. Scientists are of two minds about why these new maladies have come into view. The first is that, as the virus is spreading through such large populations, it is revealing aspects of Zika that went unnoticed in earlier outbreaks in remote and sparsely populated areas. The second is that the newly detected disorders are more evidence that the virus has evolved. [Reuters](#)

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### **INFLUENZA**

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## **AFHSB: DoD Seasonal Influenza Surveillance Summary**

For Week 12:

NORTHCOM: Influenza activity increased in some states for week 12 and ranged from low to moderate in most states.

EUCOM: EUCOM influenza activity was minimal with the exception of Germany (low activity) and Greece (moderate activity).

PACOM: Influenza activity remained low in Japan and Hawaii and minimal in Guam and the Republic of Korea.

CENTCOM and AFRICOM: Influenza activity remained minimal across CENTCOM and AFRICOM.

SOUTHCOM: Influenza activity in Honduras was minimal based on DMSS data.

[DHA -Armed Forces Health Surveillance Branch](#)

## **APHC: U.S. Army Influenza Activity Report**

For the week ending 26 March 2016 (Week 12)

Following a trend seen in the civilian population, influenza-like activity continues to decrease among military populations.

- ILI Activity: Army incident ILI outpatient visits in week 12 decreased from week 11. ILI visits were 3% lower than the same week last year.

- Influenza cases: Five hospitalized influenza cases were reported to APHC (Prov) through DRSi in week 12; all non-AD beneficiaries. None of the cases were vaccinated and three had underlying conditions.
- Viral specimens: During week 12, 444 of 1536 (29%) laboratory specimens tested positive for respiratory pathogens. RHC-A reported 134 influenza A-positive specimens, RHC-C reported 72, RHC-P reported 49, and RHC-E reported 28. CENTCOM did not report any influenza A-positive specimens. [APHC](#)

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

During week 12 (March 20-26, 2016), influenza activity decreased slightly, but remained elevated in the United States.

- Viral Surveillance: The most frequently identified influenza virus type reported by public health laboratories during week 12 was influenza A, with influenza A (H1N1)pdm09 viruses predominating. 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 NCHS Mortality Surveillance System and above the system-specific epidemic threshold in the 122 Cities Mortality Reporting System. [CDC](#)

## ECDC: Flu News Europe

Week 12/2016 (21 – 27 March 2016)

- Although 27 countries reported decreasing trends, influenza was still reported as widespread, largely in the southern and western part of the WHO European Region.
- The proportion of sentinel specimens testing positive for influenza virus remained high (46%), and 21 countries still reported positivity rates over 30%.
- Two thirds of detections in primary care were influenza virus type B.
- The proportions of type A viruses detected in hospitalized patients were 70% in intensive care units (ICUs) and 61% in regular wards.
- The number of cases of severe disease was lower than in previous weeks but varied between countries. Most severe cases were associated with A(H1N1)pdm09 infection and were in people aged 15–64 years.

[European Center for Disease Prevention and Control/WHO](#)

## Flu shot during pregnancy may cut stillbirth risk by half

1 April - Getting a flu shot during pregnancy may do more than protect against the flu, researchers reported. In a retrospective cohort analysis covering some 60,000 births, influenza immunization was associated with a more than 50% reduction in stillbirths. The

study findings support the safety of seasonal influenza immunization during pregnancy, and suggest a protective benefit. [MedPage Today](#)

## NHRC: Febrile Respiratory Illness Surveillance Update

For 2016 Week 13 (through 2 April 2016)

- Influenza: Four cases of NHRC laboratory-confirmed influenza (A/H3) among US military basic trainees at MRCD San Diego.
- FRI surveillance at all eight U.S. military basic training centers indicated FRI rates were elevated at Fort Leonard Wood. [Naval Health Research Center](#)

## WHO: Influenza Update

4 April - Globally, elevated levels of influenza activity continued to be reported in North America, in parts of Europe and in Northern Temperate Asia. An increase in influenza B virus activity has been reported in Northern Temperate Asia, South East Asia and Europe. [WHO](#)

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### **VETERINARY/FOOD SAFETY**

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## F.D.A. Proposes a limit on arsenic in rice cereal for babies

1 April - The Food and Drug Administration proposed on Friday a limit for inorganic arsenic in infant rice cereal, saying that this common starter food is a leading source of exposure to the toxin. Infants are particularly vulnerable to arsenic in rice because, relative to body weight, they eat about three times more rice than adults. A growing body of research suggests that arsenic exposure is related not only to diminished intellectual function early in life, but also to adverse pregnancy outcomes, such as stillbirth. The suggested limit is 100 parts per billion. "Data are still emerging on whether this level is sufficient, but it's certainly a step in the right direction," said Margaret R. Karagas, chairwoman of the epidemiology department at Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth. In its risk assessment, the agency tested 76 rice cereals for infants and found that about half had more inorganic arsenic than the proposed limit. [The New York Times](#)

## Mercury travels from water to land when spiders eat bugs

1 April - Call it something like fruit of a poisonous tree. Bugs live around water polluted with mercury; spiders dine on these insects, and then get eaten by birds and animals on land. ... While fish from contaminated waters remain the primary source of mercury in the human diet, a new U.S. study suggests that scientists need to pay closer attention to how much spiders transfer this toxin to foods people can get from the land. "The transfer of mercury

through food webs could eventually come back to affect humans, one way or another," said study authors Ramsa Chaves-Ulloa and Celia Chen, who completed the research at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire. [Reuters](#)

## President's advisory council publishes draft antibiotic resistance report

1 April - Yesterday the US Presidential Advisory Council on Combating Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria (PACCARB) released a draft report recommending steps to advance the goals of the National Action Plan on Combating Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria (CARB), such as focusing on "one health" surveillance and bolstering antibiotic research and development (R&D). The move was met with approval from leading infectious disease groups. In addition to its one-health approach—which means cross-discipline collaborations surrounding human, animal, and environment health—and drug R&D, the PACCARB report calls for a federal champion of the CARB initiative, coordination of the federal response to the problem, adequate funding, development of critical partnerships, and employing economic incentives for scientific advances. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (third item)

## Study: Raw milk can harbor *Campylobacter* even after negative tests

1 April - Raw milk can harbor dangerous bacteria, even when routine testing results show it to be uncontaminated, says a report from Utah on a 2014 outbreak of confirmed or suspected campylobacteriosis in 99 individuals. ... The outbreak began in May 2014 with three patients who tested positive on pulsed field gel electrophoresis for *Campylobacter jejuni*. They had all consumed raw milk from an unnamed dairy in Weber County in northern Utah. The dairy's routine testing ... had yielded results within acceptable levels (<400,000 somatic cells/mL and <10 coliform colony forming units/mL). Enhanced testing after the illnesses were identified showed *C jejuni* in the dairy's milk. Officials suspended the dairy's permit in August and then reinstated it Oct 1 after follow-up cultures were negative. However, seven more *C jejuni* cases occurred by Nov 4, and the permit was permanently revoked Dec 1. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (second item)

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### WELLNESS

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## A new health perk for coffee drinkers?

1 April - Drinking coffee may cut your risk of colon cancer by as much as 50 percent, a new study suggests. The more you drink, the more you may reduce your risk -- and it makes no difference whether the coffee is regular or decaf, researchers said. "The protective effect is

not caffeine, per se, but probably a lot of other antioxidant ingredients in the coffee that are released in the roasting process," said senior researcher Dr. Gad Rennert. He is director of the Clalit National Israeli Cancer Control Center in Haifa, Israel. These findings can't prove that coffee reduces the risk of colon cancer, only that coffee is associated with a reduced risk, Rennert said. However, the association appears strong, he added. [Medline Plus](#)

## Does exercise during pregnancy lead to exercise-loving offspring?

6 April - Mice born to mothers that run during their pregnancies grow up to be rodents that love to run as adults, according to a thought-provoking new animal experiment, while pups with sedentary moms had a less-enthusiastic attitude toward exercise. ... A number of studies have identified various snippets of DNA that, if someone carries them, predispose that person to be quite active, while other gene variations may nudge someone toward being a couch potato. But scientists also have begun to wonder about the role of a process known as developmental programming. According to this theory, a growing baby's body and its very DNA can be changed by the environment it experiences in the womb and immediately after birth. These changes may, in turn, affect lifelong health and disease risk. [The New York Times](#)

## Fashionable prostheses trade realistic color for personal pizzazz



2 April - Prosthetic limbs for people who have lost an arm or a leg have come a long way in the past decade. They are now lighter and more comfortable and flexible. You can change out a prosthetic foot for a ski, an ice skate, or a "cheetah foot" for high-performance running. Athletes and a new generation of wounded warriors from Iraq and Afghanistan are also changing the way wearers feel about the prosthesis — pride is replacing stigma. Skin tone is out; custom designs are in, like tattoos for an artificial limb. A new business in New York's Adirondack Mountains is taking the trend a step further — using 3-D printers to help people anywhere in the world design colorful, custom-made covers for their prosthetic legs that reflect their personalities. [NPR](#)

## For new parents, dad may be the one missing the most sleep

5 April - ... [No] simple description will capture the feeling of deep, dizzying fatigue that can accompany the first few weeks with a newborn. ... You might think that mothers, being the ones with the breast milk, have it the worst. But science seems to indicate otherwise. For example, one 2013 study of 21 mother-father pairs enjoying their first infant experience found that fathers actually got less sleep than the mothers and experienced more confirmed sleepiness, as measured using wrist trackers. The study authors also found that even though

the mothers got more sleep, their sleep was disturbed more often, which makes sense given their role in feeding. Both parents reported feeling about the same level of tiredness, but mothers scored worse on neurobehavioral testing (all those awakenings). [NPR](#)

## Right neighborhood may mean 90 extra minutes of exercise a week

1 April - People who live in bustling neighborhoods get at least 90 more minutes of exercise a week than other city dwellers, a new global study finds. The study included more than 6,800 adults, aged 18 to 66, in 14 cities in 10 countries. On average, study participants did 37 minutes a day of moderate to vigorous physical activity, such as brisk walking or more intense exercise. Among the cities in the study, Baltimore had the lowest average rate of activity (about 29 minutes a day) and Wellington, New Zealand, had the highest (just over 50 minutes a day). But those in activity-friendly neighborhoods did up to an hour and a half more exercise per week. ... These neighborhoods had high residential density, a large number of intersections and public transit stops, and parks within walking distance.

[Medline Plus](#)

## Sleepless nights linked to brain changes in study

5 April - Insomnia is linked with abnormalities in the brain's white matter -- the tissues that form connections and carry information between different parts of the brain, a small Chinese study suggests. The researchers said these disruptions occur in areas of the brain involved in the regulation of sleep and wakefulness as well as cognitive function. The researchers explained that white matter tracts are bundles made up of long fibers of nerve cells that connect one part of the brain to another. "If white matter tracts are impaired, communication between brain regions is disrupted," said researcher Shumei Li. ... They found that participants with insomnia had significantly reduced white matter "integrity" in several regions of the brain. One area was the thalamus, which regulates consciousness, sleep and alertness. Another was the corpus callosum, the area that bridges the two halves of the brain, the study authors said. [Medline Plus](#)

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### **USAFRICOM**

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## Angola: WHO's Chan assesses yellow fever outbreak; vaccine stockpile depleted

5 April - Angola's yellow fever outbreak has affected 490 people and killed 198 since its beginning in Dec. 2015, with 1,000 more suspected cases being reported. The Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr Margaret Chan, arrived in Angola's

capital Luanda for a two-day visit to assess the situation of the current outbreak of yellow fever virus. "This is the most serious outbreak of yellow fever that Angola has faced in 30 years," says Dr Chan, who visited a vaccination point in Luanda. "WHO is taking urgent action to support the Government to control this outbreak with a widespread vaccination campaign." "The vaccination campaign has so far been effective. We are seeing case numbers dropping considerably, especially in Luanda," explains Dr Sergio Yactayo, expert on epidemic diseases at WHO, following his mission to Angola. ... Despite the effects of the vaccination campaigns in Angola, a problem is lurking—a yellow fever vaccine shortage—the emergency stockpile has been completely depleted. UN officials say an additional 1.5 million doses are needed to vaccinate the population at risk in Luanda province alone.

[Outbreak News Today](#)

## Democratic Republic of the Congo: Hunger replaces war in Congo's Katanga

1 April - ... This season it poured – sometimes three times a day. The seeds diligently planted rotted underground. As a result up to 40,000 people are at risk of going hungry just in this small area of Katanga Province, according to Marrios Bwana Ngoshi Ilunga, of the NGO Solidarités International. Across the DRC as a whole, 550,000 people have been affected by rains and flooding between October and March as a result of an El Niño year. ... In Kilangwa village, south of Kanyoka, there is already kwashiorkor – a severe form of protein-energy deficiency – among the children as a result of the failure of the bean and maize harvest, according to village chief Jérôme Kyungu Kamana. [IRIN](#)

## New Ebola case confirmed in Liberia; Guinea tries a vaccine

1 April - A new case of Ebola was confirmed Friday in **Liberia**, less than three months after that country was declared free of the deadly virus and only three days after the World Health Organization announced the end of an international emergency to contain and eliminate it. The W.H.O. said in a statement that the Liberian health authorities had convened an emergency meeting to coordinate a rapid response after the confirmation of the new case, a 30-year-old woman who died on Thursday outside Monrovia, the capital. Health officials immediately began to identify people who may have come into contact with her.

Liberia's neighbor **Guinea**, which had been declared free of Ebola in December, also has been confronting a new cluster of cases that first emerged in February. The W.H.O. said in a separate statement on Friday that the Guinean health authorities had been using an experimental vaccine in an effort to contain that flare-up, injecting nearly 800 people who have come into contact with the eight known patients, all in two southern prefectures.

[The New York Times](#)

## South Sudan: Lives at risk due to massive drug shortages in South Sudan

7 April - Thousands of lives are at risk across South Sudan as massive drug shortages have forced many medical centers to close, a charity said, calling on donors to restore supplies before the deadly malaria season resumes. A quarter of 42 clinics visited by teams from Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) in Aweil, in Northern Bahr el Ghazal, had closed because they did not have essential medicines. A further half were sending patients to buy their own drugs. "(A) preventable medical emergency is unfolding," MSF's international president Joanne Liu said in an open letter on Thursday. "Drug outages are now a reality around the country." [Reuters](#)

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### USCENTCOM

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## Egypt: Partial building collapse another blow for Cairo gallery closed after raid

7 April - The main building of one of Egypt's most respected art galleries has partially collapsed, adding to its struggles to reopen to the public after being shut down by the authorities in December. Townhouse gallery in central Cairo has been shut to staff after a section of the recently renovated five-story building collapsed on Wednesday. The neighbouring Cairo Hackerspace, a community workspace for engineers, designers and artists, was completely destroyed. [The Guardian](#)

## Saudi Arabia: New MERS case in Buraydah

1 April - Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Health (MOH) today reported a new, fatal MERS-CoV (Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus) case in Buraydah, the first there this month after the city reported 34 MERS cases in March. Today's MERS-CoV case involves a 75-year-old Saudi woman whose infection was contracted in a healthcare setting, as have most of the cases in the Buraydah cluster, which was first noted on Mar 3. The woman died from her infection. She had preexisting disease and was not a healthcare worker, the MOH said. Her case brings the MERS-CoV total in Saudi Arabia since the outbreak began in 2012 to 1,363 infections, including 583 deaths. Thirteen patients are still undergoing treatment, the MOH said. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (first item)

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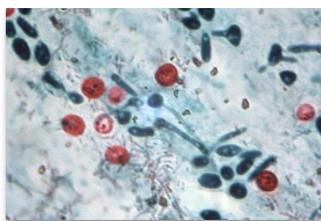
## USEUCOM

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### United Kingdom: Teeth whitening - call for action on 'rogue' beauticians

2 April - "Rogue" beauticians who offer teeth whitening and people who sell illegal kits should face tougher penalties, councils in England and Wales say. Some kits contain 300 times the legal limit of hydrogen peroxide, the Local Government Association said. This would be like "brushing with bleach" and could cause blistering, burns and other damage, the LGA added. ... Only dental professionals can legally perform teeth whitening at business premises, but the LGA said a "worrying number" of unqualified staff were offering the treatment. [BBC News](#)

### United Kingdom: Wales 'crypto' outbreak update - case count rises



6 April - In a follow-up to a report on a cryptosporidium outbreak on a farm in Monmouthshire, Wales, Public Health Wales now reports seven people have now tested positive for the parasite, *cryptosporidium* and 16 others are under investigation after regular attendance at Coleg Gwent's farm in Usk or contact with those who have. Heather Lewis,

Consultant in Health Protection for Public Health Wales, said: "We are continuing to work with Coleg Gwent, who has written to all students who may have been on the farm in March. "As a precaution, Coleg Gwent has also cancelled a series of open days which were due to take place with invited primary schools between April 12-15 and have put in place a number of recommended control measures which include limiting college students' access to animals when they return next week." [Outbreak News Today](#)

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## USNORTHCOM

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### U.S.: Health scare at Malibu school sets off media war

4 April - ... [Parents] have been yanking their children out of Malibu High School, concerned about PCBs, the highly toxic chemical compounds that have been found in caulking of the school's windows. A battle over how to handle the PCBs, which were first discovered three years ago, is now convulsing this famously wealthy beach community, with parents, television stars and a supermodel pitted against one of the most elite public school districts in the country. The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District insists that its classrooms

are safe; the Environmental Protection Agency agrees. But not all parents and teachers are convinced: They blame PCBs for an array of maladies, including migraines, thyroid cancer and common colds, and they have sued to compel the district to remove all contaminated caulking. A judge ruled last week that the lawsuit could move forward. [The New York Times](#)

## **U.S.: Medical students - false beliefs about blacks' biology common**

4 April - Half of white medical students held at least one false belief about biological differences between black and white patients, a trend that affected both their perception of the patient's pain and the accuracy of their treatment recommendations. ... The more false beliefs the students held, the more likely they were to rate a black patient as experiencing less pain than a white patient in the same scenario, and the less likely they were to make an appropriate medical recommendation. "The present work ... demonstrates that beliefs about biological differences between blacks and whites — beliefs dating back to slavery — are associated with the perception that black people feel less pain than do white people and with inadequate treatment recommendations for black patients' pain." [Medscape](#)

## **U.S.: Popular quartz countertops pose a risk to workers**

1 April - As sleek "engineered stone" countertops grow in popularity, safety experts are warning that workers who handle them are at particularly high risk from an old workplace hazard — silica, the mineral tied to silicosis, a debilitating and potentially deadly lung disease. The countertops are made from processed quartz, a material containing silica levels as high as 90 percent, or twice the amount found in marble. When slabs of engineered stone are cut and finished to fit a kitchen or bathroom, large quantities of silica particles are released. If workers inhale them, it can start a process leading to silicosis as well as to lung cancer and kidney disease. The risks posed by the countertops are receiving new scrutiny after the Occupational Safety and Health Administration last week announced long-delayed rules to sharply reduce exposure to silica among workers. When announcing the changes, federal officials and safety experts also reiterated warnings about the silica-related risks posed by the new countertops. [The New York Times](#)

## **U.S.: Utah Health Dept. - 11 new patients test positive for Hep. C during investigation**

4 April - The Utah Department of Health released the results of the investigation after a health care worker was accused of spreading Hepatitis C. According to health officials, 11 new patients tested positive for the same type of Hepatitis C the health care worker had, during the investigation. However, the health department would not confirm the worker is the one who infected the patients. Officials said about 7,200 patients were at risk and only 52 percent of those patients got tested. [Fox13](#)

## U.S.: Who decides if you're too young to marry?

5 April - More than 700 million women worldwide today were married as children, and most of them are in developing countries. But there is a growing recognition that many young teens are marrying in the United States as well — and several states are now taking action to stop it. - Advocates say the young marriages run the gamut: They include teens of every ethnicity and religion, teens who are American-born and teens who are not being forced into arranged marriages. ... Advocates say child marriage endangers girls' health, undermines their education and economic opportunities, and puts them at higher risk for domestic violence as well as divorce. ... Like most states, Maryland sets the minimum marriage age at 18, but teens can easily get around that with a note from their parents or a doctor's note saying they're pregnant. [Maryland Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary] is pushing a bill to tighten those loopholes. Even stricter measures are pending in New Jersey and in New York, where Assemblywoman Amy Paulin wants to ban all marriages under 18. [NPR](#)

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### USPACOM

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## Bangladesh: Arsenic-laced water affects millions

6 April - Nearly 20 million people in Bangladesh are still drinking water contaminated with arsenic, even though the toxin was discovered in it nearly two decades ago, according to a report. The Human Rights Watch (HRW) launched a report on Wednesday which revealed that the government failed to take the basic steps needed to tackle the problem which kills an estimated 43,000 Bangladeshis every year. "Bangladesh isn't taking basic and obvious steps to get arsenic out of the drinking water of millions of its rural poor," HRW researcher Richard Pearshouse told the AFP news agency. ... Chronic exposure to arsenic is linked to cancers of the liver, kidney, bladder, and skin as well as miscarriages, low-birth weights and poor cognitive development in children. [Al Jazeera](#)

## India: Traditional cigarette makers halt production over health warnings

7 April - India's traditional cigarette industry, which makes hand-rolled smokes and employs more than 8 million people, shut down production on Thursday, saying it could not meet new government rules requiring them to print bigger health warnings on tobacco packets. New rules mandate that from April 1 all manufacturers must cover 85 percent of the surface of a packet of cigarettes with health warnings, up from 20 percent now. Traditional cigarettes, called beedis, are made by wrapping raw tobacco in leaves that are then packed manually in conical paper packets that have curved surfaces. The shape means small-scale manufacturers in rural areas cannot print warnings on the packs, an industry body said. ...

"All the workers, mainly women in rural areas, engaged by the industry have been rendered jobless overnight." [Reuters](#)

## Indonesia launches fresh crackdown on child exploitation



7 April - Authorities in the sprawling Indonesian capital are cracking down on the exploitation of children after a raft of cases, from child labor to violence and sexual assault was uncovered in recent weeks. Tens of thousands of children are trafficked annually in Indonesia, with the majority forced into prostitution and manual labor, the United Nations' child welfare

agency UNICEF says. ... Authorities have begun designating safe houses for vulnerable children in the city, besides tightening patrols in neighborhoods where there are many children, he added. [Reuters](#)

## Philippines begins world's first dengue immunization program

4 April - The Philippines began the world's first public immunization program for dengue fever this Monday, according to an Associated Press (AP) story. The government subsidized the \$76 million cost for the three-dose vaccine Dengvaxia, and children under the public health system and public school system have already begun to receive their free vaccinations. Although the WHO has not finished its assessment of vaccine effectiveness in the Philippines, Dengvaxia has already been approved by the country's food and drug administration, according to CNN Philippines. ... Dengvaxia was developed by the French pharmaceutical company Sanofi Pasteur and is the first licensed vaccine to treat dengue, according to the AP report. The vaccine has been shown to be effective for all four strains of dengue. [CIDRAP News Scan](#) (third item)

## Vietnam: Rabies - Thái Nguyên Province reports 3 human deaths

5 April - The risk of rabies in the northern Vietnam Thái Nguyên Province is ever present as dog bites are fairly common. Since the beginning of the year, provincial health authorities have reported some 2,500 bitten by suspected rabid dogs, according to local media. This unfortunately has resulted in three human rabies deaths in individuals age range 8 to 63 years. They were from Đồng Hỷ and Võ Nhai districts and in Sông Công City. None of them sought medical attention and post exposure prophylaxis (PEP). Six people died from rabies in the province in 2015. Only about half the dogs in the province have been vaccinated against rabies. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), rabies is endemic in Vietnam and has been a reportable disease for more than a decade. The main vector for rabies in Vietnam is the domestic dog. According to the OIE World Animal Health

Information System in 2013 Vietnam reported 102 cases of rabies in humans. [Outbreak News Today](#)

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**USSOUTHCOM**

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## Argentina: Scientists try to stop another deadly virus

4 April - An experimental drug could offer a new weapon against the virus that causes Argentine hemorrhagic fever -- a potentially fatal infection that is considered a "bioterror" threat. The findings are based on lab studies of guinea pigs. And researchers said it's not clear when the treatment might advance to human trials. But they said there's a vital need for new ways to battle Argentine hemorrhagic fever, which is caused by a virus called Junin. There is no drug against it, and the only treatment is a plasma transfusion from someone who has survived the disease -- and, therefore, has built up antibodies against the virus. ... Junin virus occurs in rural parts of Argentina and, for now, remains confined to that country. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the virus is carried by certain rodents, and humans can become sick if they come in contact with contaminated droppings, urine or saliva. Person-to-person transmission is rare, but possible, says the Public Health Agency of Canada. [Medline Plus](#)

## Venezuela: Economic crisis hits young mothers

5 April - Venezuela's economy, already struggling with runaway inflation resulting from fiscal policies implemented by its socialist government, went into a tailspin last year when oil prices crashed. The government relies on oil exports for 95 percent of its revenue, including funding for state hospitals. A lack of resources is now crippling the public healthcare system, leaving pregnant women and young children especially vulnerable. At Concepción Palacios, the largest state maternity hospital in the country, doctors face shortages of antibiotics, surgical equipment, chemicals to process blood tests, latex gloves, and even running water and cleaning supplies to sanitise operating rooms. Last year, 748 infants (nearly eight percent of all babies born at the hospital) contracted infections caused by poor hospital hygiene. And, in the first three months of 2016, dozens of women developed infections after having caesarean operations at the hospital. Infections are so prevalent that "doctors are afraid to operate," said Gladys Zambrano, an epidemiologist in charge of tracking the infections. At the national level, infant mortality rates rose to two percent last year, from 0.05 percent in 2014, according to the Health Ministry's annual report. [IRIN](#)

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