The Health Policy Institute of Ohio is collecting the latest research so that Ohio policymakers and other stakeholders can make informed decisions on the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic. HPIO has also created a Coronavirus (COVID-19) resource page to serve as a "one-stop-shop" for links to the Ohio Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other sources of frequently updated, reputable information.

Guidelines aimed at helping providers care for COVID-19 patients

New guidance and analysis gives healthcare providers new insight on how to care for COVID-19 patients.

A panel of experts who had previously issued guidelines for sepsis and septic shock recently issued guidance for managing critically ill adults with COVID-19 (Journal of the American Medical Association, March 26). The guidelines include four best practice statements and 43 recommendations on infection control and testing, hemodynamic support, ventilatory support and therapy. The guidelines also specify areas in need of ongoing research.

Analysis shows severe COVID-19 impacting Americans of all ages

An early analysis of U.S. cases by the CDC (March 26) between Feb. 12 and March 16 found that not all severe cases of COVID-19 involve older adults. Of the cases reported during that early time period, 31% were people age 65 and older. Older Americans comprised 45% of hospitalizations, 53% of ICU admissions and 80% of deaths. While the virus appears to be affecting older adults in higher numbers, the analysis found that 20% of hospitalizations were adults age 20-44. The CDC continues to recommend social distancing to slow the spread of the virus and protect the healthcare system. They also recommend that older adults maintain supplies of nonperishable foods and prescription medications.

Chinese studies shed light on outcomes for pregnant women with COVID-19 and newborns

Several early studies from China examine the impact on children who are born to a mother who has tested positive for COVID-19.
A case report (Lancet, March 24) of seven full-term pregnant women who tested positive for COVID-19 in Wuhan, China, found that people infected with COVID-19 late in pregnancy experienced "very good" maternal, fetal and neonatal outcomes, which were achieved with "intensive, active management." The report provides information for healthcare providers with patients who are pregnant and positive for COVID-19. However, it is important to note that the report includes a small sample and there has been no assessment of long-term outcomes and/or mother-to-child transmission.

Another study (Journal of the American Medical Association, March 26) of six moms in Wuhan, China, infected with confirmed COVID-19 found that the virus was not detected in any of the newborns and all of the infants had positive birth outcomes. The study measured antibodies from infant throat swabs and blood samples. All six infants had antibodies for COVID-19 detected in their serum, although information about the mode of transmission is not conclusive. This early research indicates that infants born to women with COVID-19 pneumonia have positive birth outcomes and have antibodies for COVID-19. Like the other study of pregnant women in Wuhan, this study is limited by a small sample size, lack of cord blood, amniotic fluid and breast milk studies and by incomplete information on the outcome of the infants.