

The COVID Mitigation Monitoring Project

By Dan Ingram and Dave Ingram

Editor's note: As our readers probably would have guessed, COVID-19 is the main focus of the Risk Management newsletter.

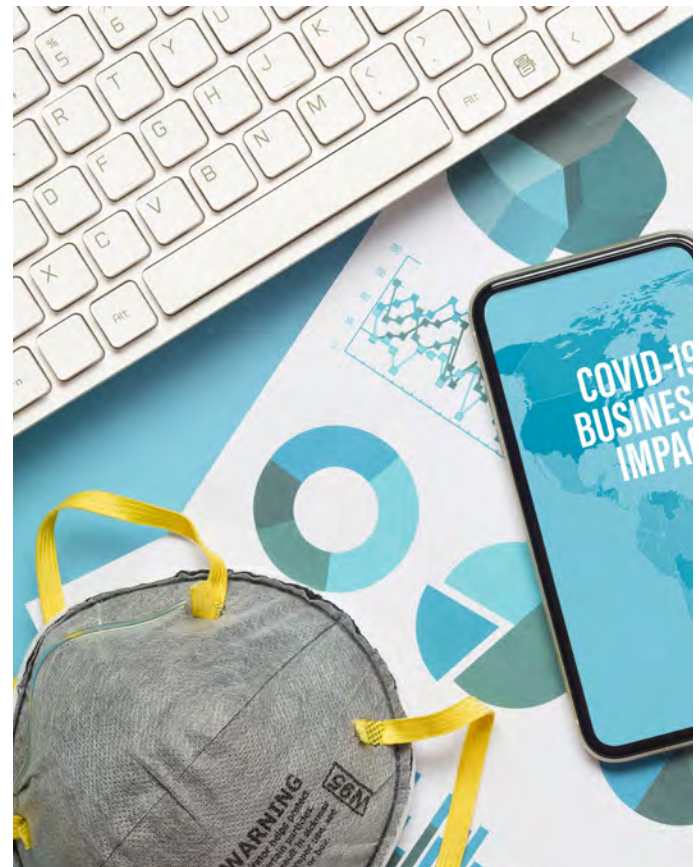
Our first article is meant to raise awareness about the COVID Mitigation Monitoring Project. This study, coordinated by Daniel Ingram and David Ingram, attempts to collect opinions from volunteers regarding the degree of adoption of a list of strategies used by U.S. states to reduce the transmission of COVID-19.

The article is a high-level summary of how the authors are going about the survey, the end goal and how readers can participate.

The summary is followed by the link to the survey itself as well as the latest results of the survey, using data as of August 17. This report is updated every month to reflect new incoming data.

While the news has been flooded with stories about COVID-19 for months, it has been difficult to get a clear picture of the pandemic in the United States. With 50 states each enacting their own mitigation strategies, and little understanding of how those policies are lived by everyday citizens, it is hard to know which mitigation strategies are the most effective. It is because of this uncertainty and imprecise environment that the idea arose for a study comparing hard data about infections and deaths with “the wisdom of the crowds” on what is actually being done in local communities.

The study has two components. First, the hard data comes from a combination of the Johns Hopkins COVID-19 Dashboard and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This data is used to calculate two metrics based on the idea that a person who gets COVID-19 is typically infected for two weeks on average. The first is the number of new cases in the previous two weeks per 100,000 people. The second is the new infection rate (NIR), which we have defined as one day's percent of the



total new cases in two weeks. This rate can be used at a glance to know if a state or country is increasing or decreasing in infections.

The second component of the study is the “wisdom of the crowd”—a survey of people across the country who give their weekly impressions of which mitigation strategies are in place and how much their communities are adhering to those strategies. The strategies fall into a few broad categories: voluntary or mandatory changes in personal behavior, public services, health sector operations and business operations.

To date, the study is in a pilot phase wherein four weeks of data have been collected from approximately 30 respondents each week. This data has been organized into weekly reports identifying mitigation methods that are in the widest use and comparing it to weekly data on the infection rate and number of new cases in various states. A monthly report investigating the relationships between mitigation strategies and the infection

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rate in specific states has also been produced. The goal is to be able to provide states, local governments, businesses and individuals with a suite of tools to understand what would be the most effective mitigation strategy for their community.

We are moving out of the pilot phase for this project but to do that, we need many more observers in every state. An observer does not need any special training and everyone's observations

will be aggregated to achieve our overall view of mitigation practices in each state.

Please enter your observations at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CVDObserver>. You can browse our pilot reports and commentary at <https://covidmitigationmonitoring.wordpress.com/>. ■



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