



COMMUNITY CARE NETWORK OF KANSAS

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What We Know Now

October 15, 2021

A compilation of the latest news surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic from the Community Care Network of Kansas. Published on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Visit our [COVID-19 Resources](#) page for complete, updated information.

Community Care Member Update

Today's Spotlight is on **Vibrant Health**, whose

COVID-19 clinical team was part of the group welcoming First Lady Jill Biden to Kansas City earlier this week. The First Lady is on a national tour marking Hispanic Heritage Month.

The health center readily accepted an invitation from Representative Sharice Davids, since Biden also was celebrating the work that frontline healthcare workers have done throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. She remarked how Latinos across the country were enduring the pandemic, and noted the targeted efforts of the federal government to assist them.

Vibrant's presence at the airport reflects well on the effect the health center is having in the Kansas City community. The honor was well-deserved.

From KDHE/Governor's Office/Statehouse

Latest statistics: 423,283 positive cases, 6,165 deaths, 14,410 hospitalizations and 19 MIS-C cases (Multi-system Inflammatory Syndrome in Children associated with COVID-19). Since Wednesday, there have been 1,820 new cases, 14 deaths and 80 hospitalizations reported.



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According to the Kansas WebIZ vaccination tracker ([here](#)), 3,029,400 doses have been administered in Kansas out of the 3,756,780 doses distributed. 1,619,357 people (52.5% of the population) have had their first dose; 1,329,515 (49.6%) have had their second doses; and 80,529 have had their third dose of the vaccine series.

Clinics, nonprofits, pharmacies and other organizations are encouraged to apply for Pandemic Assistance & Vaccine Equity Grants of up to \$10,000 to further their vaccine equity work. The federal COVID-19 Pandemic Vaccination Equity Supplemental Funding (PAVE) program provides funding for Kansas to support local efforts to ensure greater equity and access to vaccines by those disproportionately affected by the pandemic, including high-risk and underserved populations such as racial and ethnic minorities and rural communities. Applications must be submitted on or before December 31, 2021. For more information or to download and application, click [here](#).

Highlights from Thursday's COVID-19 Update for Local Partners webinar include:

- Secretary Norman said the overall numbers give him cause for optimism, particularly as more vaccines are administered. KDHE will be ready to respond whenever FDA approves other boosters and doses for 5- 11-year-olds. He believes it is too soon to know what to expect from the legal challenges being launched against vaccine mandates, but they will keep us posted. KDHE is working on a plan to distribute the first antiviral pill targeted to treat COVID-19 once it becomes available. FDA is considering an application from Merck & Co. for an emergency use authorization called molnupiravir.
- Kansas rates for new cases, hospitalizations and deaths are dropping. Community transmission remains high, with only five counties as moderate or low.
- The state is recording 779 new cases per day in the latest seven-day rolling average. Deaths are averaging about 5 per day.
- Kansas has had 2,725 outbreaks since the start of the pandemic, with 198 currently active (decrease from 217 last week). There are six active outbreaks in healthcare facilities.
- 140 samples recently sequenced at KHEL showed 100% were the Delta variant. The national figure is 99.9%.
- When ordering doses, providers no longer need to distinguish whether they are needed for first or second doses. Orders need to be placed no later than 5:00 p.m. (CT) Wednesdays.
- The FDA's Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) is meeting today to make recommendations on the Moderna booster authorization. Moderna's booster is half the regular dose and the packaging will not change. Providers will need to manage inventory of vials that could yield 14 regular doses, 28 booster doses, or a combination.
- VRBPAC will make recommendations on the J&J booster authorization on Friday, October 15. Its booster would be a full dose two months after the initial dose. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices will meet October 20-22 to discuss and potentially recommend Moderna and J&J boosters based on this week's VRBPAC meetings.
- VRBPAC will meet October 26 to recommend on the Pfizer EUA for children aged 5-11. The vaccine is one-third of the adult dose, and will come in new packaging with new NDC codes. There will be an orange cap vial of the vaccine with Diluent that will come in 10-vial packs (100

doses). A grey cap vial with no Diluent needed will come in 25-vial packs (150 doses) and 10-vial packs (60 doses). Both orange and grey cap doses can be refrigerated for 10 weeks.

- They reminded of the voluntary recall of certain Ellume home tests because of their potential for false positives. Self-administration of over-the-counter home tests do not require a CLIA Certificate of Waiver. However, staff-administered (such as in a shelter, jail, etc.) tests would require one.
- Supply chain issues remain for Abbott IDNow, BinaxNow and Cepheid testing kits. Be flexible with alternatives.
- Kansas allocations of monoclonal antibodies now include Sotrovimab (390 doses), in addition to REGEN-COV (588), BAM/ETE (400) and ETE SOLO (310). Nationally, 183,000 doses of mAbs were distributed this week. That number will continue decreasing to about 150,000. KDHE reminded that side effects from BAM/ETE administration should be reported through the FDA Adverse Events Reporting System (FAERS). Look closely at all packaging and included fact sheets to ensure the correct product is being utilized and recorded properly.
- REGEN-COV in both packaging configurations may be used to prepare and administer intravenous infusions as well as subcutaneous injections. Each dose pack can be used to prepare two doses for treatment. Each pack contains 1,200 mg of casirivimab and 1,200 mg of imdevimab. For the Casirivimab and Imdevimab co-pack, there are two vials per carton. The label on the carton notes “2 vials of 6 mL.” This refers to the vial size, not the actual content in the vial.
- For infusions, if immediate administration is not possible, store the diluted casirivimab and imdevimab solution in the refrigerator between 2-8 Celsius (36-46 Fahrenheit) for no more than 36 hours or at room temperature up to 25 C (77 F) for no more than four hours.
- Subcutaneous syringes should be administered immediately. If that is not possible, store the prepared syringes in the refrigerator. Medical information inquiries should be referred to Regeneron Medical at 1-844-734-6643.
- FDA now permits the emergency use of the unapproved product sotrovimab for the treatment of mild to moderate COVID-19 for those 12 years and older with a positive SARS-CoV-2 viral test. More information about sotrovimab can be found [here](#).
- KDHE now has a small quantity of mAbs for requesting from appropriate facilities. To place a request or to ask questions about monoclonal antibody distribution, contact Michael McNulty at mike.mcnulty@ks.gov.
- FDA has a Multilingual Myths Social Media Toolkit that can be found [here](#).

From HRSA/Bureau of Primary Health Care (BPHC)

A new question, “Are health centers required to provide free COVID-19 screening testing for asymptomatic individuals who do not have known, suspected, or reported exposure?,” was added to the HRSA COVID-19 FAQs page ([here](#)). The answer, in essence, is yes unless the health center does not have sufficient capacity to provide unlimited screening testing (e.g., limited PPE, testing supplies, staff capacity). In that case, the health center should make efforts to refer patients to other appropriate providers.

HRSA has published a checklist, HRSA COVID-19 Claims Reimbursement to Health Care Providers and Facilities for Testing, Treatment, and Vaccine Administration for the Uninsured, that can be found [here](#). The COVID-19 Claims Reimbursement page can be found [here](#). **Vibrant Health** CEO Patrick Sallee recorded a video ([here](#)) in 2020 describing the health center's participation in the program.

From the U.S. Food & Drug Administration

FDA to hold advisory committee meeting to discuss Merck and Ridgeback's EUA application for COVID-19 oral treatment. Read the news release [here](#).

From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CDC issued several updates, including:

- Underlying Medical Conditions Associated with Higher Risk for Severe COVID-19: Information for Healthcare Providers ([here](#)),
- Science Brief: Evidence used to update the list of underlying medical conditions that increase a person's risk of severe illness from COVID-19 ([here](#)),
- COVID Data Tracker Weekly Review ([here](#)),
- Cases in the U.S. ([here](#)), and
- Overall U.S. COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution and Administration ([here](#)).

From the National Institutes of Health

NIH RADx initiative expands COVID-19 testing innovation for additionally types of rapid tests. Read the news release [here](#).

Antibody treatment for multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) works by depleting inflammatory immune cells. Read more [here](#).

From the National Association of Community Health Centers

NACHC's next installment of the four-part Special and Vulnerable Populations COVID-19 Forum will be from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. (CT) Friday, November 19. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

NACHC also has drawn attention to a COVID-19 specific article, When May an Employer Reject a Religious Accommodation Request? published by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) this week. The article, which can be read [here](#), has been added to NACHC's Federal Vaccine Mandate Toolkit ([here](#)).

From InterHab

The InterHab alliance, which works to improve the lives of Kansans with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), launched the Be Safe with Me campaign to encourage direct support professionals working with this community to be vaccinated for COVID-19. The campaign includes five public service announcements ([here](#)) as well as a toolkit ([here](#)) to use to encourage others to get vaccinated.

From Media Reports

Kansas reports fourth child COVID death as school-aged children have highest case rate. Read more at The Topeka Capital-Journal [here](#).

Healthcare advocates tie decrease in school clusters to increase in masking. Read more at the Kansas Reflector [here](#).

COVID testing, turnaround times are still uneven this far into the pandemic. Read more at Kaiser Health News [here](#).

FDA panel endorses lower-dose Moderna COVID shot for booster. Read more at The Associated Press [here](#).

FDA advisory panel votes 19-0 to endorse booster dose of J&J vaccine. Read more at STAT News [here](#).

Here's what happens next after an FDA panel recommended Moderna and J&J boosters. Read more at The New York Times [here](#).

FDA will review Merck COVID-19 pill. Read more at Axios [here](#).