

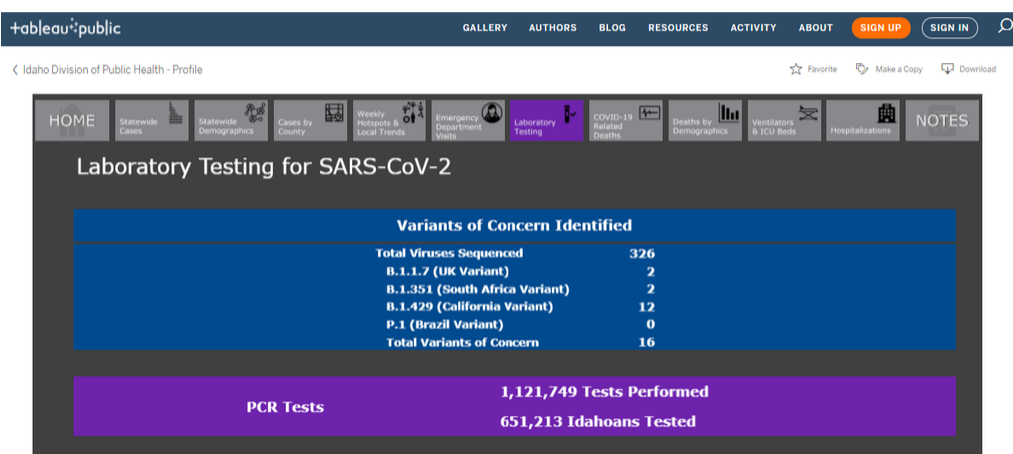
COVID-19 Report to Members ~ March 11, 2021

Reports are sent on Mondays and Thursdays, unless there's breaking news.

Reimbursement & Policy

**Relief bill signed into law**

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 was signed by President Biden today, making way for \$1.9 trillion in relief funds to support recovery efforts. As noted in [Monday's Update](#), there are several provisions impacting healthcare and hospitals, including \$8.5 billion to help rural healthcare providers with expenses and lost revenue. For details on how this relief bill will support hospitals' continued response, see the [AHA's Special Bulletin](#). Additional funds will also be sent to the state which continues to experience a significant budget surplus.



The state's COVID-19 dashboard now includes information on variants identified in Idaho.

Quality & Patient Safety

**Vaccine fact versus myth ~ fertility in women**

Johns Hopkins Medicine continues to update their [vaccine myth versus fact resource](#). The most recent addition highlights the affects on a woman's fertility.

**MYTH:** The COVID-19 vaccine can affect women's fertility.

**FACT:** The COVID-19 vaccine will not affect fertility. The truth is that the COVID-19 vaccine encourages the body to create copies of the spike protein found on the coronavirus's surface. This "teaches" the body's immune system to fight the virus that has that specific spike protein on it.

Confusion arose when a false report surfaced on social media, saying that the spike protein on this coronavirus was the same as another spike protein called syncitin-1 that is involved in the growth and attachment of the placenta during pregnancy. The false report said that getting the COVID-19 vaccine would cause a woman's body to fight this different spike protein and affect her fertility. The two spike proteins are completely different and distinct, and getting the COVID-19 vaccine will not affect the fertility of women who are seeking to become pregnant, including through in vitro fertilization methods. During the Pfizer vaccine tests, 23 women volunteers involved in the study became pregnant, and the only one who suffered a pregnancy loss had not received the actual vaccine, but a placebo.

Getting COVID-19, on the other hand, can have potentially serious impact on pregnancy and the mother's health. Johns Hopkins Medicine encourages women to reach out to their medical providers to discuss other questions they have about COVID-19 as it relates to fertility or pregnancy.

**Guidance updated for nursing home visitation**

Yesterday, CMS and the CDC issued [updated guidance](#) regarding nursing home visitation. Under this latest guidance, facilities should "allow responsible indoor visitation at all times and for all residents, regardless of vaccination status." However, the guidance does include some scenarios where risk of transmission is higher which would necessitate visitation would be limited, including for:

- unvaccinated residents if the county positivity rate is greater than 10% and less than 70% of residents in the facility are fully vaccinated;
- residents with confirmed COVID-19 infection, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, until they have met the criteria to discontinue transmission-based precautions; or
- residents in quarantine, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, until they have met criteria for release from quarantine.

The guidance also stated that "compassionate care" visits for those whose health has seriously declined or those who are experiencing significant changes in circumstance should be allowed at all times.

Virtual Meetings & Education

**Webinar ~ Mandating Vaccines**

The Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) will be discussing the legal issues surrounding vaccine mandates in their March 18 webinar. In the first of a three-part series, presenters will review the types of vaccine mandates used by state and local governments; will layout the legality of a mandate within the confines of an EUA; and will discuss the FDA's EUA authority.

**Mandating Vaccines and Implications for COVID-19**

Thursday, March 18 ~ 11a MTN / 10a PAC

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