



February 2, 2024 Weekly Situational Awareness Brief

Awareness Topics

FEMA Expands Disaster Aid for Extreme Weather Events, Citing Climate Change

“The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is expanding eligibility for government assistance following extreme weather disasters, citing the impacts of climate change. The agency on Friday announced changes that seek to make it easier for more Americans who face damage to their homes or businesses to get federal funding in the wake of a disaster.”

FDA Review Supports Reclassifying Marijuana as Less Risky Drug

“Scientists from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration conclude in newly released documents that marijuana has less potential for abuse than other drugs with the same restrictions and it should be reclassified as a less dangerous drug.

Not only that, the review found there is some evidence backing its use as a medical treatment. Right now, cannabis is classified as a Schedule I controlled substance, a high-risk category that includes heroin and LSD.”

Psychologists reaching their limits as patients present with worsening symptoms year after year

“A majority of psychologists reported an increase in the severity of symptoms among their patients. Many also reported an increased length of treatment course for existing patients—meaning that patients needed treatment for longer periods. This may be a factor in more than half of psychologists reporting that they have no openings for new patients, or many saying they have longer waitlists. Despite engaging in self-care, more than one-third of psychologists reported that they were burned out. Taken together, these findings demonstrate that psychologists are working at the limits of their capacity, and underscores the fact that some patients who need care are not able to access it quickly.”

Three fourths of adults have hidden infectious illness to work, travel, or socialize, surveys suggest

“Up to 75% of adults have concealed an infectious disease from others in order not to miss work, travel, or social events, according to a new study in Psychological Science. The article, by researchers at the University of Michigan, is based on four studies and surveys given to 4,110 survey participants. All surveys were given after March 2020, when the COVID-10 pandemic began, and initial survey participants included 399 university healthcare employees.”

Even 15 Minutes of Activity Might Reduce Risks of Sitting Too Long

“People who spent much of their day at work sitting had a 16% higher risk of dying from any cause and a 34% higher mortality risk from cardiovascular disease compared with those who didn’t spend as much time sitting on the job, according to a cohort study in JAMA Network Open. After the study’s roughly 13-year surveillance of about 480 000 participants, researchers also found that people who mostly sat during the day but increased their physical activity by an extra 15 to 30 minutes had a similar chance of dying as sedentary individuals who did not spend as much time in a chair during the day.”

Response to Elmo's "checking in" post underscores U.S. mental health crisis

"Sesame Street" favorite Elmo's wellness check-in post on X asking "How is everybody doing?" has been met with thousands of responses this week. The big picture: Many made clear in the comments section that they're not doing so well — with some citing being laid off, feeling tired or noting they're "depressed and broke."

Events

[Click Here for Current and Upcoming Events List](#)

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MESH serves as the designated Medical Multi-Agency Coordination Center for Marion County, Indiana. The MESH Intelligence Program is a joint-effort between the City of Indianapolis Emergency Management Agency and the Marion County Public Health Department designed to provide real-time information and support to the healthcare sector in the Indianapolis area. Assistance with info or questions at: MESHintel@meshcoalition.org

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