March 4, 2020

Update about National EHDI Meeting and COVID-19

- As all EHDI Meeting participants know, we are in the midst of an expanding global coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19). The conference organizers extend our sympathies and messages of support to all of those who have been affected by the outbreak.

- The National EHDI Meeting will be held in Kansas City from March 8th to 11th. Additional attendees are registering every day (currently almost 1,000 people) and all of the exhibitors are still committed to participating.

- Conference organizers will continue to monitor information about the spread and containment of COVID-19 so we can make any necessary adjustments to ensure the safety of our attendees.

- We have checked the websites of 52 conferences in the US that are being held between March 1 and April 15, 2020 and cater primarily to attendees from the US. Some of these are very large conferences with registered attendance of more than 30,000 people. None of these conferences have been canceled or postponed as of today. This list is available here.

What EHDI-Organizers are Doing to Protect Attendees

- Extra hand sanitizers and boxes of tissues will be available throughout the venue.
- Microphones and podiums will be sani-wiped after every session.
- Extra trash bins will be set throughout the venue.
- Large infographics will be posted throughout the venue with suggestions and instructions about what you can personally do to prevent respiratory infections (like colds, flu, or coronavirus) as described below.
- We are working closely with the Sheraton Kansas City Hotel at Crown Center to increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting commonly touched surfaces such as door hands and handrails.
- Attendees are encouraged to use the Attendify APP to exchange contact information rather than exchange business cards.

Personal Protective Precautions for All EHDI Attendees

Attendees should follow standard infection control recommendations and everyday preventive actions to prevent the spread of respiratory infections.

- Face masks are useful for health workers and persons who are ill. CDC does not recommend use of face masks for people who are well as a means to protect themselves from respiratory diseases.
- Avoid close personal contact such as handshakes, hugs, or kisses; elbow or shoulder bumps are preferred if a greeting is desired.
- Wash hands with soap and warm water regularly (with attention to between fingers and under fingernails), scrubbing for at least 20-30 seconds.
• Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available. Although supplies are very limited throughout the US, we will have some personal bottles of sanitizer available onsite. You are also encouraged to bring your own.
• Avoid touching face, eyes, nose, and mouth.
• Cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue, forearm/elbow, or shirt sleeve, and wash hands ASAP after a cough or sneeze; dispose of used tissue immediately.
• Food and drink for group breakfasts, coffee breaks, and afternoon snacks will be protected to the extent possible. Use napkins and wax paper sheets to pick up items. If you touch an item, take it—do NOT put it back on the table.
• Stay home if you are ill.

**What to Do If You Have Symptoms (Cough and Fever)**

• If you have symptoms of a respiratory infection before the EHDI Meeting starts, do NOT attend the EHDI Meeting.
• If you develop respiratory symptoms during the EHDI Meeting, please self-isolate to the extent possible.
• The EHDI Registration desk will have current information about how to obtain timely medical help for people who develop a respiratory infection during the conference.

**Informed and Prepared**

Remember that influenza (commonly referred to as the flu) is still a far bigger threat in the US than coronavirus. Every year in the US, the flu infects 10-50 million people and more than 30,000 people die (it fluctuates some from year to year - data are available [here](#)). By contrast, there are currently less than 150 cases of confirmed coronavirus in the US and only 9 people have died. Fortunately, the very same preventive measures for reducing the spread of coronavirus, will also reduce the spread of the flu.

EHDI organizers are committed to ensuring our response to concerns about COVID-19 is responsibly based in facts, not driven by fear. Following are important and helpful resources to monitor as you finalize your travel plans for Kansas City.

- [Daily Situation Reports from the World Health Organization (WHO)](#)
- [Prevention and Treatment of COVID-19 – CDC](#)
- [Guarding Against Stigma Related to Coronavirus – CDC](#)
- [Information for Travelers – CDC](#)
- [Interim Guidance Regarding Large Community Events – CDC](#)
- [Coronavirus: Information from HRSA/MCHB](#)

As new information emerges, please remember that the risk of COVID-19 is not connected with race, ethnicity or nationality. Do not make determinations of risk based on race or country of origin. Sharing accurate information from only reliable sources is the best thing community members can do to keep rumors and misinformation from spreading.