

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

13th Nov 2020

News Highlights

Japan sees highest levels of Covid-19 since August amidst fears of a third wave

Health experts in Japan are predicting a 'third wave' of infections after the country logged a near-record of 1,547 new coronavirus cases on Wednesday, [more than three months after its highest single day record of 1,596 cases registered earlier on August 6](#). Areas with big big urban populations have seen a spike in the number of cases as winter sets in and people are spending more time indoors without enough ventilation, facilitating the spread of the virus.

Herd immunity hopes dashed as Sweden sees surge in coronavirus cases

Sweden has been an outlier in the way it tackled the coronavirus pandemic, with the government not imposing strict lockdowns and keeping schools and restaurants open in the hope of developing herd immunity in the country. [However, with the second wave of the pandemic raging on](#), new infections and hospital admissions have surged in the country, with health officials predicting that thousands of additional people would need hospital care over the coming weeks.

Restaurants and gyms most likely places to catch Covid-19, data suggests

A computer model, developed by Stanford University scientists, has indicated that 'superspreader sites' such as coffee shops and gyms are the places where one would most likely be infected with the coronavirus and also predicted that millions more people could be infected with the virus if these establishments were opened at full capacity in major U.S. cities. [The model suggested that reopening at 100% occupancy in Chicago would lead to nearly 3.5 million cases](#), but a 20% occupancy cap would only lead to about 500,000 new infections.

As cases rise in the U.S., it is reported that a Biden Covid-19 advisor has suggested a month-long lockdown paid for by the government

Michael Osterholm, a senior health advisor to President-elect Joe Biden, said that the U.S. [is well-positioned financially to withstand a lockdown of a month to combat a steep increase in Covid-19 cases in the country](#). Osterholm said that the federal government had the capacity currently to pay for a package to cover for individual workers, [medium sized companies and institutions even as the country is on track to hit 150,000 cases a day very shortly](#).

Lockdown Exit

How China claimed victory over the coronavirus

Millions have been tested in response to recent outbreaks and Chinese infections are well below many other countries. Lockdowns and mass testing are China's main weapons in the fight against the pandemic

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/3109393/how-china-claimed-victory-over-coronavirus>

Families make the dash across SA to be re-united with loved ones in Western Australia

Campers and caravans are on the move in South Australia as the WA hard border is set to come down early on Saturday morning. For some families, it's been an emotional trek to reunite with their loved ones. Newcastle couple Pete and Kim Mackie haven't seen their children and grandchildren in Perth for 11 months, and said they've skipped the sightseeing through South Australia to take the direct route to be with their family.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-11-12/sa-campers-dash-to-be-reunited-in-western-australia/12878660>

England: 'shocking' decline in primary pupils' attainment after lockdown

There has been a “shocking” decline in primary school pupils’ levels of attainment in England after lockdown, testing has revealed, with younger children and those from disadvantaged backgrounds worst affected. The results provide the first detailed insight into the impact of the pandemic on academic attainment among young children and show an average decline in performance of between 5% and 15% on previous years. The biggest drop was in maths scores, and overall seven-year-olds were the most impacted. The data, shared exclusively with the Guardian, is based on standardised tests sat by a quarter of a million pupils earlier this term. Researchers said they expected attainment to drop after more than five months out of school for most pupils, but were surprised at the scale of decline.

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/nov/11/england-shocking-decline-in-primary-pupils-attainment-after-lockdown>

Exit Strategies

South Korea in final talks over COVID-19 vaccines, seeks supplies for 60% population

South Korea is in final talks with global drugmakers including Pfizer Inc over potential coronavirus vaccines as it seeks to secure supplies to cover 60% of its population this year, health authorities said on Thursday. The government has allotted 172 billion won (116.57 million pounds) to purchase an initial 60 million doses to fend off persistent COVID-19 outbreaks that have pummelled Asia’s fourth-largest economy and upended daily life for its 52 million people. This week, Pfizer said its experimental COVID-19 vaccine was more than 90% effective amid a hastened global race to contain the pandemic which has killed more than 1 million people since it emerged in China late last year.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-southkorea/south-korea-in-final-talks-over-covid-19-vaccines-seek-supplies-for-60-population-idUKKBN27S0SD>

U.S. govt partners with pharmacy chains to increase COVID-19 vaccine access

The U.S. government is partnering with regional pharmacy chains and independent community pharmacies to increase access to COVID-19 vaccines whenever they are made available, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services said on Thursday. The partnership will cover about 60% of pharmacies throughout the 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, the U.S. health agency said. Walgreens Boots Alliance Inc, CVS Health Corp, Walmart Inc, Kroger Co and Costco Wholesale Corp are among the companies that have so far agreed to participate, the U.S. agency said in a statement.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-hhs-pharmacies-idUSL4N2HY4SW>

Feds announce COVID-19 vaccine agreement with drug stores

Federal health officials have reached an agreement with pharmacies across the U.S. to distribute free coronavirus vaccines after they are approved and become available to the public. The goal eventually is to make getting a COVID-19 vaccine like getting a flu shot. Thursday's agreement with major chain drug stores, grocery market pharmacies and other chains and networks covers about 3 in 5 pharmacies in all 50 states and U.S. territories such as Puerto Rico. It looks ahead to a time next spring when yet-to-be-approved vaccines will start to become available beyond priority groups such as health care workers and nursing home residents. “The vast majority of Americans live within five

miles of a pharmacy,” said Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar, calling the agreement “a critical step toward making sure all Americans have access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines when they are available.”

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/feds-announce-covid19-vaccine-agreement-with-drug-stores-covid19-coronavirus-vaccines-pharmacies-public-pfizer-b1722032.html>

English pharmacy teams among second cohort in line for COVID-19 vax, says PSNC

Community pharmacy teams will be among the second cohort in line to get vaccinated against COVID-19 – alongside other health and social care workers, PSNC has claimed. The Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) made the case for community pharmacy teams to receive the COVID-19 vaccine “alongside all other health and social care professionals”, and claimed that NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) “has now confirmed to us that this will be the case”, the negotiator said in an update to contractors earlier this week (November 10). Community Pharmacy Scotland (CPS) director of operations Matt Barclay told C+D today (November 12) that CPS understands that pharmacy teams will be included “as part of the health and social care rollout of any programme” in Scotland.

<https://www.chemistanddruggist.co.uk/news/english-pharmacy-teams-among-second-cohort-line-covid-19-vax>

Spanish government to reduce sales tax on face masks from 21% to 4%

Spain will reduce the rate of sales tax on face masks from 21% to 4%, said the government on Wednesday. Finance Minister and government spokesperson María Jesús Montero said in Congress yesterday that the Cabinet will approve a decree next week reducing the value added tax (VAT) on these products, which are mandatory in public spaces for everyone aged six and above. The compulsory use of face masks has been in place for months, as Spain continues to struggle to curb the spread of the coronavirus. On Tuesday, the number of reported single-day fatalities reached 411, a number unseen since the days of the full lockdown in the spring.

https://english.elpais.com/spanish_news/2020-11-12/spanish-government-to-reduce-sales-tax-on-face-masks-from-21-to-4.html

Victoria zeroes in on last step out of lockdown

Victoria has again recorded no new cases of coronavirus and no further deaths, for the 13th day in a row. There are three active cases in the state and there were more than 20,000 tests processed in the last day, Health Minister Martin Foley said. “This extraordinary figure of over 20,000 shows Victorians want to stay safe and stay open by coming forward in such extraordinary numbers even with the slightest of symptoms. I would urge all Victorians to continue to do so.” Mr Foley said.

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/victoria-zeroes-in-on-last-step-out-of-lockdown-20201112-p56dux.html>

Coronavirus: Safety officials had 'political' pressure to approve PPE

Britain's safety watchdog felt leaned on by the government to make factually incorrect statements about PPE suits bought for NHS staff earlier in the Covid-19 pandemic, the BBC has found. Emails reveal how the Health and Safety Executive said protective suits, bought by the government in April, had not been tested to the correct standard. But the emails describe “political” pressure to approve them for use. The government said all PPE is “quality assured” and only sent out if safe.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-54897737>

COVID-19: Test and Trace still missing four in 10 contacts of those who tested positive

Test and Trace reached 60.4% of contacts of people who tested positive for coronavirus in the week ending 4 November, latest figures show. This is slightly up on the previous week's figure of 59.9%, making it one of the lowest rates since the scheme began. Figures also show that 149,253 people tested positive for coronavirus at least once in England in the same week - the highest weekly number since the system was launched in May, and an 8% increase on the previous week.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-test-and-trace-still-missing-four-in-10-contacts-of-those-who-tested-positive-121>

England test-and-trace system hit by 'huge' IT problems last month

The government's struggling test and trace system for England was hit by "huge" IT issues that delayed calls to some of the most vulnerable coronavirus patients last month, NHS emails show. Sources said the previously undisclosed problems led to delays of up to 48 hours in reaching potentially infected people linked to care homes and hospitals. The government's scientific advisers have said 80% of an infected person's close contacts should be reached within 24 hours to stem the spread of the disease. The IT failure happened in mid-October when the numbers of infections and people in hospital were rising exponentially across large parts of the UK. They will add to concerns that the £12bn system has failed to keep up with the second wave, which it was supposed to help prevent.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/12/englands-test-and-trace-system-hit-by-huge-it-problems-last-month>

Partisan Exits

Coronavirus UK: Now 70 rebel Tory MPs oppose lockdown extension

Covid Recovery Group has formed to oppose a third national lockdown after current one ends in December. The group initially formed with 50 Tory MPs, but is said to have grown to 70, with 25 more considering joining. It comes amid fears Britons could face more confusion when current lockdown comes to an end in December. Government is now looking again at Tier system and treating regions together rather than cities individually. New tougher Tier 4 for some regions that struggle to manage infection rates has been mooted for weeks

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8939965/Rebel-group-Tory-MPs-determined-oppose-extension-Covid-lockdown-grows-70.html>

Germany's protests against coronavirus restrictions are becoming increasingly radical

Around 9:30 on a quiet Sunday morning late last month, a crudely made explosive device went off with a small bang and a flash in central Berlin near the building of an association of German scientific institutes. A note found nearby demanded the end to coronavirus restrictions. Just a few hours earlier, molotov cocktails had been tossed at the front of the Robert Koch Institute, the German federal agency responsible for controlling the virus. The incidents come against the backdrop of a growing violent undercurrent at large-scale street demonstrations against coronavirus restrictions, including one attended by 20,000 people Saturday in Leipzig. The developments point to an increasingly radicalized movement of virus skeptics in Germany, embraced by the country's far-right extremist groups and energized by global conspiracy theories, notably those put forth by the U.S.-born QAnon movement.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/germany-coronavirus-lockdown-protests/2020/11/12/3e9879ea-2422-11eb-9c4a-0dc6242c4814_story.html

New survey shows more than half the French flout Covid-19 lockdown rules

The Ifop survey confirmed that the French are taking the second nationwide shutdown far less seriously than the first in March-April. It showed that 60 percent had flouted the rules at least once, either by giving a false reason for going out on their self-signed permission slip or by meeting up with family and friends. The figure was far higher than during the first lockdown when the proportion of rule-breakers stood at under 40 percent during the first six weeks.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/survey-shows-more-half-french-153105793.html>

Bolsonaro's clash with Sao Paulo governor over the Chinese vaccine tainted with politics

Brazil's national health regulator allowed clinical trials of a Chinese-developed Covid-19 vaccine to resume on Wednesday, two days after suspending them in what critics called a decision tainted by politics. The regulatory agency, Anvisa, said it had now received more details on the nature of the

adverse “incident” that led it to halt final stage trials of the CoronaVac vaccine, and had “sufficient information to allow vaccination to resume.” Public health officials had said the incident that led to the suspension – a volunteer recipient’s death, which police are investigating as a suicide – had no connection with the vaccine.

<https://en.mercopress.com/2020/11/12/bolsonaro-s-clash-with-sao-paulo-governor-over-the-chinese-vaccine-tainted-with-politics>

Anthony Fauci says working with Trump Administration on the coronavirus pandemic has been 'very stressful'

Dr Fauci, who has headed the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases since 1984, told 7.30's Leigh Sales working with the Trump administration on the coronavirus pandemic had “obviously been very stressful”. “I mean, it's just, to deny that would be to deny reality,” he said. “When you have public figures like [former Trump advisor Steve] Bannon calling for your beheading. That's really kind of unusual. “That's not the kind of thing you think about when you're going through medical school to become a physician.”

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-11-11/anthony-fauci-coronavirus-vaccine-donald-trump-joe-biden/12873046>

Continued Lockdown

Covid-19 restrictions in NI extended for one more week

Covid-19 restrictions in Northern Ireland will be extended for one more week with a partial reopening of some sectors next Friday, in a compromise reached by the executive. A proposal from DUP Economy Minister Diane Dodds was supported by the Ulster Unionists and Alliance. Sinn Féin voted against the move and the SDLP abstained. It means close contact services and unlicensed premises can reopen on Friday, 20 November.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-54924606>

Northern Ireland parties reach deal to extend COVID-19 restrictions

Northern Ireland's power-sharing government on Thursday agreed to extend COVID-19 restrictions for between one and two weeks, falling short of stricter measures demanded by Irish nationalist parties. Northern Ireland in mid-October became the first part of the United Kingdom to reimpose strict COVID-19 constraints, closing schools for two weeks and bars and restaurants for four, but the measures were due to lapse on Friday. The pro-British Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) has been pushing for a swift end to the restrictions to help small business owners, but the rival Ulster Unionists and Irish nationalist parties Sinn Fein and the SDLP said high infection rates meant restrictions should be maintained.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/northern-ireland-parties-reach-deal-to-extend-covid-19-restrictions/ar-BB1aXs1v>

German health minister on new lockdown measures: The second wave will be stronger

Over 261 people have died in Germany, which has had about 705,000 total Covid-19 cases so far. German Federal Minister of Health Jens Spahn joins Wilfred Frost in an exclusive CNBC interview to discuss the country’s plans to combat the coronavirus pandemic as well as the relationship Germany hopes to have with President-elect Biden.

<https://www.cnbc.com/video/2020/11/11/german-health-minister-discusses-new-lockdown-restrictions-the-second-wave-will-be-stronger-than-the-first.html>

German health minister says it's too early to tell if its partial Covid lockdown will be extended

It is “too early to say” whether Germany will extend its four-week partial lockdown, according to health minister Jens Spahn. “We need patience, actually, because the numbers of today actually are the infections that have taken place one week or more days ago,” Spahn told CNBC. “It will be the

end of this week that we might see the results of the new lockdown light we have now," he added.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/11/too-soon-to-say-if-germany-will-extend-covid-lockdown-health-minister.html>

Spain will require a negative COVID test for residents of high-risk countries starting Nov. 23

Travellers bound for Spain from countries considered high-risk areas for the coronavirus will be asked to provide proof of a negative test to visit the European country, authorities said Wednesday. Starting Nov. 23, travellers to Spain will be required to submit a negative test result from within 72 hours prior to their planned departure. They will be able to do so via the internet, a smartphone application, or with a document before boarding a plane or boat. The proof of being virus-free before traveling will come on top of the temperature checks performed on arriving passengers at Spain's airports and ports. The measure will apply to countries designated as "high risk."

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/travel/news/2020/11/12/international-travel-spain-requires-negative-covid-test-nov-23/6264271002/>

Catalonia's bars and restaurants to remain closed 10 more days

On a day when the official death toll from Covid-19 in Spain exceeded 40,000 since the start of the pandemic, authorities in several parts of the country announced new restrictions in a bid to curb the spread of the virus. The Catalan government on Thursday announced that bars and restaurants across the region will remain closed for an additional 10-day period in a bid to curb the spread of the coronavirus. Food and drink establishments have been closed for a month, and will remain so at least until November 23. The measure has evidenced a division of opinion among the governing partners and it has also met with criticism from all affected sectors of the economy.

https://english.elpais.com/spanish_news/2020-11-12/catalonias-bars-and-restaurants-to-remain-closed-10-more-days.html

Spain's Catalonia to keep bars, restaurants shut another ten days to curb COVID-19

Restaurants, bars and shopping malls will remain closed in Catalonia for at least another ten days to rein in the COVID-19 pandemic, regional officials said on Thursday. Unlike most other Western European countries, Spain has held off on ordering a nationwide confinement to control its second wave of infection, instead letting regional authorities implement their own policies. This has led to a patchwork of measures, with Catalonia's strictest approach contrasting with the Madrid region's decision to leave bars and restaurants open. Catalonia has Spain's second-highest number of COVID-19 cases after Madrid.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-spain/spains-catalonia-to-keep-bars-restaurants-shut-another-ten-days-to-curb-covid-19-idUKKBN27S2AO>

Pandemic and lockdown fuelled domestic violence, new study confirms

Australia's pandemic and lockdown fuelled a significant rise in domestic violence, according to a new study published yesterday by the Australian Institute of Criminology. Researchers explored the relationship between social isolation, time spent at home, financial stress and domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic - with some startling results. The paper found that most women who were victims had not experienced violence by their partner prior to the pandemic, for example. Of those who had, two-thirds experienced further violence during this period.

<https://www.australianimes.co.uk/news/pandemic-and-lockdown-fuelled-domestic-violence-new-study-confirms/>

German minister sees COVID-19 restrictions through winter

Germany's health minister said on Thursday he expects restrictions imposed to curb the coronavirus pandemic will continue through winter, with life unlikely to get back to normal in December or January even if infections fall. "I don't see events with more than 10 or 15 people happening this winter," Jens Spahn told RBB broadcaster. Germany reported 21,866 new coronavirus cases on Thursday, bringing the total to 727,553 and jumping back above 20,000 after four days below that

figure, while the death toll rose by 215 to 11,982, according to the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) for infectious diseases. Chancellor Angela Merkel and the leaders of Germany's states are due to meet on Monday to review whether partial lockdown measures imposed on Nov. 2 have been enough to slow a steep rise in new infections that risks overwhelming hospitals.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-germany/german-minister-sees-covid-19-restrictions-through-winter-idUKKBN27S1M8>

Call for 'designated visitors' to tackle coronavirus care home loneliness

Care home providers and relatives today called on the Government to urgently allow each resident to have a "designated visitor" to help tackle "heartbreaking loneliness". The plan would mean that each resident has at least one designated visitor who, like care home staff, would be tested for Covid-19 weekly and wear protective PPE, allowing them to make regular visits safely. This would alleviate the isolation of residents, some of whom have been denied visits for nine months. The Government agreed to pilot the approach in October but there are claims it is dragging its feet.

https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/call-designated-visitors-tackle-covid-care-home-loneliness-b66410.html?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1605167122

Scientific Viewpoint

Russia says its COVID-19 vaccine is looking 92% effective, but skeptics wonder

Developers of Sputnik V, Russia's experimental COVID-19 vaccine, say that early, interim data from a large trial suggest that the shot appears to be 92% effective, but experts have raised questions about the claim. The Russian announcement Wednesday, which did not include detailed information about the trial, came two days after a similar announcement by Pfizer but is based on far fewer coronavirus cases. Some experts say that the data may have been rushed out in an effort to keep up with the worldwide race for a successful vaccine. Russia touted Sputnik V, a two-shot vaccine, as the world's first to receive a government go-ahead after it was approved in early August without completing advanced testing. The move drew considerable criticism from experts who said data from tens of thousands of people were needed to ensure the safety and effectiveness of the vaccine before it is widely distributed.

<https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2020-11-12/russia-covid-19-vaccine-92-percent-effective-skeptics-wonder>

Another Covid-19 breakthrough as researchers find inhaled multiple sclerosis drug proven to work

Just 13 per cent of patients given SNG001 fell ill enough to need intensive care. That was compared to 22 per cent of Covid patients who received a placebo. SNG001 uses naturally-occurring protein interferon beta which fights viruses

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8941751/Another-Covid-19-breakthrough-researchers-inhaled-multiple-sclerosis-drug-proven-work.html>

Asian people are more likely to get Covid-19 and die, study claims

Researchers combed through data of 18million people in 50 studies. They found higher risk of infection in Asian and black people compared to white. But only those of Asian ethnicity had higher odds of ICU or death. Although the study is the largest of its kind, it still leaves questions unanswered

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8938769/Asian-people-likely-Covid-19-die-study-claims.html>

Pharma companies must open their books on the funding agreements for covid-19 vaccines

Recently, the Financial Times reported that there is an important limitation to pharmaceutical corporation AstraZeneca's not-for-profit promises on the production of their covid-19 vaccine. With

hundreds of other vaccines under development, supported by an exceptional level of public funding, this is a cause for concern. Pharmaceutical corporations must open their books, make all funding and licensing agreements public, and substantiate any no-profit claims with data. We know that pharma does not tend to share this information willingly, so it is time for governments to take charge, demand transparency, and put their commitments to equitable access of covid-19 vaccines into action. As someone working on innovation and access to healthcare issues for Médecins Sans Frontières, an international medical humanitarian organisation, and a person living with cystic fibrosis who is at high risk of severe covid-19, we can see how groundbreaking a safe, effective, and affordable covid-19 vaccine would be in our joint global journey towards normality.

<https://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2020/11/12/pharma-companies-must-open-their-books-on-the-funding-agreements-for-covid-19-vaccine-candidates/>

Implications of early COVID-19 vaccine data

News this week has largely been dominated by talk about a COVID-19 vaccine and finnCap's Rude Health Life Sciences Sector Report is one of the first to focus on the implications of the early data surrounding the vaccine. The report acknowledges that the initial results are promising but warns that an over-reaction in the market shouldn't diminish the need for more treatments and testing in the future. At the beginning of the week, Pfizer and BioNTech announced the first interim analysis from the Phase III study of its COVID-19 vaccine candidate, which was found to be more than 90% effective in preventing COVID-19 in participants without evidence of prior SARS-CoV-2 infection in the first interim efficacy analysis.

<https://pharmafield.co.uk/opinion/implications-of-early-covid-19-vaccine-data/>

Need for U.S. Virus Lockdowns to Be Determined: Johns Hopkins

Johns Hopkins University Professor of Nursing Jason Farley discusses the potential need for lockdowns in the United States and the make-up of President-elect Joe Biden's Covid task force. He speaks with Bloomberg's Francine Lacqua on "Bloomberg Surveillance." The Bloomberg School of Public Health is supported by Michael R. Bloomberg, founder and majority owner of Bloomberg LP, the parent company of Bloomberg News

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/videos/2020-11-12/need-for-u-s-virus-lockdowns-to-be-determined-johns-hopkins-video>

Covid:19: Italy has wasted the sacrifices of the first wave, say experts

The lessons of the first and harshest lockdown in Europe have not been heeded as Italy drowns in a second wave, writes Marta Paterlini - In October, Giulia Chiarcossi, 80, called her doctor's office to arrange her flu vaccination, as she has done every year for the past 15 years, usually getting it done straightaway. "My family doctor told me to call back in November," she says, a little surprised. There were no flu vaccinations available. Mindful of the dangers of winter and a potential twin epidemic of covid-19 and influenza, the Italian Ministry of Health has for months urged regions to start administering flu vaccinations early and extend free coverage to people over 60. Chiarcossi lives in Brescia in the northern region of Lombardy, one of the epicentres of the first coronavirus wave, which began in February. Italy's most wealthy and populous region, Lombardy was until May the hardest hit region in the whole of Europe.¹

<https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m4279>

Boosting Psychological, Social Well-Being Could Play Role In Countering Conspiracy Theories, Misinformation About COVID-19, Opinion Piece Says

To counter conspiracy theories, boost well-being - Aleksandra Cichocka, political psychologist at the University of Kent and affiliate of the Nicolaus Copernicus University...."[T]hose who believe conspiracy theories are less likely than those who don't to comply with public health measures. The World Health Organization has called on countries to manage the spread of false information. But

how? ... [The Routledge Handbook of Conspiracy Theories] concludes that it is easier to spread them than to refute them. Correcting entrenched beliefs is very difficult. So it is better to prevent falsehoods taking root than to try to weed them out. That means looking beyond their content and the platforms and algorithms that fuel their spread. We need to examine what makes people susceptible. ... The COVID-19 pandemic created a perfect storm for vulnerability to conspiracy narratives. Uncertainty and anxiety are high. Lockdown and social distancing bring isolation.

<https://www.kff.org/news-summary/boosting-psychological-social-well-being-could-play-role-in-counteracting-conspiracy-theories-misinformation-about-covid-19-opinion-piece-says/>

COVID-19: BioNTech founder behind coronavirus vaccine says first UK patients could get jab next month

The scientist behind the BioNTech/Pfizer vaccine has told Sky News people in the UK could be vaccinated against coronavirus by the middle of next month. Speaking in his first interview with a UK broadcaster, Professor Ugur Sahin, co-founder of German firm BioNTech, said the first vaccines could be rolled out to patients nationwide mid-December. But he said it would depend on whether the UK regulator licenses it in time, adding: "The earliest time point for supplying vaccines will not be before the middle of December.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-biontech-founder-behind-coronavirus-vaccine-says-first-uk-patients-could-get-jab-next-month-12130523>

Black people are twice as likely to get Covid-19 but do not face a greater risk of death — yet Asian people DO, study claims

Researchers combed through data of 18million people in 50 studies. They found higher risk of infection in Asian and black people compared to white. But only those of Asian ethnicity had higher odds of ICU or death. Although the study is the largest of its kind, it still leaves questions unanswered

https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8938769/Asian-people-likely-Covid-19-die-study-claims.html?ito=social-twitter_dailymailUK

Gates Foundation adds \$70 million more funding for COVID vaccines for poor

The Gates Foundation added another \$70 million of funding on Thursday to global efforts to develop and distribute vaccines and treatments against the COVID-19 pandemic, saying it hoped other international donors would now also pledge more. An extra \$50 million will go to the COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC) led by the GAVI vaccine alliance, the foundation said, and another \$20 million to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) which is co-funding development of several COVID-19 vaccine candidates.

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-gates-funding/gates-foundation-adds-70-million-more-funding-for-covid-vaccines-for-poor-idUSKBN27S0QT?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=twitter

India's Serum says made 40 million doses of AstraZeneca's COVID vaccine, to make Novavax shot soon

Serum Institute of India, the world's largest vaccine producer, said on Thursday it has made 40 million doses of AstraZeneca's potential COVID-19 vaccine, and would soon begin making Novavax's rival shot, as they both seek regulatory approval. While there are no COVID-19 vaccines approved yet and trials are still under way to prove they are safe and effective, leading drugmakers have been funded to begin production early to expedite deliveries, as the pandemic has killed more than 1.2 million people worldwide. AstraZeneca said last week that it was holding back deliveries of its COVID-19 vaccine candidate while it awaits the data from late-stage clinical trials, which got delayed due to a summer dip in UK coronavirus infections. Serum declined to comment on whether the 40 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine were meant for global supply or only for India.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-vaccine-india-idUKKBN27S0JB?taid=5facef07c2578a0001c77739>

[&utm_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm_medium=trueAnthem&utm_source=twitter](#)

Covid-19: Government faces legal action over £75m contract for antibody tests

Legal action has been launched over the UK government's award of a £75m (€84m; \$99m) contract for one million antibody tests to a business consortium, alleging that the deal unlawfully bypassed safeguards protecting taxpayers' money. Judicial review proceedings issued on 11 November by the Good Law Project, a not-for-profit legal organisation, say that the government was actively involved in setting up the UK Rapid Test Consortium and gave it £10m to buy components to manufacture testing kits. The contract to purchase the AbC-19 Rapid Tests was signed without a public tender and without evaluating the accuracy of the tests, the action says. This, the Good Law Project claim argues, raises serious concerns about the maladministration of public funds. A study¹ published in The BMJ this week questions the accuracy of the AbC-19 test and suggests that, if used in real life settings, the test would result in a large number of false positive results. These conclusions contrast with an earlier (not yet peer reviewed) study suggesting that the test gave no false positive results.

https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m4427?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_term=hootsuite&utm_content=sme&utm_campaign=usage

Why I volunteered for a COVID-19 vaccine trial

So why did I volunteer to be injected with an experimental vaccine for COVID-19? That's what some of my friends wanted to know when I told them what I was doing. "Who knows about the long term," texted a former college roommate. "Seems like a gamble." It all began in July when the British government announced it was seeking lots of volunteers for large-scale clinical trials of new vaccines. Only a month before, a good friend of mine here had died of COVID-19 after spending weeks on a ventilator. Curious, I completed an online form, figuring I wasn't committing myself to anything.

https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSKBN27S0YM?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=twitter

Where COVID lurks: Restaurants and gyms are behind infection surge and where you're most likely to catch virus, while malls, convenience stores and pharmacies are all low-risk, cell phone tracking data suggests

A computer model analyzed 10 cities and looked at where people go during the day, how long they stay and the occupancy. It found most COVID-19 occur at 'superspreader' sites, such as coffee shops, full-service restaurants and gyms. Keeping department stores, convenience stores, gas stations and pharmacies open contributed relatively few additional infections. Next, they created trade off charts to determine how limited occupancy could reduce infection risk. In Chicago, reopening at 100% occupancy would lead to nearly 3.5 million cases but a 20% occupancy cap would only lead to about 500,000 new infections. In Los Angeles, full capacity would lead to more than three million new cases but limiting occupancy reduce the number of infections by 75%

https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-8933873/Superspreader-computer-model-shows-COVID-infections-cities-spread-restaurants-gyms.html?ito=social-twitter_dailymailus

Coronavirus Resurgence

Czech Republic reports 8,925 new COVID-19 cases

The Czech Republic reported 8,925 new coronavirus cases for Nov. 11, Health Ministry data showed on Thursday, well below a record daily tally registered a week ago as the country seeks to push down Europe's highest per-capita infection rate. Wednesday's tally brings the total number of infections in the country of 10.7 million since the pandemic started to 438,805. A record one-day tally of 15,727 cases was hit on Wednesday last week.

<https://www.msn.com/en-au/lifestyle/wellbeing/czech-republic-reports-8925-new-covid-19-cases/ar-BB1aVTWg>

Montana emergency physicians warn Covid-19 has their community on 'the brink of

disaster'

A group of emergency physicians in Montana is pleading with their community to follow Covid-19 restrictions, warning that a surge in cases and dwindling hospital capacity in Ravalli County has the community "on the brink of disaster." "This is a real threat, and it is getting worse daily -- there is no exaggeration in saying that," said a letter signed by seven emergency physicians affiliated with Marcus Daly Memorial Hospital in Ravalli County. "We are on the brink of disaster."

https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/montana-emergency-physicians-warn-covid-19-has-their-community-on-the-brink-of-disaster/ar-BB1aXxdC?bep_ref=1&bep_csid=21268%2520%2522%2520target

Covid: UK daily cases reach new high of 33,470

A record 33,470 people have tested positive for coronavirus in the UK government's latest daily figure. It is the highest daily number reported in the UK, although testing capacity has increased greatly since the first wave of the epidemic. It brings the total number of cases in the UK to more than 1.29 million. Government minister Alok Sharma said rising case numbers were "a reminder to us about why we are taking action to stop the spread of the virus". On Wednesday the UK became the first country in Europe to pass 50,000 Covid deaths, based on government figures. On Thursday, a further 563 people were reported to have died within 28 days of a positive Covid test, down from Wednesday's figure of 595. Other ways to measure deaths, such as the number of people whose death certificates mention Covid-19, have put the overall toll at more than 60,000.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-54908680>

Video of dead man in hospital lavatory highlights COVID crisis in Italy's south

The health crisis in Italy's third largest city Naples is out of control, Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio said on Thursday, after a video was posted on social media showing a corpse sprawled in a hospital lavatory. The unidentified man was a suspected coronavirus sufferer who had been waiting for a test in a packed, squalid hospital emergency room, which was also shown in the amateur video.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-italy-idUSL8N2HW7KM>

Italian hospitals face breaking point in fall virus surge

Dr. Luca Cabrini was certain his hospital in the heart of Lombardy's lake district would reach its breaking point caring for 300 COVID-19 patients. So far, virus patients fill 500 beds and counting. Italy, which shocked the world and itself when hospitals in the wealthy north were overwhelmed with coronavirus cases last spring, is again facing a systemic crisis, as confirmed positives pass the symbolic threshold of 1 million. "We are very close to not keeping up. I cannot say when we will reach the limit, but that day is not far off," said Cabrini, who runs the intensive care ward at Varese's Circolo hospital, the largest in the province of 1 million people northwest of Milan.

<https://apnews.com/article/international-news-milan-italy-coronavirus-pandemic-51f93fa0a281f3c7db7d8cf8760cfb38>

Swedish surge in Covid cases dashes hopes of herd immunity

New infections and hospital admissions have surged in Sweden as the country battles a second wave of the coronavirus pandemic that officials had hoped its light-touch, anti-lockdown approach would mitigate. "We consider the situation extremely serious," the director of health and medical care services for Stockholm, Björn Eriksson, told the state broadcaster SVT this week. "We can expect noticeably more people needing hospital care over the coming weeks." Swedish hospitals were treating 1,004 patients for Covid-19, SVT said, an increase of 60% over the previous week's 627. Data from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control suggests the rise in recent weeks may be Europe's fastest.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/12/covid-infections-in-sweden-surge-dashing-hopes-of-herd-immunity>

Italy passes 1m Covid cases as calls grow for national lockdown

Italy surpassed 1m confirmed coronavirus infections on Wednesday, as its death toll climbed rapidly in a second wave that is wreaking havoc on hospitals. The government is biding its time on resorting

to another national lockdown despite repeated calls from overwhelmed medics for such a policy. A further 623 Covid-related deaths were registered on Wednesday, the highest daily tally since early April, and there were 32,961 new infections. Italy is the third country in mainland Europe, after Spain and France, to exceed 1m cases. Italy was the first country in Europe to be hit by the pandemic and has the highest death toll on the continent, at 42,953. Doctors said this week there would be an additional 10,000 deaths in a month unless drastic action was taken.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/11/italy-passes-1m-covid-cases-as-calls-grow-for-national-lockdown>

Spain's official coronavirus death toll rises above 40,000

Spain has now exceeded 40,000 official coronavirus victims since the start of the pandemic, according to the latest report from the Health Ministry. Wednesday's data saw 349 Covid-19-related fatalities added to the overall death toll, taking the total to 40,105. The ministry also reported 19,096 new infections, a slight rise on the figure for the day before. The official number of cases confirmed by testing now exceeds 1.4 million in Spain.

https://english.elpais.com/spanish_news/2020-11-12/spains-official-coronavirus-death-toll-rises-above-40000.html

Signs of hope in Germany, France but virus strains hospitals

The surge of new coronavirus cases appears to be slowing in Germany and France generating hopes that the two European heavyweights are beginning to regain control over the pandemic. But authorities said Thursday that hospitals are crowded and are likely to face further strain in the coming weeks. Countries across Europe have implemented more or less drastic lockdown measures in recent weeks as they try to tamp down a resurgence of the pandemic, with numbers of confirmed cases hitting records. They have largely overwhelmed contact-tracing efforts even in Germany, which was credited with handling the pandemic's first cases well and is still in better shape than most of its neighbors.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/signs-of-hope-in-germany-france-but-virus-strains-hospitals-france-germany-countries-hospitals-control-b1721768.html>

Two weeks into new lockdown, France faces further restrictions as cases surge

French Prime Minister, Jean Castex will hold a press conference on Thursday evening, looking at the Covid-19 situation, two weeks after the latest lockdown regulations. With the number of infections continuing to rise, few commentators are optimistic that there'll be any relaxation of restrictions. Paris centrist newspaper Le Monde has asked the prime minister what he'll say at Thursday's press conference. "We'll see if we're in a position to relax or reinforce the current regulations, on the basis of the latest statistics" Castex said. But, while admitting that there was evidence of a slight slowdown in the number of French infections, he added that "this is certainly not the moment to lower our guard".

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/two-weeks-lockdown-france-faces-093833925.html>

Coronavirus appeared to be under control in Pakistan. But one young ICU doctor fears the worst is yet to come

Amara Khalid was only a month into her new job as a doctor in one of Pakistan's biggest hospitals when the nation's number of coronavirus cases exploded for the first time. Late one night in June, she decided to record a video on her mobile phone from the back of an ambulance. "I don't even want to imagine what some people are going through right now," she said through thick, muffling personal protective equipment (PPE). In the video, she sounds exhausted. "So many people are dying. So many people are sick. I am just helpless." Dr Khalid is in her first year out of university.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-11-12/pakistans-coronavirus-outbreak-documented-by-young-doctor/12795416>

Modi declares victory in India's first coronavirus election as cases soar in country's capital

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has claimed victory in the country's first major state election

held during the pandemic. Results from the Election Commission of India show that Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its coalition partners have returned to power after a tight race for control of the legislative assembly in Bihar, the country's third most populous state with more than 100 million people. "Democracy has once again prevailed in Bihar with the blessings of the people," Modi tweeted Tuesday local time, as results rolled in from Bihar's legislative election. "I assure every citizen of Bihar that we will continue to work for the equal development of every region and for every person."

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/11/asia/bihar-india-election-coronavirus-intl-hnk/index.html>

As U.S. Breaks Hospitalization Records, N.Y. and Other States Add Restrictions

With coronavirus cases surging in New York and across the country, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo said on Wednesday that private indoor and outdoor gatherings statewide would be limited to 10 people and that gyms, bars and restaurants must close daily at 10 p.m. The restrictions will take effect Friday, and Mr. Cuomo said that local governments will be responsible for enforcing them. The limit on gatherings will apply to private homes. The curfew will apply only to bars and restaurants licensed by the state liquor authority, and restaurants can continue to provide takeout and delivery after 10 p.m., but only for food. Mr. Cuomo said that officials were moved to announce the new restrictions as they confronted an increase in cases.

<https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/11/world/covid-19-coronavirus-live-updates>

New Zealand reports first new community coronavirus case with no link to its border regime since August

Aucklanders are being urged not to panic after New Zealand health authorities announced a new case of COVID-19 in the community without a link to the country's border regime. It is the first case that cannot be drawn to the country's managed isolation (MIQ) facilities since August, when a new cluster formed and infected 179 people, killing three. COVID-19 Minister Chris Hipkins said it was too soon to suggest the infected person would trigger an outbreak. "Panic never helps with COVID-19. We're still in the very early stages of this case investigation," he said.

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/new-zealand-reports-first-new-community-coronavirus-case-with-no-link-to-its-border-regime-since-august>

One of Biden's coronavirus advisors says the U.S. should go into national lockdown for 4 to 6 weeks

Dr. Michael Osterholm, a member of Biden's COVID-19 task force, suggests the U.S. should go into a national four- to six-week lockdown as it awaits a vaccine to keep deaths low.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8939863/Bidens-coronavirus-advisor-says-U-S-national-lockdown-4-6-weeks.html>

New Zealand businesses waiting for workers Covid-19 tests

About 100,000 Aucklanders who work in the city's CBD are being advised to work from home tomorrow if they can. Karyn speaks with the CEO of Business New Zealand, Kirk Hope, about the impact of this waiting game after a year of various lockdown alert levels on Auckland and the country's businesses.

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/lately/audio/2018772579/new-zealand-businesses-waiting-for-workers-covid-19-tests>

Alberta doctors are calling for a 'circuit breaker' lockdown. Here's what that would mean

As Alberta doctors call for a short, sharp "circuit breaker" lockdown to prevent the province's health-care system from being overwhelmed, one epidemiologist says it may not be enough to curb the spread of COVID-19. "I think a circuit breaker is a compromise between doing nothing and doing what you need to do," Raywat Deonandan, an epidemiologist and associate professor at the University of Ottawa, told The Current's Matt Galloway. "What you need to do, probably, is a ... long-

term suppression strategy followed by mitigation, rather than the short-term break in the system, leading to a rise in the cases when you lift these efforts."

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/the-current-for-nov-11-2020-1.5798031/alberta-doctors-are-calling-for-a-circuit-breaker-lockdown-here-s-what-that-would-mean-1.5798142>

New Zealand partially shuts central Auckland over mystery Covid case

Health authorities in New Zealand are partially shutting down the central city of Auckland on Friday, asking workers in the city to stay home as they try to trace how a student became infected with Covid-19. "Out of an abundance of caution, we are asking people who work in downtown Auckland to work from home tomorrow where possible," Covid-19 minister Chris Hipkins said. The number of workers in Auckland central business district instructed to stay home on Friday is 100,000. "If you must go into this area, please use masks and social distancing while health authorities continue work to trace the source of this infection."

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/12/new-zealand-investigates-mystery-covid-case-in-auckland>

Turkey bans smoking in public areas amid surge of COVID-19 patients

Turkey on Wednesday banned smoking in crowded public places to slow a recent surge in symptomatic coronavirus patients, the Interior Minister said, as the government warned citizens to abide by protective measures. Daily coronavirus cases in Turkey have recently spiked, with 2,693 patients identified on Wednesday. Ankara only reports the number of those who show symptoms, a decision which critics have said hides the true scale of the outbreak in the country. In a nationwide notice, the Interior Ministry said the smoking ban aimed to ensure citizens comply with rules to wear protective masks properly in public because people were seen to lower them while smoking.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-turkey/turkey-bans-smoking-in-public-areas-amid-surge-of-covid-19-patients-idINKBN27R2QO>

ICU beds full as COVID surges in Indian capital, weekend festival a worry

After his 92-year-old grandmother started coughing and her blood oxygen levels plummeted, Varun Kaushik took her to two top private hospitals in New Delhi on Monday. Neither took her in, even after one of them found her positive for COVID-19. Kaushik said several other hospitals told him and his family on the phone that they did have free beds, but not in the intensive care units (ICU) his grandmother needed. He finally admitted her to a non-ICU COVID bed in a government hospital, 10 hours after leaving home.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-india-delhi/icu-beds-full-as-covid-surges-in-indian-capital-weekend-festival-a-worry-idUSKBN27S0PD>

Texas tops 1 million cases as COVID-19 surge engulfs the US

Texas on Wednesday became the first state with more than 1 million confirmed COVID-19 cases, and California closed in on that mark as a surge of coronavirus infections engulfs the country. In New York, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said all restaurants, bars and gyms statewide will have to close at 10 p.m. starting Friday, a major retreat in a corner of the U.S. that had seemingly brought the virus largely under control months ago. He also barred private gatherings of more than 10 people. Texas, the second-most populous state, has recorded 1.02 million coronavirus cases and over 19,000 deaths since the outbreak began in early March, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. California, the most populous state, has logged more than 995,000 cases.

<https://apnews.com/article/virus-outbreak-new-york-andrew-cuomo-california-texas-36ef6d694fec7cd8cdc329ed07842812>

Japan sees near-record 1,547 coronavirus cases in possible 3rd wave

Japan reported Wednesday a near-record 1,547 cases of the novel coronavirus, the highest level since early August, amid signs of what some health experts say is a "third wave" of infections as cooler temperatures arrive and people spend more time indoors without enough ventilation. The

nationwide tally, compiled by Kyodo News based on official information, inched closer to the single-day record of 1,596 logged on Aug 7 after areas with big urban populations saw a spike in the number of new cases. Tokyo confirmed 317 cases, topping the 300 mark for the first time since Aug. 20, bringing its cumulative total to 33,377, the highest by far among the country's 47 prefectures. Osaka, Hyogo and Saitama prefectures all reported record single-day increases since the outbreak of the virus, while there has also been a rapid rise of cluster infections in northern regions such as Hokkaido, a popular tourist destination.

<https://japantoday.com/category/national/update3-japan-sees-near-record-1-547-coronavirus-cases-in-possible-3rd-wave>

Covid patients 'head to toe' on trolleys in A&E spark warnings over 'lethal' situation

Patients, including those with the coronavirus, are being kept "head to toe" on trolleys in accident and emergency departments in Manchester, with some forced to wait up to 40 hours for a bed. The "dangerous" situation has sparked warnings from the president of the Royal College of Emergency Medicine over the "potentially lethal" crowding of patients in A&Es across the country this winter. Katherine Henderson said she was "absolutely terrified" by what was happening in some departments. She said she had warned NHS England about the dangers of crowding patients in A&E but that not enough action had been taken.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/covid-nhs-hospital-a-and-e-coronavirus-manchester-b1721012.html>

New Lockdown

A national coronavirus lockdown would be 'the absolute last resort,' Democratic senator says

In an interview with Yahoo Finance, Dr. Michael Osterholm, a member of President-Elect Joe Biden's 12-person coronavirus task force, floated the idea of a four- to six-week lockdown to bring the coronavirus to heel. The virus that has killed around 250,000 people in the U.S. is on track to hit 150,000 new cases per day by the end of the week. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D., Ohio), in a separate interview with Yahoo Finance, said a lockdown would be "the absolute last resort" and suggested an array of priorities to fight the pandemic.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/a-national-coronavirus-lockdown-would-be-the-absolute-last-resort-ohio-democratic-senator-says-194150996.html>

An Expert Explains: A second wave of Covid-19, and is lockdown the answer?

Large parts of Europe are in a second lockdown as a new wave of infection sweeps through the continent. Cases in the US are smashing new records. But overall numbers in India are falling — for reasons not yet fully clear. What is the way forward, given the cost of lockdowns? In an interview to The Indian Express, Professor Sunetra Gupta, a proponent of herd immunity, weighed in on this and related questions.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/an-expert-explains-covid-pandemic-second-wave-what-next-7013939/>

Is India heading towards another lockdown from December 1? PIB clarifies

As coronavirus cases are continuing to spike significantly in the country, there are a lot of rumours doing the rounds that the government might impose another lockdown in the country in December. It is to be noted that Britain has also announced Lockdown-2 after France to control the outbreak which is overwhelming the public health system. In fact, the second wave also started in India. Recently, AIIMS Delhi director Randeep Guleria warned that the second wave of coronavirus in India has begun. People should not leave the house unless absolutely necessary, he added. Guleria's statement came at a time when the number of corona patients is increasing significantly across the country

<https://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-is-india-heading-towards-another-lockdown-from-december-1-pib-clarifies-2856103>

Romania enters lockdown as medical workers protest

News of a possible vaccine against the coronavirus has hit the headlines across the globe. The first effective coronavirus vaccine can prevent more than 90% of people from getting COVID-19, a preliminary analysis shows. The developers, Pfizer and BioNTech, are a joint American and German effort. But these two countries are not the only ones currently busy trying to provide a vaccine to halt the health pandemic. So too is Kazakhstan which, while not quite at the same stage as Pfizer, is at the forefront of such efforts. The Pfizer and BioNTech vaccine has been tested on 43,500 people in six countries and no safety concerns have been raised. The companies plan to apply for emergency approval to use the vaccine by the end of the month. No vaccine has gone from the drawing board to being proven highly effective in such a short period of time.

<https://www.eureporter.co/health/2020/11/12/romania-enters-lockdown-as-medical-workers-protest/>

New EU Travel Bans: Country By Country Covid-19 Restrictions As Europe Locks Down

In a week when most European countries saw hospitals reach near-saturation point, many nations had no choice but to implement lockdowns, curfews and new travel restrictions. The U.K. reached 50,000 deaths, many countries moved from implementing curfews to full lockdowns, Denmark and other countries restricted movement due to a Covid-19 outbreak in minks and many European countries entered red lists, meaning residents from those countries cannot travel without a negative PCR test.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/alexledsom/2020/11/12/new-eu-travel-bans-country-by-country-covid-19-restrictions-as-europe-locks-down/>

Biden COVID-19 adviser floats plan to pay for national lockdown lasting up to six weeks

A top health adviser to President-elect Joe Biden suggested that the nation is well-positioned financially to withstand a lockdown of more than a month in an effort to get the coronavirus pandemic under control. "When you look at the personal savings rate in this country, it's now gone from about 8 percent to over 22 percent. We have a big pool of money out there that we could borrow. The historic low interest rates by the federal government, we could pay for a package right now to cover all of the wages, lost wages for individual workers, for our losses to small companies to medium sized companies, for city states, county governments. We could do all of that," said Michael Osterholm during a live event this week with Yahoo News.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/politics/biden-covid-19-adviser-floats-plan-to-pay-for-national-lockdown-lasting-up-to-six-weeks/ar-BB1aWSHt>

Biden COVID Advisor Says US Lockdown of 4 to 6 Weeks Could Control Pandemic, Revive Economy

Dr. Michael Osterholm, a coronavirus advisor to President-elect Joe Biden, said a nationwide lockdown would help bring the virus under control in the U.S. He said the government could borrow enough money to pay for a package that would cover lost income for individuals and governments during a shutdown. "We could really watch ourselves cruising into the vaccine availability in the first and second quarter of next year while bringing back the economy long before that," he said.

<https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/coronavirus/biden-covid-advisor-says-u-s-lockdown-of-4-to-6-weeks-could-control-pandemic-and-revive-economy/2458477/>