



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR ANDY BESHEAR

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Crystal Staley

502-545-3714

Crystal.Staley@ky.gov

Sebastian Kitchen

502-330-0799

Sebastian.Kitchen@ky.gov

Kentucky Doctor on COVID-19: ‘It’s Hard to Tell a 40-Year-Old They’re Going to be Dead Within 24 Hours and There’s Nothing We Can Do’

Colleague adds: ‘I’ve been in codes not just for people my age, but my kid’s age’

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Sept. 16, 2021) – On Thursday during his weekly Team Kentucky update, Gov. Andy Beshear said the state is supporting hospitals in the fight against COVID-19 with expanded personnel and testing assistance, as health care professionals sound the alarm on the delta variant’s threat, even to young Kentuckians.

From March 2020 to May 2021, before the delta variant was dominant in the United States, 74% of COVID-19 deaths in Kentucky were among those 70 and older, and 98% were among those 50 and older. From June 2021 to Sept. 15, 2021, once the delta variant became dominant, the share of younger COVID-19 patients dying increased significantly. During that time, 48% of COVID-19 deaths in Kentucky were among those 70 and older, and 88% were among those 50 and older.

“The No.1 thing that we can do to get through this is to get vaccinated,” said **Gov. Beshear**. “I think the tough conversations we’re having with those we love who

may be hesitant to get the vaccine are making a difference, but we need a lot more of those conversations.”

As of today, Kentucky has 93 total adult ICU beds left. Out of 96 Kentucky hospitals, 66 are experiencing critical staffing shortages.

“Within the last month or so, we’ve been seeing 20-year-olds and 30-year-olds and 50-year-olds come in and within 24 to 48 hours they die,” said **Traci Sanchez, MD, KDMC**. “Families are angry. They’re lost. Patients are lost because they know they’re dying. It’s hard to tell someone who is 40 years old that they’re going to be dead within 24 hours and there’s nothing we can do.”

The Governor said more than two dozen hospitals are receiving or soon will receive Kentucky National Guard support. To see a map of all hospitals receiving assistance, click [here](#).

The state is supporting six community testing sites across Kentucky. To see a map, click [here](#).

Nursing students are also supporting more than a dozen hospitals throughout the commonwealth. To see a map of these hospitals, click [here](#).

To see a map that includes Kentucky National Guard, nursing student and testing support, click [here](#).

Three other doctors from King’s Daughters Medical Center (KDMC) in Ashland and the chief executive at Harrison Memorial Hospital in Cynthiana shared the pain and sudden loss they see families go through every day due to COVID-19.

“We have seen significant changes this week alone. We have been concerned about our oxygen pressure and being able to support all of the oxygen BiPAP and ventilators for these COVID patients. We have had to order 10 additional ventilators this week, and we’ve had to cancel all elective surgeries to be able to staff our COVID units, ICU units and the rest of our floors,” said **Stacy Caudill, MD, chief medical officer, KDMC**. “We’ve seen an overwhelming volume of patients in our emergency department and in our urgent care. We have seen our positivity continue to increase, which tells us in a couple of weeks our admissions are only going to go up.”

“I’ve been in codes not just for people my age, but my kid’s age. I think that when you see that you really think, and it really scares us about going forward,”

said **James Goetz, MD, KDMC**. “I just ask everyone out there to get vaccinated and help all of us here.”

“COVID is a very difficult disease to care for. Our treatment options are extremely limited. Oftentimes despite our best efforts and all that we can do to try to prevent the progression of this disease, people still worsen. People pass regardless of whatever measures we can take,” said **Josh Bryant, DO, KDMC**. “It’s one thing to have an end-of-life conversation with someone who’s had time to live and prepare. It’s a very different conversation to have when you’ve having this with a 20-, 30- or 40-year-old.”

“Despite our hospital being ground zero in Kentucky for the onset of the pandemic 18 months ago, this week we are being hit with a COVID surge like never before since the onset of the pandemic,” said **Dr. Stephen Toadvine, chief executive officer at Harrison Memorial Hospital**. “We are setting records in terms of our volume of patients being seen in our emergency room and our urgent treatment centers. Our test positivity rate in our COVID clinic is well-exceeding 30%. We’ve hit an all-time high in terms of the number of inpatients currently admitted with COVID.”

Monoclonal Antibody Utilization

The Governor said the week ending Sept. 14, Kentucky hospitals used 5,063 COVID-19 monoclonal antibody treatment courses and had 6,883 additional courses on hand. Just a week before, Kentucky hospitals distributed 3,642 monoclonal antibody courses and had 7,435 additional courses on hand. The trend indicates that soon Kentucky may not have enough monoclonal antibody courses to meet the demand, as the federal government recently [announced](#) a national shortage.

COVID-19 Update

Today, Gov. Beshear reported 2,631,420 Kentuckians have received at least a first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, meaning 69% of all eligible Kentuckians (those 12 and older) have received at least one dose.

Sept. 16 2021, COVID-19 Case Information

Cases: 4,891

Deaths: 62

Positivity Rate: 13.00%

Hospitalizations: 2,453

Intensive Care Admittances: 667

On Ventilators: 448

The week ending Sept. 12, the state's seven-day average COVID-19 positivity rate was the highest it has ever been since the commonwealth had adequate testing supplies, at 13.88%.

From March 1 to Sept. 15, 2021, 87.1% of COVID-19 cases, 92.1% of COVID-19 hospitalizations and 84.6% of COVID-19 deaths have been among partially vaccinated or unvaccinated Kentuckians.

In addition to getting vaccinated for COVID-19, **Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health**, encouraged Kentuckians to get the influenza vaccine to help lessen the strain on hospitals.

"In a typical winter, flu always drives up the number of people in the hospital. In bad years, hospitals really get strained or taxed with the number of influenza patients who fill them," said Dr. Stack. "The flu vaccine does protect large numbers of people and prevents substantial burdens to the hospitals. So if we all get immunized for the flu, we can keep the hospitals with more capacity and more able to care for COVID patients and other patients as well."

COVID-19 Memorial

The Governor said this week our commonwealth suffered another heartbreaking loss when Amanda Nutt, a 36-year-old teacher with Caverna Independent Schools in Horse Cave, passed away after a battle with COVID-19.

"We spoke with school officials who said Amanda was the teacher who would not let kids fail. She got involved in their lives, in and out of the classroom. She was the 'mom' at the school to many, and her loss will be felt by students and faculty alike," said **Gov. Beshear**. "We've all had that teacher who made an impact on us, the one who we credit for our success. Amanda was that teacher to so many. Tonight, as we light our homes green, let us lift Amanda's family and the entire Caverna school district in prayer."

Gov. Beshear urged all schools that haven't already instituted a mask mandate locally to take action ahead of tomorrow's expiration of the Kentucky Board of Education's school masking requirement.

State Has Provided More than \$65 Million in Eviction, Utility Relief to Kentuckians

Today, Gov. Beshear said the state has paid more than \$65 million in rent and utility relief to Kentuckians during the pandemic, including more than \$51 million since March, to help keep them in their homes and keep their electricity and water on. The Governor encouraged Kentuckians to apply for the remaining \$152 million available to Kentuckians for rent and utility assistance. To learn more, see the [full release](#).

- To learn more about the Healthy at Home Eviction Relief Fund and apply, visit teamkyhherf.ky.gov/.
- To apply in Fayette County: [\[covid19renterhelp.org\]](http://covid19renterhelp.org)covid19renterhelp.org
- To apply in Jefferson County: stopmyeviction.org

If a tenant is facing eviction, they are encouraged to:

- Apply for rent assistance;
- Speak with their landlord to see if they can stay in their home while the application is processed;
- Contact their local legal aid agency. A list is available [here](#);
- Attend their eviction hearing; and
- Ask the judge for additional time while they await their assistance through the Healthy at Home Eviction Relief Fund.

Kentuckians can apply for and receive funds from the Healthy at Home Eviction Relief Fund until Sept. 30, 2022, or until funds run out.

Team Kentucky All-Stars

Today, Gov. Beshear recognized [9-year-old Brody Fromholt](#) as a Team Kentucky All-Star. Brody is an advocate for other kids across the country who have Usher Syndrome like he does.

Usher Syndrome is a rare genetic disorder that impacts three major senses in the body: vision, hearing and balance. At least 25,000 people in the United States are affected. Although there is no cure, we know that early intervention can make a difference.

“We are fortunate to have a supportive community here in Kentucky with leaders like Virginia Moore, and also Brody’s mom and her entire team at Heuser Hearing. And of course, First Steps and preschool opportunities also play a major role,”

said **Gov. Beshear**. “Brody, you’re the man. I know your parents, Katie and Jordan, are so proud of you and all of us on Team Kentucky are, too.”

The Governor proclaimed Saturday, Sept. 18, as Usher Syndrome Awareness Day in the commonwealth.

Gov. Beshear: ‘Kentucky’s Time is Now and Our Future is Now’

As Kentucky’s economy continues to thrive and expand despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, today, Gov. Beshear recognized five Kentucky companies that recently celebrated significant investments and anniversaries in the commonwealth.

- **Gov. Beshear Congratulates Rajant on Opening of New Morehead Facility:** Today, Gov. Beshear congratulated Kinetic Mesh wireless networks provider Rajant Corp., as leaders cut the ribbon on the company’s new Rowan County facility, a project that will create 100 full-time jobs over the coming years with a \$2 million investment. To learn more, see the [full release](#).

“It’s my goal to take this facility from 30 people to 100 people over the next few years,” said **Robert Schena, chief executive officer and co-founder at Rajant**. “We will be adding folks with all kinds of backgrounds from manufacturing and assembly all the way to artificial intelligence and even genetics research as we branch into health care as well as part of our expansion here in Kentucky.”

- **Load Covering Solutions to Create 30 Jobs, Construct Manufacturing Facility in Cadiz:** Load Covering Solutions Ltd., a producer and distributor of tarp systems for commercial trucks and trailers, plans to construct a \$2 million plant in Trigg County and create up to 30 quality jobs for Kentuckians across the coming years, Gov. Beshear announced. To learn more, see the [full release](#).
- **Gov. Beshear Welcomes New President of Phoenix Paper Parent Company to Kentucky:** Today, the Governor welcomed Michael Grimm, the new president and chief executive officer of Global Win Capital Corp., to Kentucky. Global Win is the North American parent company for Phoenix Paper, which operates a renovated paper mill in Wickliffe, a major employer for both Ballard and Carlisle counties. The mill closed in July 2016, but was later bought by the Chinese paper company Shanying, which invested \$150 million to modernize and reopen the facility.

“Congratulations to Mike, and thanks to Global Win for their continued investment in this Kentucky facility,” said **Gov. Beshear**. “I anticipate seeing more great developments at Phoenix Paper and ongoing success for the West Kentucky region.”

- **Gov. Beshear Recognizes Longstanding Kentucky Company Toyota Boshoku:** The Governor said Toyota Boshoku, which primarily manufactures automotive door trim and interior and exterior components, this week reached 30 years of operation in Bardstown, and said he “looks forward to another 30-plus years of this great partnership.”
- **Amazon Announces Plans to Hire 4,000 Kentuckians:** The Governor said earlier this week, Amazon – which is an increasingly important Team Kentucky partner – announced plans to hire 125,000 employees across the country, and 4,000 of those jobs will be available in Kentucky. These jobs will largely be in fulfillment and transportation and, on average, will pay more than \$18 per hour, with up to a \$3,000 sign-on bonus in select locations, comprehensive benefits and access to training programs to help employees to launch into long-term careers. Kentuckians interested in one of these openings can apply and learn more at amazon.com/apply.

“Amazon sees exactly what we have in Kentucky: an incredible workforce, ready to get any job done,” said **Gov. Beshear**.

The Governor said compared with last year, Kentucky’s manufacturing employment is up 14,600 filled jobs; educational and health services employment is up 8,300 filled jobs; professional and business services employment is up 2,100 filled jobs; management company employment is up 2,200 filled jobs; transportation and utilities employment is up 1,000 filled jobs; construction sector employment is up 4,400 filled jobs; and leisure and hospitality employment is up 7,900 filled jobs.

###