

Daily Update on the Coronavirus Outbreak

August 19th, 2020

INFORMS Members in the News

- None Today

U.S. Federal Policy Update

- The Office of Science and Technology Policy published an [update](#) on their efforts in enhancing telehealth services in the U.S. – stating that as “the onset of COVID-19 has challenged [the U.S.] and the world to rethink the future of healthcare delivery,” the “Trump administration is advancing healthcare through a shared public and private sector commitment to emerging technologies that make high quality healthcare more accessible for all Americans.”
- The White House released a [readout](#) from Vice President Mike Pence’s COVID-19 briefing with governors from all 50 states.
- Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Tina Smith (D-MN), and Chris Murphy (D-CT) sent a [letter](#) to HHS Secretary Alex Azar and CDC Director Robert Redfield, asking that they provide information on their COVID-19 data collection and reporting. They cautioned that the “lack of guidance is likely to create a patchwork of inconsistent information across states, localities, and the nation, undermining transparency and efforts to address the pandemic.”
- National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony Fauci stated that he doesn’t think the United States will pursue a coronavirus vaccine mandate, “especially for the general public.”
- The Department of Defense published an [Installation Status Update](#) regarding COVID-19 travel restrictions.
- Assistant Health & Human Services Secretary Brett Giroir encouraged that “trends are going in the right direction” and “the plans that are being implemented are working and will continue to work” in bringing down coronavirus cases. However, he cautioned that “this could turn around very quickly if [the U.S.] is not careful.”

Global Response

- The U.S. Department of State [announced](#) that they would be providing humanitarian assistance to Iraq, which includes \$49.5 million in coronavirus-specific aid.
- Norway’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that they would impose a 10-day quarantine on travelers entering the country from Greece, Ireland, Austria, and the United Kingdom.

- French Minister of Labor Elisabeth Borne announced that the government will enforce that facial coverings be mandatory in shared indoor office spaces – effective September 1st.
- The Australian government announced that they have entered a deal with British pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca to access doses of their forthcoming COVID-19 vaccine, if the trials are successful.

State Update

- The Massachusetts Department of Public Health announced that it would require all public school and daycare students over the age of 5 to get flu vaccines – in an effort to “reduce the overall impact of respiratory illness during the COVID-19 pandemic.”
- Maryland Governor Larry Hogan (R) announced that the state submitted an application for an additional \$300 weekly federal unemployment benefit payments, in order to help the “many Marylanders that are still struggling to make ends meet during this pandemic.”
- Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards (D) signed an executive order that “allows the state to move forward with emergency plans to support the 2020 election,” adding that the state’s election plan must “take into account the seriousness of this global pandemic and the health and safety of the voters.”
- Due to a recent surge in cases, the Hawaiian government stated that they are officially delaying the reopening of travel to mainland tourists – who won’t be allowed to enter the state until at least October 1st.

Economic Update

- U.S. stocks were on the decline today, with all three indices closing the day with decreases. The Nasdaq Composite fell by 0.6%, the S&P 500 by 0.4%, and the Dow Jones Industrial Average by 0.3%.

Latest Impact Data

- In the United States: Over 5,695,551 cases and 176,181 deaths in 50 states, 4 territories, and Washington, D.C.
- Worldwide: Over 22,547,652 and 789,739 deaths in at least 204 countries and territories.

In the News

- [Stalled COVID-19 package may allow Republicans to flip health care in their favor \(Roll Call\)](#)
- [Rank-and-file Dems press Pelosi for more votes on coronavirus aid \(Politico\)](#)
- [As White House pushes 'skinny' COVID-19 bill, Democrat sees September action \(Reuters\)](#)
- [Democratic lawmaker calls telehealth expansion the 'silver lining' of pandemic \(The Hill\)](#)