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April 5, 2023:

Less Covid; Little Prep for Next Pandemic; impact of End of Emergency

At the beginning of March, after taking Paxlovid, I was getting over a mild case of Covid. If more eligible people had taken Paxlovid we would have saved [thousands of lives](#). For now, Covid cases have plummeted; yet I had two new Covid patients (happily telephonic) yesterday. Otherwise, no new Covid patients as I was in the country for only two weeks in March (on the Healing Across the Divides Study Tour [see our daily facebook posts](#))! On the Study Tour, I was one of the few people to wear a mask everywhere except when I ate. I agree with NYT columnist Zeynep Tufekci's conclusion that [masks work](#) despite the kerfuffle of some scientific studies that were misinterpreted to state the opposite. This [article](#) highlights how Covid experts behave now.

Should we have shutdowns in the future? I think it is ridiculous to talk about hypotheticals. Who knows what will happen if we have a [rampant fungus secondary to climate change](#)? What we do know is that our public health systems (each state is different) [have worsened](#) since the start of the pandemic. As I've written before there will be no national response – not with this Congress.

The Biden declaration ending the Covid public health emergency [has many ramifications](#) including: stricter training rules for nursing home staff, decreased availability of telemedicine for drug abuse treatment, and many others most notably the need for Medicaid enrollees to re-certify their eligibility. The latter could result in [15 million people losing their health insurance](#) – a tragedy of our fractured health care system. Loss of Medicaid will likely result in [continued increase in congenital syphilis](#) which is skyrocketing in the U.S. while almost eliminated in other industrialized countries. In addition [maternal mortality](#) will likely worsen which not only increased by 40% over 2021 but is **10 times** the rate of other industrialized countries like Australia and Spain! This situation will also deteriorate if a Trump selected judge [decision](#) stands striking down a key Obamacare provision mandating free coverage for preventive services. Overall, the Commonwealth Fund [recently found](#) that U.S. health care spending continues to outpace other countries while our outcomes continued to worsen. Was New Hampshire's state motto prescient – Live Free or Die – as the [headline by Selena Simmons-Duffin](#) proclaimed?

While many people will lose their Medicaid coverage, the federal government continues [respond to the lobbying frenzy](#) by private health insurers and thus overpays private HMOs. On the bright side, [North Carolina approved Medicaid expansion!!](#)

Abortion will be in the news through the 2024 election. A number of Republican dominated states have [further restricted](#) abortion access. The LA Times has a [must-read article](#) entitled: Horrifying stories of women chased down by the LAPD abortion squad before Roe vs. Wade.

Bystanders were present at 46% of drug overdoses. [Here is what you can do to reverse an overdose.](#) [But the cost \(50-100\) is formidable](#) even though it will shortly be available over the counter. The new 988 Crisis Line continues to get [increased use](#).

AND will increasingly focus on climate change which has implications for new epidemics and [increased hunger](#) and starvation leading to increased migration [including health professionals](#).

AND affiliated health professionals in Florida recently published two important op-eds – one on [Medicaid expansion](#) in Florida and the other [using humor on DeSantis](#). I believe our strategy in Florida should be, in part, to highlight the malfeasance of the DeSantis' surgeon general, Ladapo, who does not believe in preventive medicine such as vaccines. We also continue work on Paid Family Medical Leave in Maine; if you are a Mainer health professionals consider signing on to [this petition](#). In addition, we are currently working on a new brochure, revamping our website, and continuing to meet with health professionals throughout the country in preparation for 2024. I would also encourage you to support Healthcare Leaders for Democracy, a national volunteer-led fundraising campaign of Movement Voter PAC (MVP). Please [email](#) Michael Kane or [fill out this form to learn about getting involved!](#) For [more MVP information](#).

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