Mixed Jobs Picture for Healthcare Sector

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics today released the May jobs report, showing that healthcare employment increased by 312,000 over the month, with gains in offices of dentists (+245,000), offices of other health practitioners (+73,000) and offices of physicians (+51,000). But job losses continued in nursing and residential care facilities (-37,000) and hospitals (-27,000).

Total nonfarm payroll employment rose by 2.5 million in May, and the unemployment rate declined to 13.3%. The report says the improvements in the labor market reflected a limited resumption of economic activity that had been curtailed in March and April due to the COVID-19 pandemic and efforts to contain it. In May, employment rose sharply in leisure and hospitality, construction, education and health services, and retail trade. By contrast, employment in government continued to decline sharply.

Among the major worker groups, the unemployment rates declined in May for adult men (11.6%), adult women (13.9%), Whites (12.4%) and Hispanics (17.6%). The jobless rates for teenagers (29.9%), Blacks (16.8%) and Asians (15.0%) showed little change over the month.

Physical Distancing, Facing Coverings Work

Keeping at least one meter (three feet) from other people as well as wearing face coverings and eye protection, in and outside of healthcare settings, could be the best way to reduce the chance of viral infection or transmission of COVID-19, according to a study published in The Lancet. The study was based on a review and meta-analysis of 172 observational studies in 16 countries.

However, none of these interventions, even when properly used and combined, give complete protection from infection, and the authors note that some of the findings, particularly around face masks and eye protection, are supported by low-certainty evidence, with no completed randomized trials addressing COVID-19 for these interventions.

The study, conducted to inform World Health Organization guidance documents, is the first time researchers have systematically examined the optimum use of these protective measures in both community and healthcare settings for COVID-19. The authors say it has immediate and important implications for curtailing the current COVID-19 pandemic and future waves by informing disease models, and standardizing the definition of who has been potentially exposed (i.e., within 2 meters) for contact tracing.

CDC: ER Visits Decline During COVID-19 Pandemic

A new Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates that emergency department (ED) visits declined 42% during the early period of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The National Syndromic Surveillance Program, which collects electronic health data in real time, found that ED visits declined from a mean of 2.1 million visits per week (March 31–April 27, 2019) to 1.2 million visits (March 29–April 25, 2020), with the
steepest decreases in persons under 14 years of age, females and the Northeast. The proportion of infectious disease-related visits was four times higher during the early pandemic period.

To minimize COVID-19 transmission risk and address public concerns about visiting the ED during the pandemic, CDC recommends continued use of virtual visits and triage help lines and adherence to CDC infection control guidance.

ACS Tools to Prepare Patients for Operations
As healthcare facilities resume operations that were delayed due to COVID-19, surveys show a majority of people are reluctant to undergo procedures while COVID-19 continues to spread. To help surgeons and hospitals address patient concerns, the American College of Surgeons (ACS) has released a new resource document, *Preparing to have surgery during the time of COVID-19*.

The document includes a patient-surgeon discussion guide with suggested questions patients can ask their surgeon to feel more prepared about returning to a healthcare facility for their procedure. The guide also covers common concerns such as how the check-in process has changed, what to expect during appointments, safeguards to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and how the ongoing pandemic may change after-operation care.

EMS Response to COVID-19 and Protests
The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s Office of EMS and the Dept. of Health and Human Services’ Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) are hosting a COVID-19 Clinical Rounds webinar – “EMS Response to COVID-19 and Protests” – on Monday, June 8 at 11 a.m. CDT. To register, click here. To access the latest COVID-19 information for EMS, go to [COVID-19 Resources for EMS](#).

Meanwhile, the ASPR Technical Resources, Assistance Center and Information Exchange (TRACIE) has issued a summary of resources for hospitals during civil unrest.

State, National, Global COVID-19 Update
The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) announced today 1,156 new COVID-19 cases and 59 deaths. The total number of cases in the state is 125,915 in 101 counties, with a total of 5,795 deaths. IDPH says that in the past 24 hours, 18,903 test specimens have been processed, with a positivity rate of 6%. The state has now surpassed the one million mark in total number of tests. The preliminary seven-day statewide positivity rate from May 29 to June 4 is 6%. Statewide COVID-19 hospitalizations in the past 24 hours decreased from 3,044 patients to 2,911 patients. Of that figure, 817 patients are in the ICU, with 500 patients on ventilators.

IDPH also reported today that a pet cat recently tested positive for COVID-19 after becoming sick in mid-May. The cat was in a home with people who had tested positive. This is the first animal to test positive for the virus in Illinois. There is no evidence COVID-19 is transmitted from animal to humans. However, if you are sick, you should distance yourself from pets as well as people.

|Current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) figures show more than 1.86 million confirmed and presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 in the U.S., with 108,064 deaths.

The latest WHO Situation Report shows more than 6.5 million COVID-19 cases globally, with more than 387,000 deaths. The Region of the Americas (includes the U.S.) continues to lead the world with nearly 3.1 million cases and over 172,000 deaths.

Briefly Noted
Today, IHA made available to its member hospital CEOs, CFOs, and Other Finance Staff the FFY 2021 proposed rule Inpatient Prospective Payment System (IPPS) and Long-Term Care Hospitals (LTCH) hospital-specific reports via the C-Suite.

Staff contacts: Laura Torres, Cassie Yarbrough

The state Dept. of Insurance reminds Illinoisans who are applying for unemployment insurance that they may also need health insurance after losing job-based coverage. The Affordable Care Act Health Insurance Marketplace (GetCoveredIllinois.gov) is
offering a Special Enrollment Period for certain qualifying life events, including involuntarily losing job-based coverage and expiration of COBRA benefits.

During the coronavirus pandemic when families are secluded at home, calls to report suspected child abuse and neglect have decreased significantly across the country, and by 57% in Illinois compared to the same time last year. To ensure that children know that it is never okay for anyone to hurt or neglect them, the Illinois Dept. of Children and Family Services is launching the “You are Not Alone” campaign with the simple message: if someone is hurting you, we can help. If a child is being hurt or neglected, he or she can call 1-800-25-ABUSE for help.

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