

Michigan sees a dramatic rise in hospitalizations with COVID-19 for those aged 30 to 50

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When the pandemic befell Italy and the rest of Europe a little more than one year ago, the United States watched in horror at the images of overcrowded hospitals and morgues filled to the brim.

Desperate governments rapidly implemented national lockdowns to bring the scourge under control. Following suit, the United States also found itself confronting the coronavirus's ravages. Hospitals in New York City quickly reached capacity with the sick and afflicted. Exhausted health care workers were decrying the lack of PPEs and N95s to protect themselves adequately.

One year later, history (with the virus) appears to be attempting a similar rhyme with the added dangers of the more virulent strains growing ever more dominant.

The US has essentially abandoned every mitigation measure to stem new infections. In this regard, the state of Michigan is quickly becoming the new epicenter for the pandemic. The seven-day moving average across the state has risen nearly four-fold, from a low 1,062 cases per day on February 19 to 3,753 cases a day as of March 24, and continues to accelerate. Yesterday Michigan reported 5,172 new cases. There have been more than 700,000 cases of COVID-19 and 17,000 deaths in the state.

The dramatic turn in the pandemic curve is undoubtedly, and partially, attributable to the more transmissible B.1.1.7 variant, which was first identified in the United Kingdom. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports on its variant tracker that there have been 7,501 reported cases of this variant across every state in the country. In Michigan, 986 cases of the B.1.1.7 variant have been detected, a number that will soon exceed Florida's, which has seen

1,042 cases reported.

Of note, there have been 219 cases of the B.1.351 variant identified in South Africa across 27 states. The P.1 variant corresponding to the strain first originating in Brazil has only spread to 18 states thus far, and 61 cases have been identified.

The main reason for these developments is the lifting of all restrictions and assuming a laissez-faire attitude by the political establishment towards the pandemic. The vaccines have absolved them of all responsibility for the health of their population. In this regard, hospitalization trends are a very troubling development and expose their ruthless disregard for the population's welfare.

With 249 cases per 100,000 over the last seven days, Michigan has the third-highest COVID-19 case rate in the United States. New Jersey with 330 and New York with 279 cases per 100,000 are also areas of significant concern, especially as school reopening has gotten underway and gyms and eating establishments are anxious to open for business.

The Michigan Health and Hospital Association has warned that hospitalization rates for COVID-19 are surging again. What is vexing authorities is that the cases are occurring among younger populations who have the lowest vaccination rates. As of March 1, hospitalizations for ages 30 to 39 have grown by 633 percent, while those aged 40 to 49 have seen an 800 percent rise.

The MHHA remarked that hospitalizations among those 80 years or older are also climbing. But the effect of the COVID-19 vaccines has been notable, with only a 37 percent increase since the beginning of the month for these most elderly patients.

In a press release statement, the MHHA wrote, “The correlation between high vaccination rates and lower hospitalization growth rates shows the effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccine and how it protects from the risk of severe disease or hospitalization. The data also indicates that, although older adults still have a higher risk of hospitalizations, the percentage of hospitalized patients who are younger than 40 years old has doubled (outpacing older adults), showing that adults of any age are vulnerable to complications from the disease.”

The *Detroit Free Press* indicated that hospital bed occupancy for COVID-19 patients was now at 72 percent. The statewide coronavirus tracker also noted that the bed occupancy for COVID-19 at a dozen hospitals was 90 percent or more. Not even the growing influx of patients into health systems is sufficient to alarm state officials anymore.

Democratic Governor Gretchen Whitmer, who recently said with regards to the rise in cases and hospitalizations, “It’s a stark reminder that this virus is still very real” and “it can come back roaring if we drop our guard,” has no plans to tighten any of the restrictions that were eased in recent months.

Dr. Nick Gilpin, medical director of infection prevention and epidemiology for Beaumont Health, said during an update on the pandemic, “This is unfortunately becoming a familiar refrain for us here. COVID-19 cases are now rising at a pretty alarming rate throughout Michigan and especially in Southeast Michigan, and we at Beaumont Health are pretty concerned about the trend that we’re seeing.”

Dr. Gilpin noted that most of those admitted at Beaumont for inpatient care are not vaccinated. However, he remarked that most of them are in the over-50 age group. “I’m not seeing a disproportionate number of young people or other populations that we haven’t seen thus far.” These comments reflect more of a regional outlook but underscore that a vast majority of the population remains at risk. Some 87.3 million people have received one or both doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, representing 26.3 percent of the people. A huge swath of the country is still vulnerable.

During an event hosted by Axios, Dr. Michael Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota, speaking frankly, stated, “Our only hope right now is that we as a country take this seriously and do whatever

we can to limit transmission, as these other countries tried to do. And, yet, at the same time, I sit here and tell you we’ve never been more open as a country since the very first days of the pandemic.”

Expressing his frustrations with the new school opening and social distancing guidelines, he added, “The transmission dynamics are going to change, and it won’t be quite the same way that it was. We don’t care, in the sense that we’re opening up everything at local, state, and even federal levels.”

Currently, the seven-day average for the United States has turned upwards at 58,312 new cases each day. CDC Director Rochelle Walensky admitted during Wednesday’s White House COVID-19 briefing that the latest data showed a three percent increase in COVID-19 cases across the country. As she laments about “the stall in the pandemic” there is only praise for the pace of vaccinations and school reopenings. This rigmarole only confirms she has abdicated all her responsibilities as a public health officer to appease the White House and ruling elites.

The profits that are rolling in behind the pandemic response are jaw-dropping while most of the globe has seen their wages and livelihoods suffer. Hunger has become an existential issue for millions more.

The exuberant Irish trauma surgeon and epidemiologist, Dr. Mike Ryan, Executive Director of the Health Emergencies Programme at the World Health Organization, said it succinctly at their latest press brief on Monday, “The formula for this may be boring. It may not be attractive. There are no silver bullets. We have got to get back to strong, comprehensive, strategic approaches to the control of COVID that include vaccination as one of those strategies. I’m afraid we’re all trying to grasp at straws, we’re trying to find the golden solutions and if we just get enough vaccines and we push enough vaccines into people and that’s [somehow] going to take care of it. I’m sorry; it’s not. There aren’t enough vaccines in the world, and they’re distributed terribly iniquitously.”



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