



Welcome to the Newsletter for the Pediatric Pandemic Network at Lurie Children's!

Introducing Ready. Prep. Go!

Ready. Prep. Go!, a podcast from the Pediatric Pandemic Network, features conversations with emergency, disaster, and preparedness subject matter experts and those on the frontlines. Guests share stories and lessons learned from their experiences, particularly related to the unique physiological and developmental characteristics of children during emergencies, disasters, and global health threats. These discussions about key concepts in disaster preparedness and everyday readiness are aimed at inspiring collaboration between emergency professionals and communities.



The first two episodes are available on the [PPN website](#) and other podcast sites.

Research Opportunities

2024 Pilot and Emerging Issues Project

The Pilot and Emerging Issues Project funds research with an emphasis on mental and behavioral health, disaster preparedness, infectious diseases, and health equity. The RFP prioritizes projects that serve the PPN goal to advance pediatric care in future disasters, emergencies, and pandemics.

The funding opportunity is open to all Lurie Children's investigators and will fund projects up to \$100,000 over a 2-year period. A letter of intent is due by April 1, 2024, and the full proposal by June 1, 2024. Find more information [here](#).

Please reach out to Megan Reyna (mreyna@luriechildrens.org) or Dr. Taylor Heald-Sargent (thsargent@luriechildrens.org) if you have any questions!

Join the PPN Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) and Children with Medical Complexities (CMC) Task Force!

Register to participate in the first virtual meetings hosted by the PPN Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) and Children with Medical Complexities (CMC) Task Force!

Town Hall Schedule:

March 13 from 12:30–2 p.m. ET

March 20 from 10:30 a.m.–1 p.m. ET

March 27 from 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m. ET

Town halls will include presentations and open discussions with representatives of the CYSHCN/CMC Task Force and guests—who will provide insights into their own experiences with everyday emergency care, pandemic/disaster response, and pre-emergency care for children and youth with special health care needs.

This is an excellent opportunity to connect with colleagues from across the nation, gain new insights, and explore potential collaborations!

Resources

The [PPN provides curated resources](#) on a variety of topics on their website. Below, we highlight the most recent updates through both the PPN and the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH).

Measles

The city of Chicago has identified several cases of measles. This is an evolving outbreak. Below are resources from CDPH to stay current. Updates will be provided at a [Measles Webinar hosted by CDPH on March 20th](#).

- [Get the Facts: Measles](#)
- [CDC: Measles Information for Healthcare Providers](#)

Respiratory Viral Season

The 2023-2024 respiratory viral season is winding down but not yet over. While some preventive care interventions have a clear end point this month, others are ongoing. Please see updates below and refer to the [CDPH Health Alert Network](#) updates for more information.

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV): RSV activity has declined substantially. RSV maternal vaccine is no longer being given this season. Nirsevimab and palivizumab administration to eligible patients should continue until March 31st, 2024. After this date, nirsevimab and palivizumab administration will restart in the fall.

Influenza: Influenza A activity is down trending significantly, and this accounted for a significant decline in overall influenza activity in late January. We are currently observing a late season increase in influenza B activity (not unexpected), and overall burden of influenza and influenza-related ICU visits have increased over the past month. Influenza vaccine should continue to be offered until the end of influenza season.

COVID-19: [COVID-19 activity in Chicago](#) is low and stable. COVID-19 vaccines should continue to be offered based on [CDC recommendations](#). An additional booster dose was recently recommended for adults aged 65 years and older. Pediatric recommendations remain unchanged.

Chicago respiratory viral surveillance: [Chicago Department of Public Health Flu and Respiratory Virus Surveillance Report](#)

Lessons Learned from the COVID-19 Pandemic

From the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP):

The AAP and its members played a critical and leading role in addressing the needs of infants, children, and adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic. With the declaration of *COVID-19 Recovery and Disaster Readiness* as a strategic priority by the AAP Board of Directors in late 2022, the AAP pursued the development of a manuscript to document the experiences and lessons learned through the AAP COVID-19 response. [Successes and Lessons Learned in Responding to the Needs of Pediatricians, Children, and Families During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) is now available online in Pediatrics.

Meet our PPN people

Dr. Erica Popovsky is a pediatric emergency medicine physician at the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago and Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. Her academic interests include pediatric emergency preparedness, resuscitation review, simulation, and medical education. She is currently involved at the local, regional, and national levels for pediatric disaster preparedness. At Lurie Children's she serves as the newly appointed Associate Medical Director for Emergency Preparedness where she designs and leads

division-specific and hospital-wide emergency preparedness simulations. Locally, she serves on the Drills and Exercises Committee for the Chicago Healthcare System Coalition for Preparedness and Response. Within the PPN, she co-leads Lurie's involvement in the Disaster Networking Collaborative, which supports collective efforts to identify and share best practices and solutions to enhance each children's hospital's infrastructure to prepare for disasters. Erica is also the Lurie site co-PI for the ASPR-funded Region V for Kids: Great Lakes Pediatric Consortium for Disaster Response and a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Children and Disasters.

PPN Praise – Recent achievements of the Lurie Children's PPN team

The PPN Research Domain issued additional pilot awards to hub site investigators conducting impactful research on mental health, infectious diseases, emergency management, and health equity and community engagement. Two awardees are Northwestern University faculty members in the Dept. of Pediatrics.

- [Marie Heffernan, PhD](#): Gauging Family Preparedness for Climate Change in the United States
- [Jennifer Hoffman, MD, MS](#): Triage of Children with Mental and Behavioral Health Emergencies: Comparing Performance of the Emergency Severity Index and the Australian Mental Health Triage System

Cathy Shanahan, Senior Director of Preparedness and Response at Lurie Children's, was elected to serve as the **Coalition Healthcare Chair** of the **Chicago Healthcare System Coalition for Preparedness and Response (CHSCPR)**. CHSCPR is a collaboration of healthcare organizations and providers, public health departments, and community partners working together to care for our community before, during and after an emergency. During her two-year term, Cathy will lead the CHSCPR Executive Committee, who will advise the Chicago Department of Public Health Bureau of Emergency Preparedness and Response in matters related to healthcare system emergency preparedness, response, and recovery.

Stay connected with PPN on social media

The Pediatric Pandemic Network has recently joined Instagram to amplify messaging as a hub dedicated to empowering health care systems and communities to provide high-quality, equitable care to children every day and in crises. The PPN is also on X, Facebook and LinkedIn.

Follow [@pedspandemicnetwork](#) on Instagram, [@pedspandemic](#) on X or follow us on [LinkedIn](#)!

If you would no longer like to receive these email communications, please email Megan Reyna at ppn@luriechildrens.org.

Newsletter sent Monday, March 18, 2024. Links reflect content at that time.
