

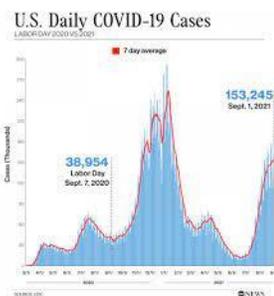
# Three Minute Read™

## Insights from the Healing American Healthcare Coalition™

September 2021-1



**From the Editor:** For those of us lucky enough to live at the Jersey Shore, the Labor Day weekend usually marks the end of a successful summer season in the U.S. 2021 is different. Many states have run out of ICU capacity and the “*pandemic of the unvaccinated*” continues to rage. To access each article, just click on the headline.



[Daily US COVID cases up more than 300% from Labor Day last year](#), by Jessica Schladebeck, New York Daily News, 9/7/21  
TMR Topline™ - According to data from Johns Hopkins, Covid-19 cases are four times

higher than they were following Labor Day weekend 2020 and the daily death toll is twice as high. With many states out of ICU beds, Dr. Anthony Fauci told CNN: “*We are perilously close. You’re going to have to make some very tough choices.*” Nationally, just 62% of eligible Americans have received their jabs, leaving tens of millions at risk.

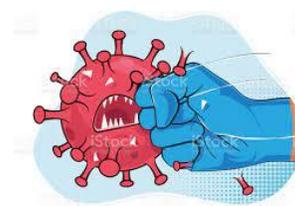


[CDC finds unvaccinated 11 times more likely to die of COVID](#),

Associated Press, 9/12/21

TMR Topline™ - Three new U.S. studies show that the Covid-19 vaccines remain effective against hospitalizations and deaths. According to the CDC, a study that tracked 600,000 cases in 13 states from April to mid-July

found that unvaccinated were 4.5 times more likely to get infected, 12 times more likely to be hospitalized and 11 times more likely to die from Covid-19. Two other studies released by the CDC hint of waning protection for older adults. One examined Covid-19 hospitalizations in nine states over the summer and found protection for those 75 and older was 76% compared to 89% for all other adults. In five VA Medical Centers, protection against Covid-19 hospitalizations was 95% among 18-64-year-olds compared to 80% among those 65 and older. This latest real-world data will help in deciding if at least some Americans need a booster, and how soon after their last dose.



[The Memo: Biden comes out punching on COVID-19](#), by Niall Strange, The Hill, 9/9/21

TMR Topline™ - President Biden is done pussyfooting around on Covid-19 vaccination rates and he believes most Americans agree with him. On 9/9, President Biden spoke to the nation and made it extremely clear that he has decided that a major change is needed to defeat Covid-19. He will now require vaccination wherever he can legally do so rather than continuing to propose vaccination just because as he said, “*It’s free, safe and convenient.*” The President announced that he will require all healthcare workers who serve Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries to get vaccinated. Federal Executive offices, and employers with 100 or more employees must insist that their employees be vaccinated. More than 80 million Americans will be affected by these new vaccination requirements. At least three Republican Governors are considering legal action to block these new requirements; however public opinion agrees with President Biden.

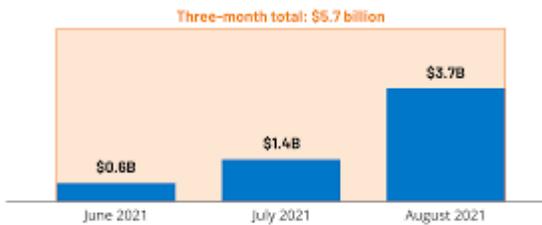


[Delta Air Lines’ \\$200 per month experiment for changing unvaccinated employees’ minds seems to be working](#), by Cory Stieg, CNBC, 9/9/21

**TMR Topline™** - The \$200/month surcharge for unvaccinated employees was announced on 8/25. In the following two weeks Delta's vaccination rate increased from 74% to 78% according to Dr. Henry Ting, Delta's chief health officer. Delta's average cost for a Covid-19 hospital stay is \$50,000, and the surcharge is intended to "address the financial risk" that comes with choosing not to get vaccinated, said CEO Ed Bastian. The airline did not see employee resignations spike because of the announcement, Ting said.

**TMR's Take** – The previous TMR issue stated: "The carrot didn't work, but the stick might." Delta's results are encouraging. If the unvaccinated continue to roll the dice, it's likely to come up craps!

**Preventable COVID-19 Hospitalizations Among Unvaccinated Adults Tops \$5 Billion Through August**



[Preventable Costs of Unvaccinated COVID-19 Patients Rise Sharply in August as Hospitalizations Surge](#), by Krukita Amin and Cynthia Cox, Kaiser Family Foundation, 9/14/21

**TMR Topline™** - The August surge in Covid-19 hospitalizations among the unvaccinated added an estimated \$3.7 billion in preventable costs, almost twice the estimates for June and July combined. An average Covid-19 hospitalization costs about \$20,000, and most of the cost is covered by insurance. The full analysis is available through the [Peterson-KFF Health System Tracker](#)

country  
roads  
take me home  
to the place  
I belong

[COVID hospitalizations, cases set records in West Virginia](#), Associated Press, 9/13/21

**TMR Topline™** - West Virginia's 154 virus-related deaths thus far in September has already

surpassed August's total. With 8,860 confirmed cases last week and a record 852 West Virginians hospitalized on Monday, Republican Governor Jim Justice scolded the 40% of residents over age 12 who continue to balk at receiving Covid-19 vaccines: "This is a pandemic of the unvaccinated." He introduced Linda Lanier, who said her

adult son, Joe Goodnite, refused to get vaccinated and contracted Covid-19 on a family vacation. He's been in a Charleston hospital for more than six weeks and remains on a ventilator. Lanier said her son "listened to all the negative and false accusations about vaccination. Being in the medical field myself, I tried to convince him. However, it didn't work. He listened to his friends. He listened to social media. And he just listened to what I call the garbage that's out there." But while he was still able to talk in the hospital, "he told people. 'Get vaccinated. You don't want this stuff,'" Lanier said. Justice has balked at issuing either a vaccination or new mask mandate.

**TMR's Take** – Mother knew best. TMR hopes that Mr. Goodnite survives his ignorance, but the roughly 80 million unvaccinated Americans are stressing the healthcare system to a breaking point. Their infections are preventable. Sadly, West Virginia won kudos in January for being first in the nation to finish offering first doses to nursing home residents by the end of December (see TMR January 2021-3).



[Biden Administration Goes Bigger on Cutting Drug Prices](#), by Margot Sanger-Katz, New York Times, 9/9/21

**TMR Topline™** - The Biden administration has endorsed a proposal to limit prices for prescription drugs, calling for the government to negotiate prices with drug makers and applying those prices to Medicare and all drug purchasers. HHS's 29-page [white paper](#) includes a range of recommendations to foster more competition among drugmakers and make drugs more affordable for Medicare beneficiaries. PhRMA CEO Steve Uhl called the policy "an existential risk to the industry." HHS's proposal could help fund other expensive priorities, such as expanding Medicare benefits to cover [dental care](#), and providing insurance coverage to uninsured people [in states that have not expanded](#) Medicaid. Most other Western governments negotiate directly with companies over prices, but in the U.S. only commercial health plans are allowed to do so. A recent RAND Corporation [paper](#) estimates that in the U.S., prescription drugs cost more than 250% of the prices paid by other OECD member nations.

**TMR's Take** – America's most powerful lobbyists, PhRMA and America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP), will continue to oppose any measure that levels the playing field to foster competition and eliminates the Medicare Advantage advantage!