



Norbert Goldfield, MD
Founder, CEO

Ask Nurses & Doctors LLC

72 Laurel Park
Northampton MA 01060
413-800-2680
norbert@asknursesdoctors.com
www.asknursesdoctors.com
@asknursesdoctors.com

Oct. 31, 2022:

Two Patients Hospitalized in Last Two Weeks

I hospitalized two patients with Covid in the last two weeks. The first is a fairly unusual scenario – Covid pneumonia. Unusual in the sense that the Omicron variant typically causes less pulmonary damage than the predominant Covid variety at the start of the pandemic. The second patient had dehydration from her diarrhea and needed intravenous fluid replacement. In the U.S., there are more than 25,000 people in the hospital right now with Covid and more than 350 deaths per day. And yet, when I traveled to my birthplace, Italy, last week – virtually no one was wearing masks – at the New York airport where I departed from, on the plane and few in Italy. We mask-wearers are a disappearing breed. For now.

Italy has just elected a right-wing government into power. With respect to Covid policy: a much more relaxed attitude towards mask-wearing, even in health care facilities (it will likely be up to individual health care facilities – at least one where a close friend works clearly stated that they will continue to mandate masks); and fines for people over 50 who didn't finish their first cycle of Covid vaccinations will be suspended (imagine having such a policy in the U.S.!!).

The Lancet just published an article offering recommendations on how to increase childhood vaccination in a Covid era.

Politico published an excellent article interviewing CDC Director Walensky on CDC challenges in a pandemic era. Bottom lines, the CDC:

- Is unable to force states to share information on disease outbreaks
- Needs greater funding “to draw in new talent and train the public health workforce to speed up the information flow to the public.”
- Needs to “steer the agency toward the “sweet spot” between its old way of publishing its findings, which can take weeks or months, and ensuring that the science going out to the public is safe and reliable”
- “Announced a subsequent spate of reforms in August, including speeding up data delivery, making public health guidance easier to understand, building up its communications team, strengthening the CDC’s national laboratory system and shifting internal incentives for staff away from publishing in scientific journals and toward making practical policy recommendations.”

Scholars continue to author articles on, for example, the impact of [liberal vs conservative state health care policies on mortality](#); In another article, researchers [demonstrated](#) that “The gap in excess death rates between Republicans and Democrats is concentrated in counties with low vaccination rates and only materializes after vaccines became widely available.” In a similar vein, AND has worked with local health care professionals to publish LTEs and Op-Eds in the last few weeks in local conservative newspapers [PA](#) and [Florida](#). We are hopeful that a focus on health care issues can make a difference in some of the tight elections.

Norbert Goldfield, M.D.