PMC U.S. COVID-19 Report for January 26, 2026. pmc19.com/data

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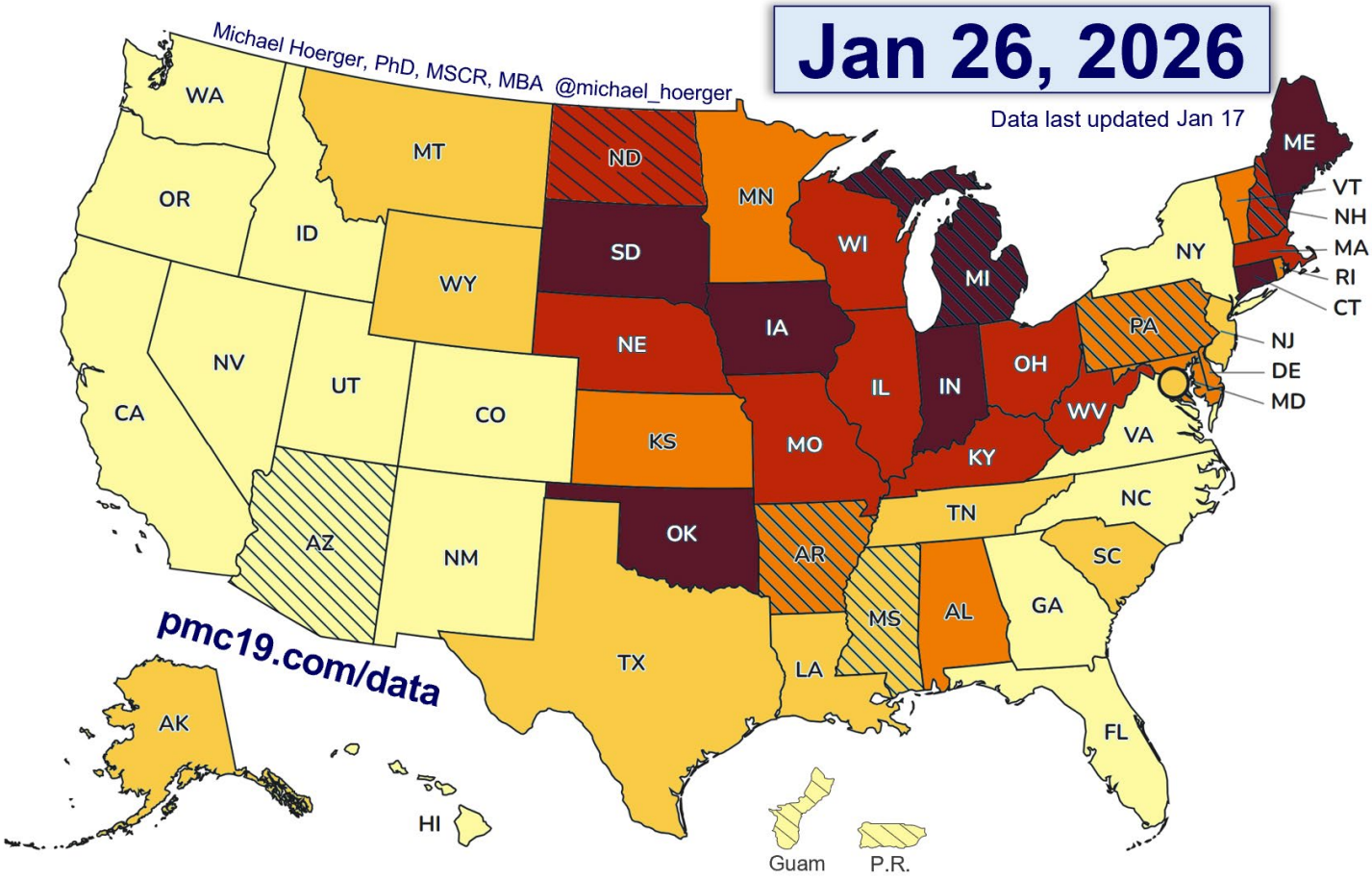

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Announcements

News

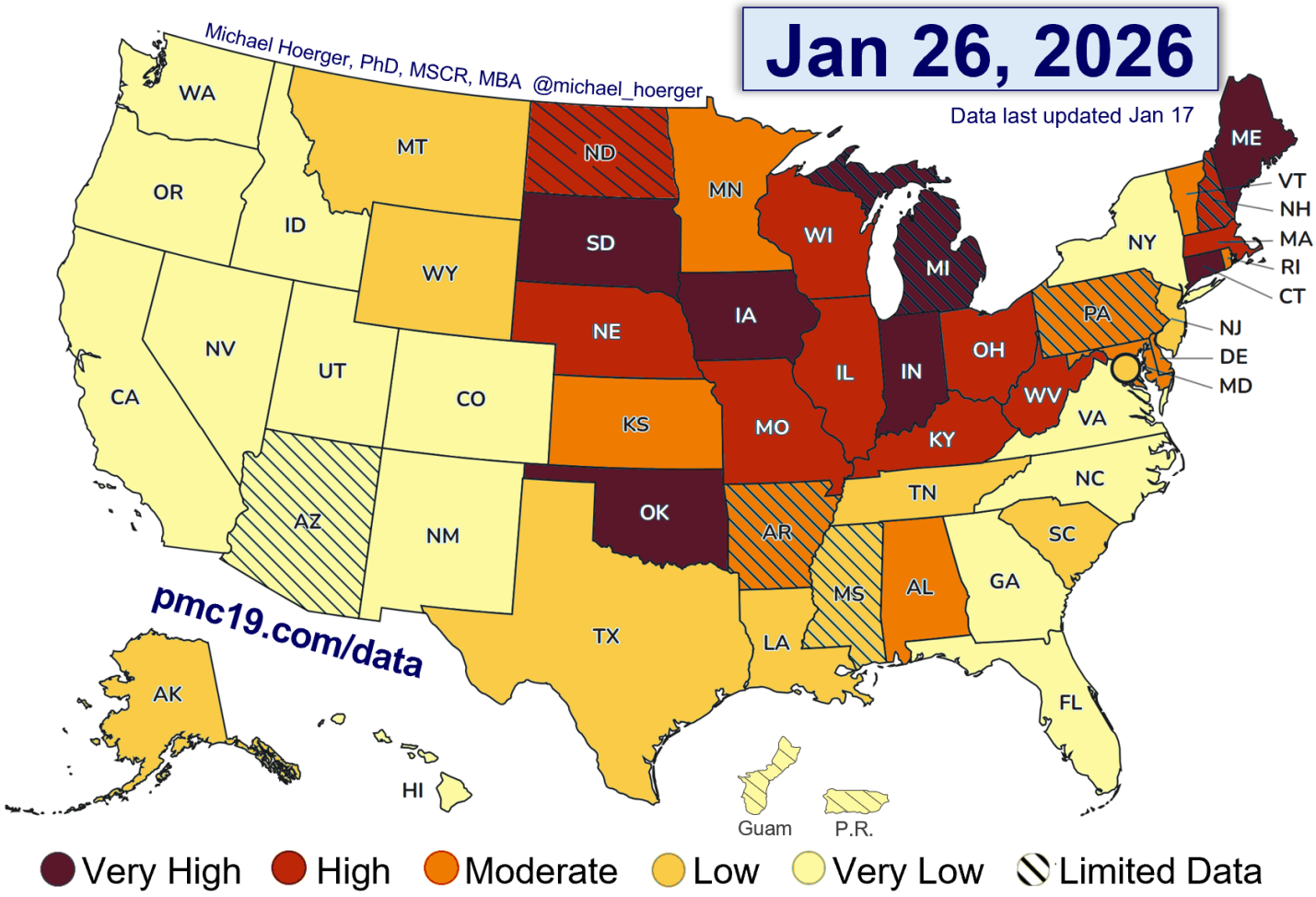
- **We've launched "Wave 2" of our Dashboard Survey.** If you have not completed it in 2026, please do so! We ran an earlier version last winter (2024-25). The survey allows us to 1) document the precautions people continue to use, 2) gain feedback to improve the dashboard, and 3) gain feedback to guide future research grant submissions to gain PPE funding for people with cancer, other serious conditions, or in need and build knowledge to improve real-world public health. We will hold a community town hall, likely on Wednesday, March 11 (the 6th anniversary of the pandemic onset) to discuss the key findings. Please share the survey with anyone who uses the PMC dashboard via the website or informally through social media graphics. Link: https://tinyurl.com/pmc2026

- We have provided a 1-hour summary of the state of COVID-19 intended for college audiences who may be unfamiliar with the data, news, and published literature. Link: https://www.veed.io/view/d545fed7-ef78-4be4-887e-c42eec8249ef

Data Quality

- The CDC (80% model weight) and Biobot (20% model weight) both reported this week. Some states still have low-quality reporting, but it is much better than the past two weeks. There have been major retroactive data corrections in both the CDC and Biobot data the past three weeks, which have led us to estimate the peak transmission as marginally higher again this week.

COVID-19 Heat Map, Based on CDC Wastewater Data and Levels (U.S.)



The 12th COVID wave in the U.S. peaked on January 3 with ongoing high transmission. Transmission remains high on the back end of the wave, particularly with students returning to school.

COVID-19 State Prevalence Estimates

pmc19.com/data

Jan 26, 2026

State	CDC Level	PMC Estimate, % Actively Infectious	Chances anyone is infectious in a room of 10 to 100 people			
			10	25	50	100
Alabama	Moderate	1 in 60 (1.7%)	16%	35%	57%	82%
Alaska	Low	1 in 85 (1.2%)	11%	26%	45%	69%
Arizona	Very Low*	1 in 220 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	37%
Arkansas	Moderate*	1 in 44 (2.3%)	21%	44%	68%	90%
California	Very Low	1 in 183 (0.5%)	5%	13%	24%	42%
Colorado	Very Low	1 in 187 (0.5%)	5%	13%	24%	42%
Connecticut	**Very High**	1 in 23 (4.3%)	36%	67%	89%	99%
Delaware	Moderate	1 in 44 (2.3%)	21%	44%	68%	90%
District of Columbia	Low	1 in 107 (0.9%)	9%	21%	38%	61%
Florida	Very Low	1 in 138 (0.7%)	7%	17%	30%	52%
Georgia	Very Low	1 in 123 (0.8%)	8%	18%	34%	56%
Guam	Very Low	1 in 220 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	37%
Hawaii	Very Low	1 in 184 (0.5%)	5%	13%	24%	42%
Idaho	Very Low	1 in 174 (0.6%)	6%	13%	25%	44%
Illinois	**High**	1 in 41 (2.5%)	22%	46%	71%	92%
Indiana	**Very High**	1 in 23 (4.4%)	36%	67%	89%	99%
Iowa	**Very High**	1 in 27 (3.7%)	31%	61%	85%	98%
Kansas	Moderate	1 in 62 (1.6%)	15%	33%	56%	80%
Kentucky	**High**	1 in 36 (2.8%)	25%	51%	76%	94%
Louisiana	Low	1 in 84 (1.2%)	11%	26%	45%	70%
Maine	**Very High**	1 in 21 (4.8%)	39%	71%	92%	>99%
Maryland	Moderate	1 in 43 (2.3%)	21%	45%	70%	91%
Massachusetts	**High**	1 in 33 (3.0%)	26%	54%	78%	95%
Michigan	**Very High***	1 in 25 (4.0%)	34%	64%	87%	98%
Minnesota	Moderate	1 in 61 (1.6%)	15%	34%	56%	81%
Mississippi	Low*	1 in 103 (1.0%)	9%	22%	39%	62%

* Limited data reporting

Data last updated Jan 17

COVID-19 State Prevalence Estimates

pmc19.com/data *Jan 26, 2026*

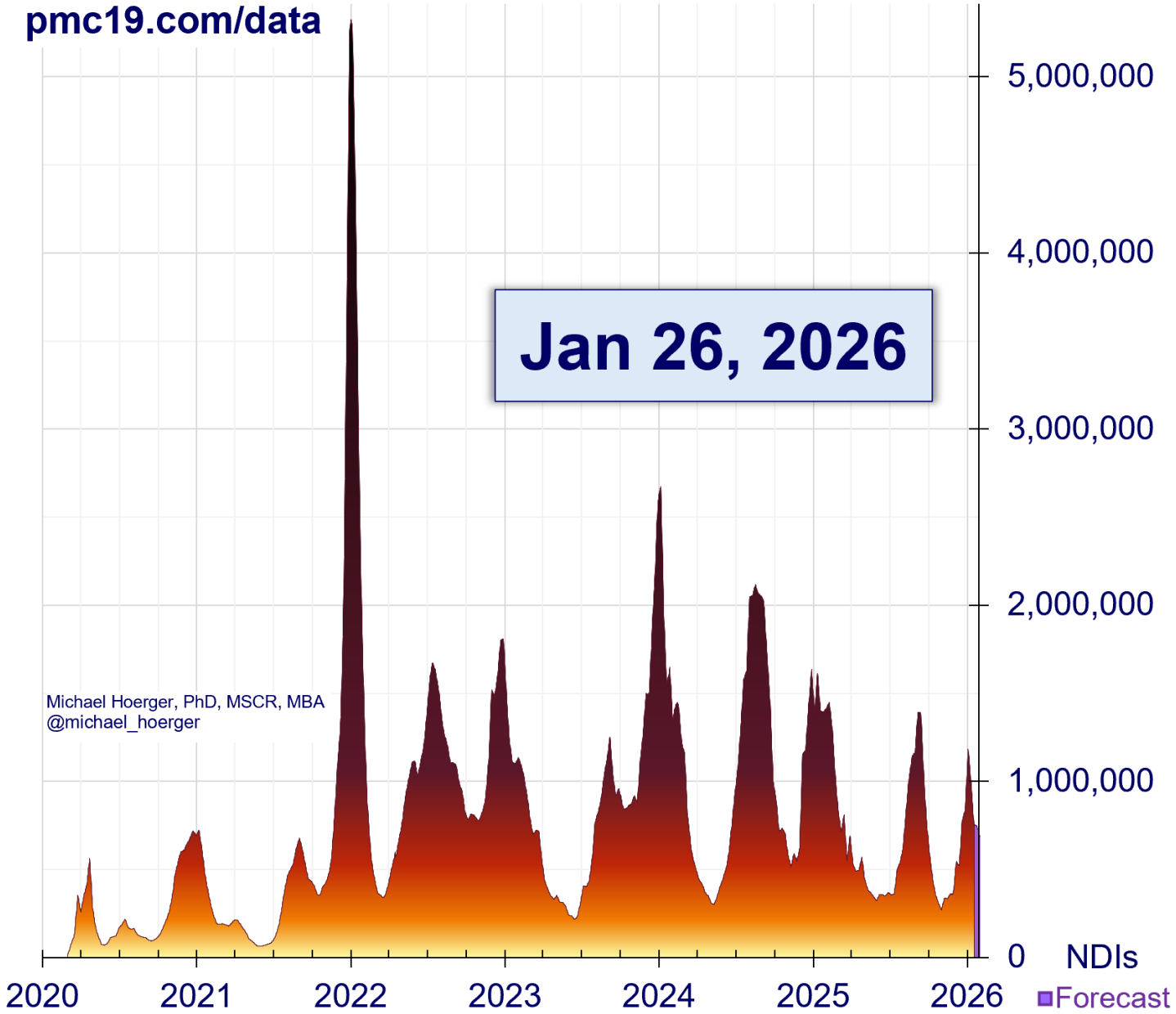
State	CDC Level	PMC Estimate, % Actively Infectious	Chances anyone is infectious in a room of 10 to 100 people			
			10	25	50	100
Missouri	**High**	1 in 37 (2.7%)	24%	49%	74%	93%
Montana	Low	1 in 69 (1.5%)	14%	31%	52%	77%
Nebraska	**High**	1 in 29 (3.5%)	30%	59%	83%	97%
Nevada	Very Low	1 in 156 (0.6%)	6%	15%	27%	47%
New Hampshire	**High***	1 in 33 (3.0%)	26%	53%	78%	95%
New Jersey	Low	1 in 76 (1.3%)	12%	28%	48%	73%
New Mexico	Very Low	1 in 112 (0.9%)	9%	20%	36%	59%
New York	Very Low	1 in 201 (0.5%)	5%	12%	22%	39%
North Carolina	Very Low	1 in 113 (0.9%)	9%	20%	36%	59%
North Dakota	**High***	1 in 33 (3.0%)	26%	53%	78%	95%
Ohio	**High**	1 in 28 (3.5%)	30%	59%	84%	97%
Oklahoma	**Very High**	1 in 17 (5.9%)	46%	78%	95%	>99%
Oregon	Very Low	1 in 167 (0.6%)	6%	14%	26%	45%
Pennsylvania	Moderate*	1 in 44 (2.3%)	21%	44%	68%	90%
Rhode Island	Moderate	1 in 42 (2.4%)	22%	46%	70%	91%
South Carolina	Low	1 in 83 (1.2%)	11%	26%	46%	70%
South Dakota	**Very High**	1 in 17 (5.9%)	45%	78%	95%	>99%
Tennessee	Low	1 in 93 (1.1%)	10%	24%	42%	66%
Texas	Low	1 in 90 (1.1%)	11%	24%	43%	67%
Utah	Very Low	1 in 194 (0.5%)	5%	12%	23%	40%
Vermont	Moderate	1 in 51 (2.0%)	18%	39%	63%	86%
Virginia	Very Low	1 in 220 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	37%
Washington	Very Low	1 in 152 (0.7%)	6%	15%	28%	48%
West Virginia	**High**	1 in 40 (2.5%)	22%	47%	72%	92%
Wisconsin	**High**	1 in 40 (2.5%)	22%	47%	72%	92%
Wyoming	Low	1 in 91 (1.1%)	10%	24%	42%	67%

* Limited reporting; ND has no data, averages MN, MT, & SD

Data last updated Jan 17

Note that while Puerto Rico provides qualitative estimates, useful for the heat map, quantitative levels do not appear to be reported publicly. Reporting in New York remains poor, but considerably better than the past two weeks.

SARS-CoV-2 New Daily Infections, Wastewater-Derived Estimates (U.S.)



The U.S. is in the middle of a 12th COVID wave. The peak is estimated to have occurred on January 3 at 1,183,000 new daily infections. This estimate is a >10% retroactive increase relative to last week, reflecting late holiday data rolling in. This is common with the winter wave and is a further reminder to remain skeptical of those who describe waves using minimizing language.

National COVID-19 Estimates (U.S.)

Jan 26, 2026 **pmc19.com/data**

Infections

Proportion Actively Infectious	1 in 67 (1.5%)
New Daily Infections	732,000
Infections the Past Week	5,220,000
Infections in 2026	24,000,000
Cumulative Infections per Person	5.04

Long COVID

Long COVID Cases Resulting from New Daily Infections	37,000 to 146,000
Long COVID Cases Resulting from New Weekly Infections	261,000 to 1,040,000

Excess Deaths

Excess Deaths Resulting from New Daily Infections	210 to 350
Excess Deaths Resulting from New Weekly Infections	1,500 to 2,500

The U.S. has surpassed an estimated average of 5 SARS-CoV-2 infections per person.

National COVID-19 Risk Table (U.S.)

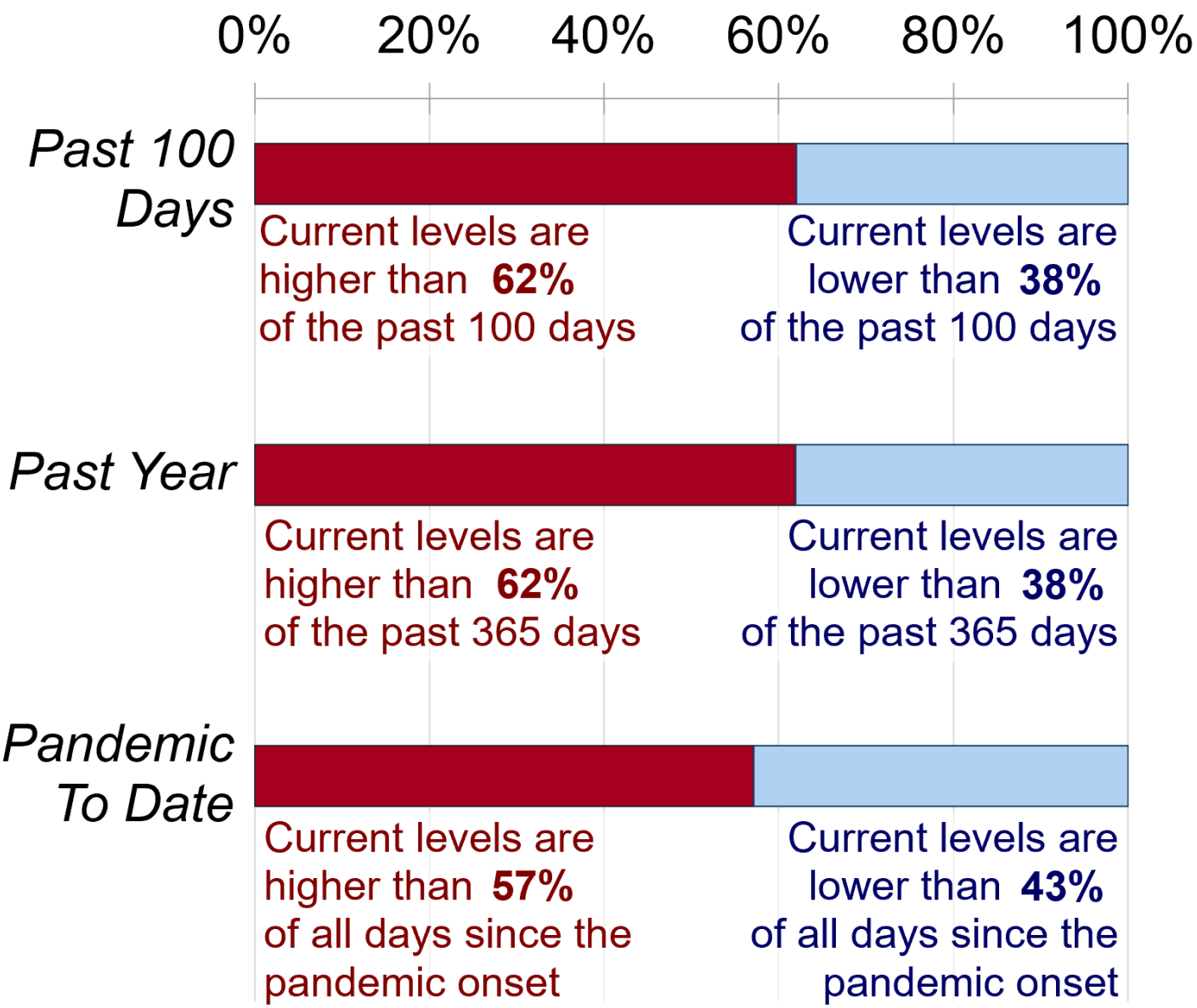
Jan 26, 2026 **pmc19.com/data**

Number of People	Chances Anyone is Infectious
1	1.5%
2	3.0%
3	4.4%
4	5.8%
5	7.3%
10	14.0%
15	20.2%
20	26.0%
25	31.4%
30	36.4%
50	52.9%
75	67.7%
100	77.8%
200	95.1%
300	98.9%

In a room of 25 people representative of the U.S. population, there would be a 31% chance of an exposure if there were no testing and isolation protocols.

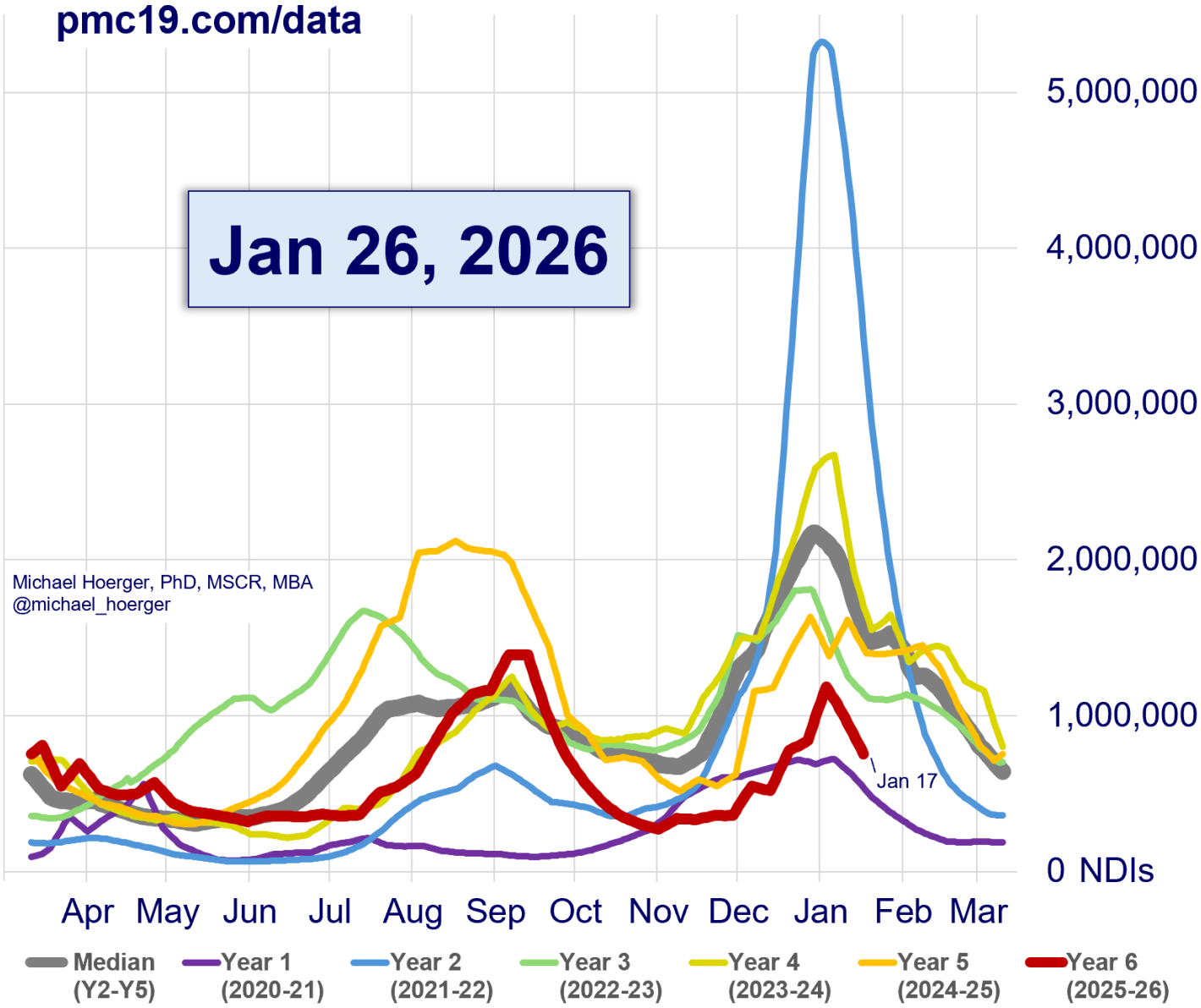
SARS-CoV-2 Relative Transmission "Barometer" (U.S.)

Jan 26, 2026 pmc19.com/data



These gauges show above-average relative transmission, compared to recent months as well as the totality of the pandemic.

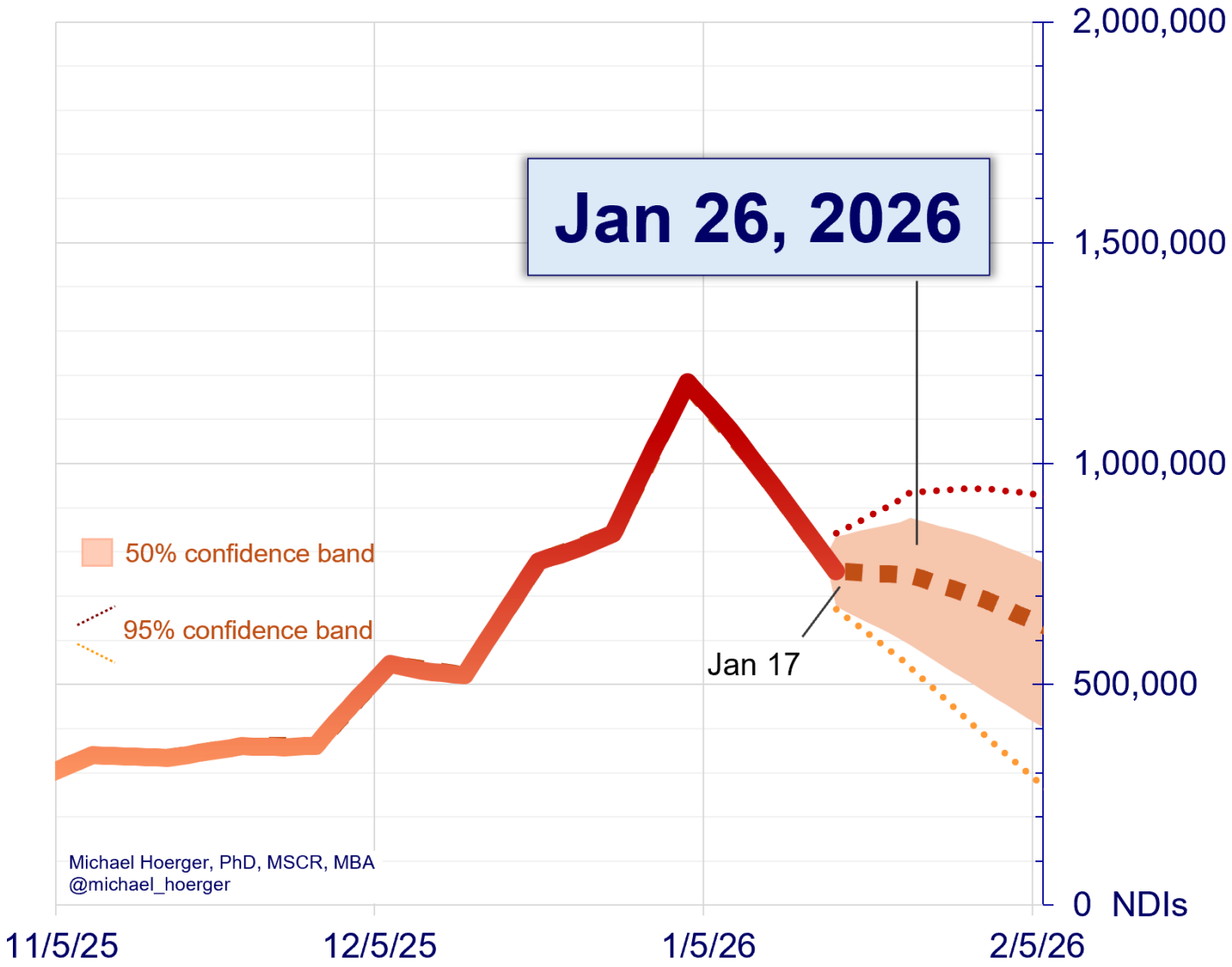
SARS-CoV-2 Year-Over-Year Estimates of Transmission (U.S.)



Notice that each of the past 3 years, post-peak declining transmission leveled off in mid-January and did not fall substantially further until early to mid-February. With reporting lags, we may not “see” the decline until mid-to-late February if following that trend.

SARS-CoV-2 Transmission Forecast, Wastewater-Derived Estimates (U.S.)

pmc19.com/data



The forecast reflects the assumption that transmission will flatten at a high level for the next few weeks. In real-world scenarios, this reflects rolling transmission following the post-winter peak as people return to schools and office meetings.

A separate document called a Technical Appendix appears on the dashboard page and has more methodologic info. Search for key answers there first, and then send a public comment tagging Dr. H. on Twitter if further help is needed.