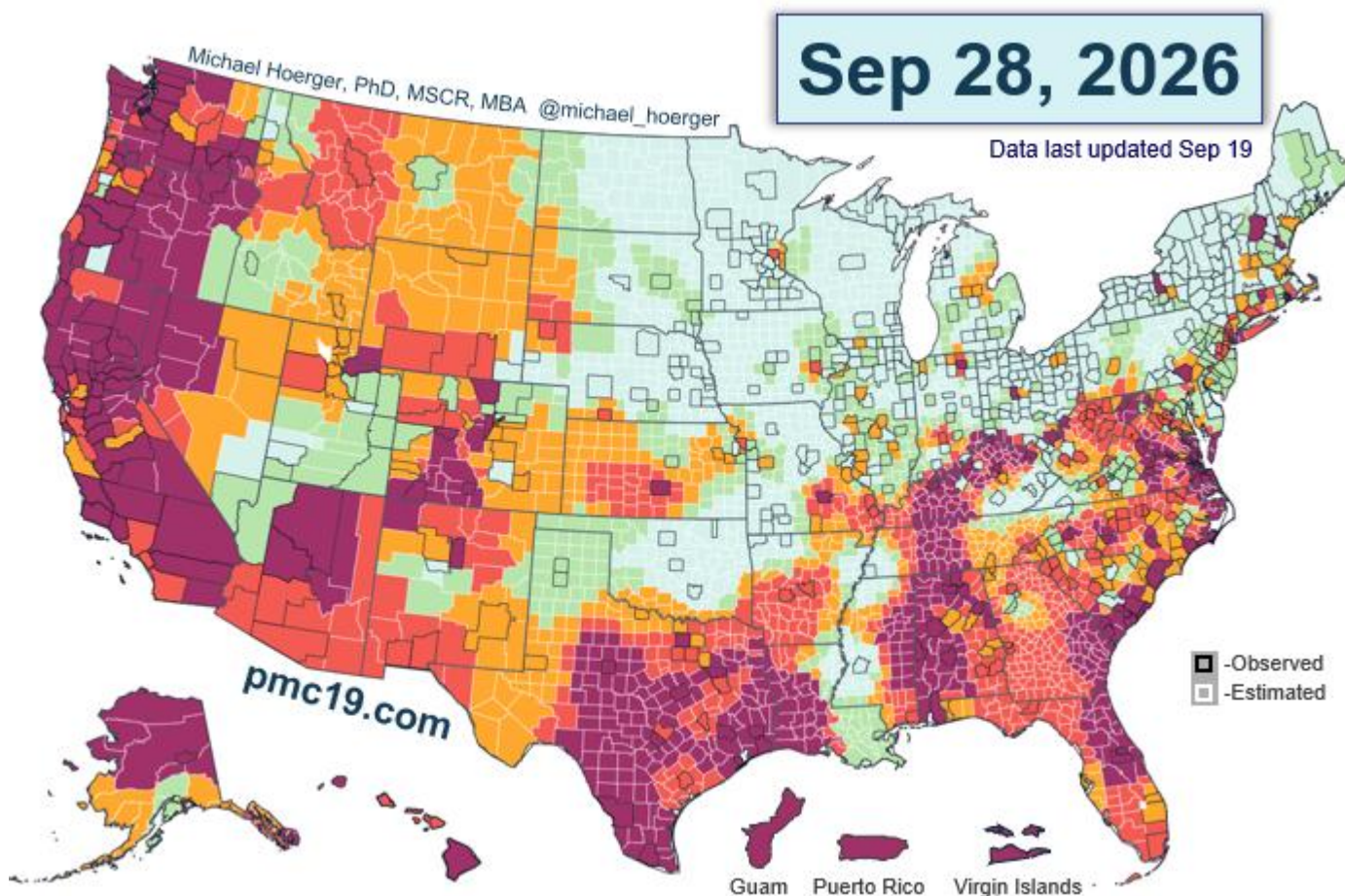


PMC U.S. COVID-19 Report for September 28, 2026. pmc19.com

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Cite as: Hoerger, M. (2026, September 28). *PMC U.S. COVID-19 Report for September 28, 2026*. Pandemic Mitigation Collaborative. <http://www.pmc19.com>

Announcements

Recent Press Coverage

- NBC News: <https://www.nbcnews.com/data-graphics/cdc-edited-key-covid-metric-2026-rcna593344>
- Detroit Free Press: <https://www.freep.com/story/news/health/2026/09/23/michigan-covid-19-surge-vaccine-recommendations/91887743007/>
- Forbes: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/judystone/2026/08/27/covid-19-cases-surge-heres-whats-different-this-summer-that-will-help/>
- The Sick Times: <https://thesicktimes.org/2026/08/18/national-covid-19-trends-august-18/>
- TODAY: <https://www.today.com/health/coronavirus/summer-covid-surge-symptoms-guidelines-2026-covid-vaccine-test-rcna592549>
- New York Post: <https://nypost.com/2026/08/19/health/cases-of-a-very-contagious-winter-disease-spiking-this-summer/>
- People: <https://people.com/cases-of-covid-growing-with-a-pretty-steady-increase-nationwide-12063766>

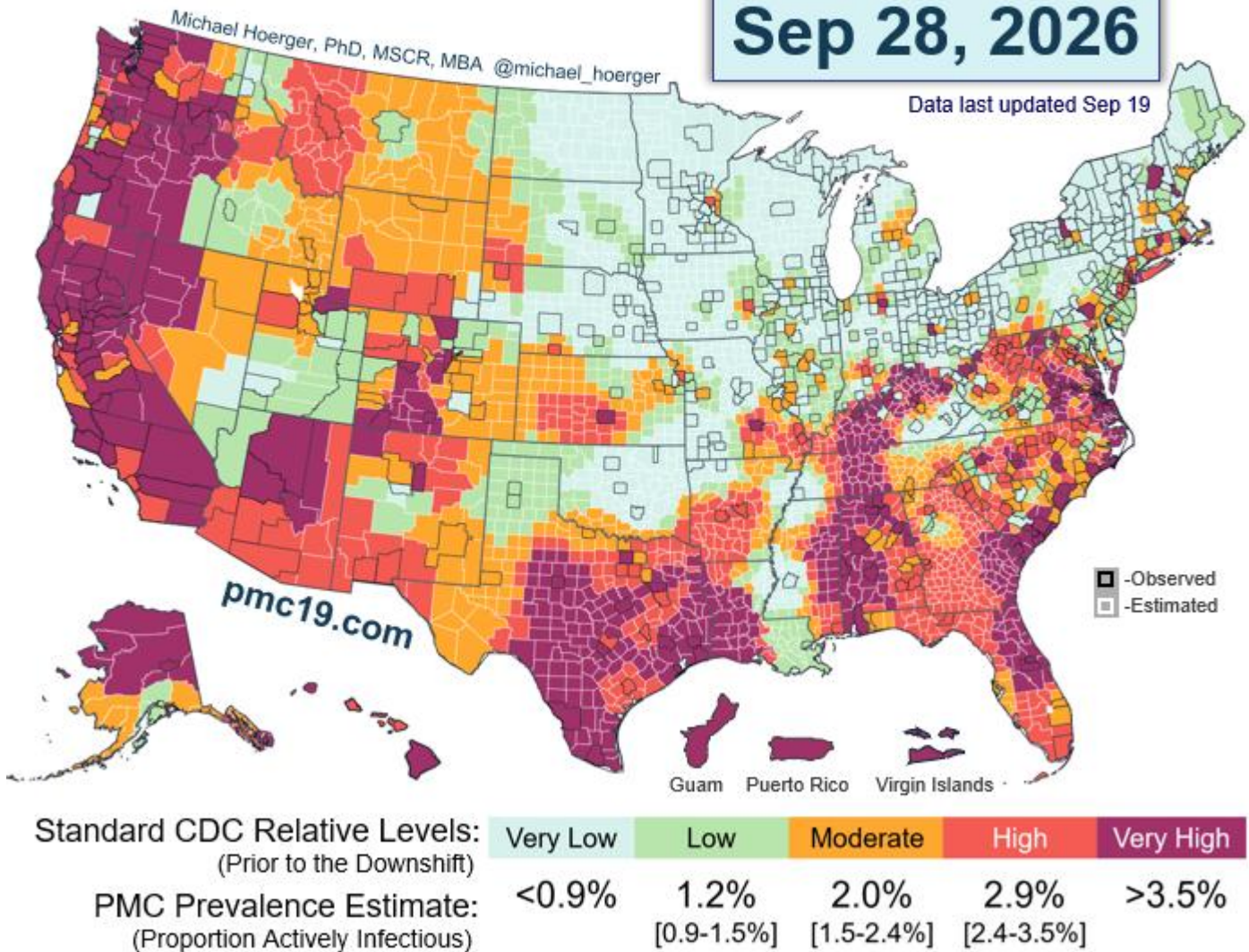
Data Quality

- The CDC (80% model weight) reported this week. Biobot (20% model weight) did not report. The CDC had major upward corrections to the two prior weeks of data. About 1 in 6 (200) sites are off temporarily, as the CDC works through a contractor issue. In addition to the outages, we identified a few likely data errors (see more: https://x.com/michael_hoerger/status/2104435238617203198), the important point being that we readily spot issues, so people should remain comfortable in our underlying interpretation of the data. The data we do have are rigorous, but outages add more uncertainty to the forecast than depicted.
- As noted previously, on August 14, the CDC abruptly changed their coding system for how they link numeric levels to category labels, without flagging or explaining the change, generally downplaying transmission (pmc19.com/bluewashing.mp4). At the extreme end of the Very High category, levels are still described as “Very High.” However, much of Very High has moved to “High.” High has moved to “Moderate.” Moderate has moved to “Low.” Low has moved to “Very Low.” Very Low remains “Very Low.” The changes are most readily observable in the middle categories, so it will slow the process of alerting the public when levels are rising. Disturbingly, the change has been applied retroactively to descriptions of historical data too, so it is rewriting the past. PMC disagrees with the change, the timing of the change as levels are rising, the lack of transparency, and the lack of a firm rationale for the change. We will continue to lead with the prior system, noted as “Standard,” and offer contrasts with the “Revised” system to shine light on its potential damage to public health. The

interactive map now allows users to toggle between systems. In October, we expect to launch a new category system but felt it would be imprudent to do so when levels are rising. It will also have a toggle switch so users can focus on the map system they prefer.

COVID-19 Heat Map, Based on CDC Wastewater Data & Standard Levels

Sep 28, 2026



The US has at least 40 states and territories with COVID outbreaks, the same number reported last week. These include Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Guam, Hawaii, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

There are likely outbreaks in additional states. The summary statistic of 40 only includes counties with observed data, rather than estimated data. For example, Idaho, Louisiana, Maryland, and Tennessee likely have outbreaks, but monitoring is poor.

COVID-19 State Prevalence Estimates

pmc19.com

Sep 28, 2026

State	Standard CDC Level	Revised # CDC Level (Downshifted)	PMC Estimate, % Actively Infectious	Chances anyone is infectious in a room of 10 to 100 people			
				10	25	50	100
Alabama	Moderate	Low	1 in 46 (2.2%)	20%	42%	67%	89%
Alaska	Very Low	Very Low	1 in 236 (0.4%)	4%	10%	19%	35%
Arizona	High	Moderate	1 in 35 (2.9%)	25%	52%	77%	95%
Arkansas	Very Low*	Very Low*	1 in 140 (0.7%)	7%	16%	30%	51%
California	Very High	High	1 in 25 (4.0%)	34%	64%	87%	98%
Colorado	Moderate	Low	1 in 50 (2.0%)	18%	39%	63%	87%
Connecticut	Moderate	Low	1 in 51 (2.0%)	18%	39%	63%	86%
Delaware	Low	Very Low	1 in 87 (1.2%)	11%	25%	44%	69%
District of Columbia ^(delays)	Low	Low	1 in 74 (1.4%)	13%	29%	50%	74%
Florida	High	Moderate	1 in 40 (2.5%)	22%	47%	72%	92%
Georgia	Low	Low	1 in 75 (1.3%)	13%	28%	49%	74%
Guam ^(delays)	Very High	High	1 in 23 (4.3%)	36%	67%	89%	99%
Hawaii	Very High	Very High	1 in 15 (6.7%)	50%	82%	97%	>99%
Idaho	Low	Very Low	1 in 98 (1.0%)	10%	23%	40%	64%
Illinois	Very Low	Very Low	1 in 140 (0.7%)	7%	16%	30%	51%
Indiana	Very Low	Very Low	1 in 125 (0.8%)	8%	18%	33%	55%
Iowa	Very Low	Very Low	1 in 118 (0.8%)	8%	19%	35%	57%
Kansas	Low	Low	1 in 80 (1.3%)	12%	27%	47%	72%
Kentucky	Moderate	Low	1 in 49 (2.0%)	19%	40%	64%	87%
Louisiana	Low	Low	1 in 79 (1.3%)	12%	27%	47%	72%
Maine	Very Low	Very Low	1 in 147 (0.7%)	7%	16%	29%	49%
Maryland	Moderate*	Low*	1 in 48 (2.1%)	19%	41%	65%	88%
Massachusetts	Moderate	Low	1 in 56 (1.8%)	17%	36%	60%	84%
Michigan	Very Low*	Very Low*	1 in 179 (0.6%)	5%	13%	24%	43%
Minnesota	Very Low	Very Low	1 in 139 (0.7%)	7%	16%	30%	51%
Mississippi	High*	Moderate*	1 in 33 (3.0%)	26%	53%	78%	95%

* Limited data reporting

Data last updated Sep 19

On August 14, 2026, the CDC revised categorical descriptors downward without notice or rationale for both past and present data. Very High levels were often revised downward to "High," High levels to "Moderate" or "Low," typically one category downward. More at pmc19.com/bluewashing.mp4

COVID-19 State Prevalence Estimates

pmc19.com

Sep 28, 2026

State	Standard CDC Level	Revised # CDC Level (Downshifted)	PMC Estimate, % Actively Infectious	Chances anyone is infectious in a room of 10 to 100 people			
				10	25	50	100
Missouri	Very Low	Very Low	1 in 122 (0.8%)	8%	19%	34%	56%
Montana	High*	Moderate*	1 in 41 (2.4%)	22%	46%	71%	91%
Nebraska	Very Low	Very Low	1 in 364 (0.3%)	3%	7%	13%	24%
Nevada	Low	Very Low	1 in 87 (1.1%)	11%	25%	44%	68%
New Hampshire	Low	Very Low	1 in 91 (1.1%)	10%	24%	42%	67%
New Jersey	Low	Low	1 in 73 (1.4%)	13%	29%	50%	75%
New Mexico	High	Moderate	1 in 33 (3.0%)	26%	53%	78%	95%
New York	Very Low	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
North Carolina	Moderate	Low	1 in 51 (1.9%)	18%	39%	63%	86%
North Dakota	Low*	Low*	1 in 75 (1.3%)	13%	29%	49%	74%
Ohio	Very Low	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Oklahoma (delays)	Very Low*	Very Low*	1 in 202 (0.5%)	5%	12%	22%	39%
Oregon	Very High	High	1 in 25 (4.1%)	34%	65%	88%	98%
Pennsylvania	Very Low	Very Low	1 in 175 (0.6%)	6%	13%	25%	44%
Puerto Rico	Very High*	High*	1 in 21 (4.8%)	39%	71%	92%	>99%
Rhode Island	Low	Low	1 in 78 (1.3%)	12%	28%	48%	72%
South Carolina	High	Moderate	1 in 36 (2.8%)	24%	50%	75%	94%
South Dakota	Very Low*	Very Low*	1 in 114 (0.9%)	8%	20%	36%	58%
Tennessee	Low	Low	1 in 81 (1.2%)	12%	27%	46%	71%
Texas	Very High	High	1 in 27 (3.7%)	31%	61%	85%	98%
U.S. Virgin Islands (delays)	Very High	Very High	1 in 16 (6.2%)	47%	80%	96%	>99%
Utah	Moderate	Low	1 in 58 (1.7%)	16%	35%	58%	82%
Vermont	Very Low	Very Low	1 in 241 (0.4%)	4%	10%	19%	34%
Virginia	High	Moderate	1 in 35 (2.8%)	25%	51%	76%	94%
Washington	Very High	High	1 in 26 (3.9%)	33%	63%	86%	98%
West Virginia	High	Moderate	1 in 40 (2.5%)	23%	47%	72%	92%
Wisconsin	Very Low	Very Low	1 in 220 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	37%
Wyoming	Moderate	Low	1 in 57 (1.8%)	16%	36%	59%	83%

* Limited reporting; ND averages MN, MT, SD; PR from non-CDC PR dashboard

Data last updated Sep 19

On August 14, 2026, the CDC revised categorical descriptors downward without notice or rationale for both past and present data. Very High levels were often revised downward to "High," High levels to "Moderate" or "Low," typically one category downward. More at pmc19.com/bluewashing.mp4

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



PMC identifies **12** SARS-CoV-2 waves and estimates averages of **5.4** infections per person and **14.5** months between infections.

National COVID-19 Estimates (U.S.)

Sep 28, 2026

pmc19.com

Infections

Proportion Actively Infectious	1 in 92 (1.1%)
New Daily Infections	532,000
Infections the Past Week	3,810,000
Infections in 2026	115,000,000
Cumulative Infections per Person	5.43

Long COVID

Long COVID Cases Resulting from New Daily Infections	27,000 to 106,000
Long COVID Cases Resulting from New Weekly Infections	191,000 to 760,000

Excess Deaths

Excess Deaths Resulting from New Daily Infections	130 to 230
Excess Deaths Resulting from New Weekly Infections	900 to 1,700

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

Sep 28, 2026

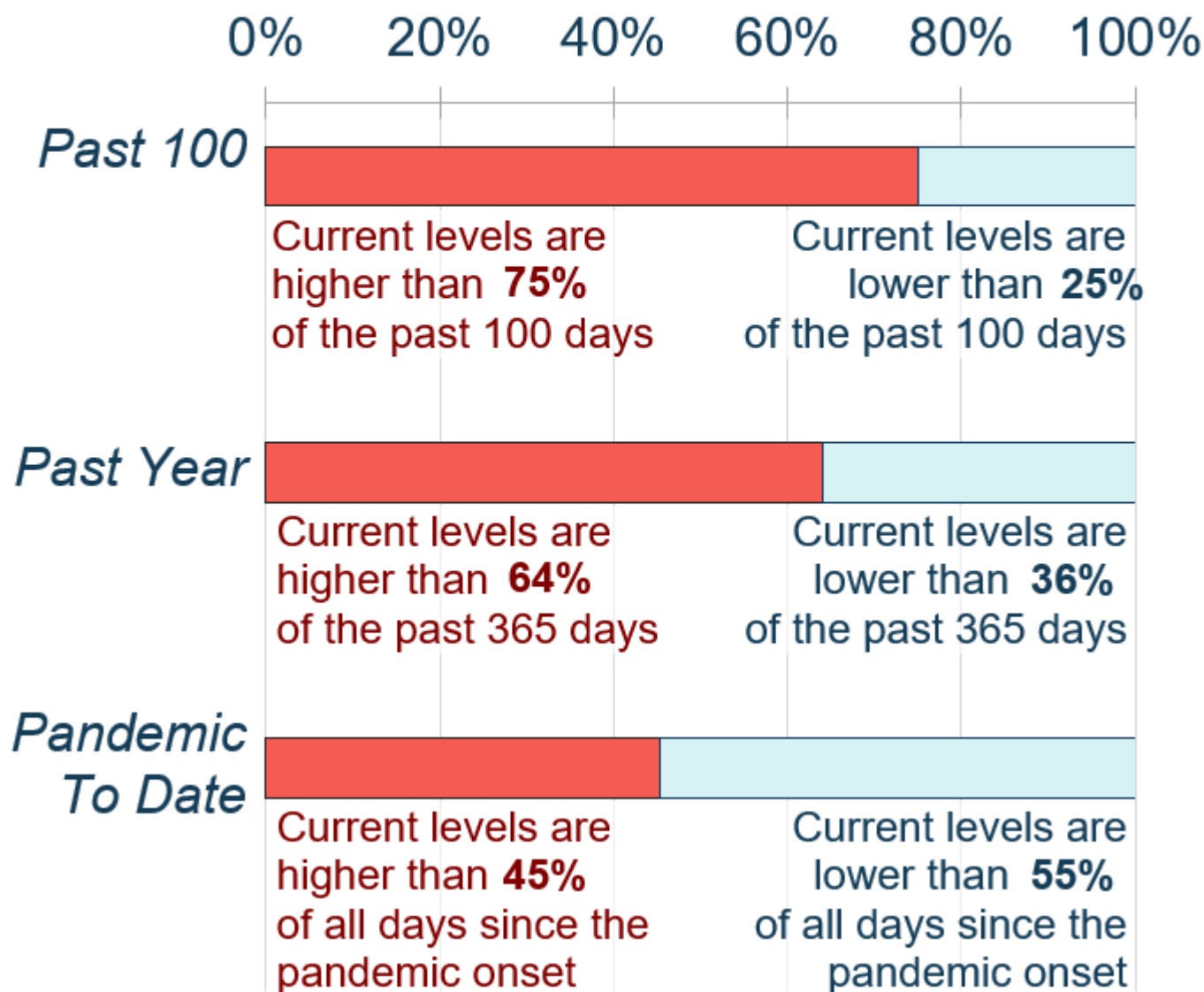
pmc19.com

<u>Number of People</u>	<u>Chances Anyone is Infectious</u>
1	1.1%
2	2.2%
3	3.2%
4	4.3%
5	5.3%
10	10.3%
15	15.1%
20	19.6%
25	23.8%
30	27.9%
50	42.0%
75	55.8%
100	66.4%
200	88.7%
300	96.2%

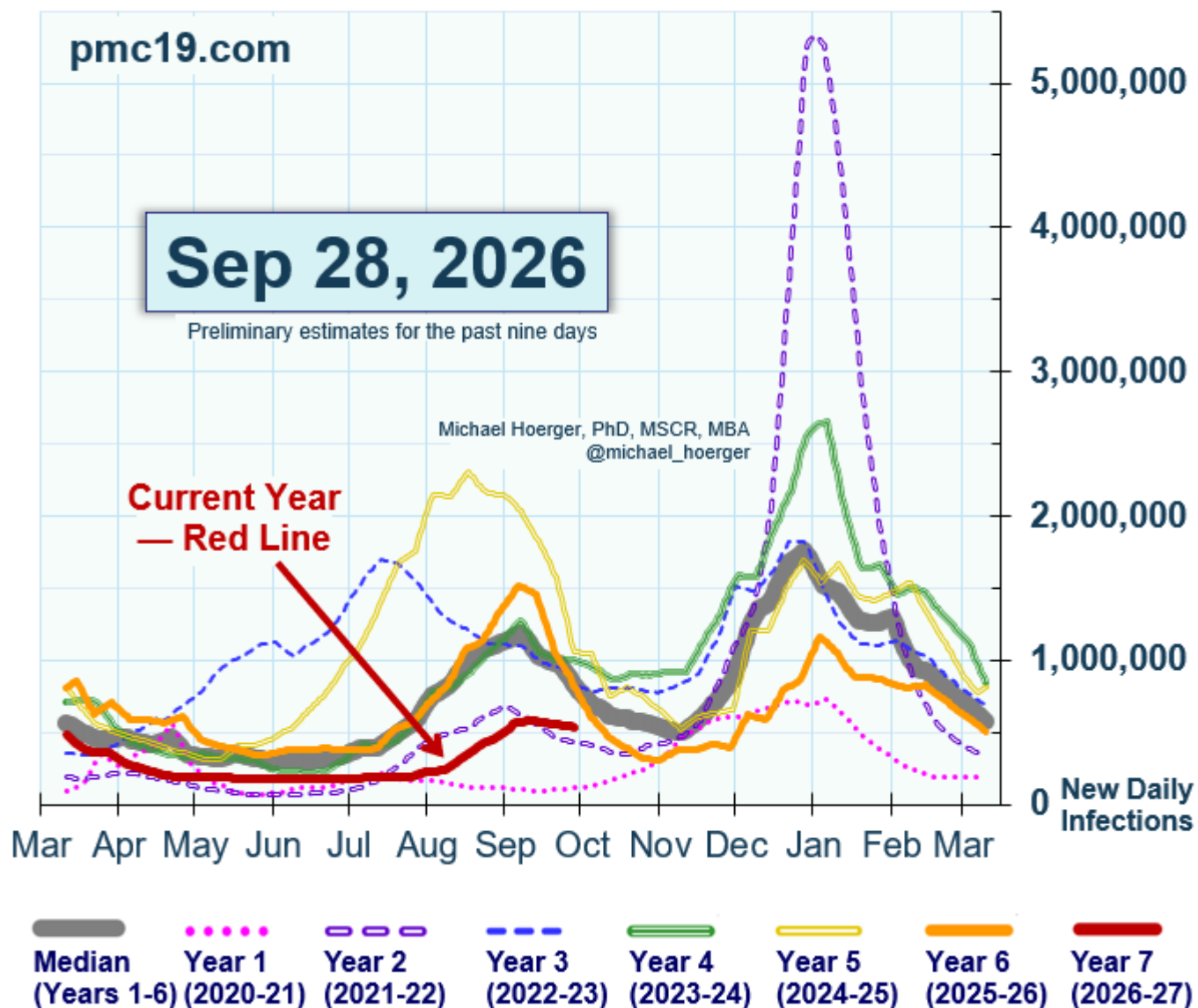
SARS-CoV-2 Relative Transmission "Barometer" (U.S.)

Sep 28, 2026

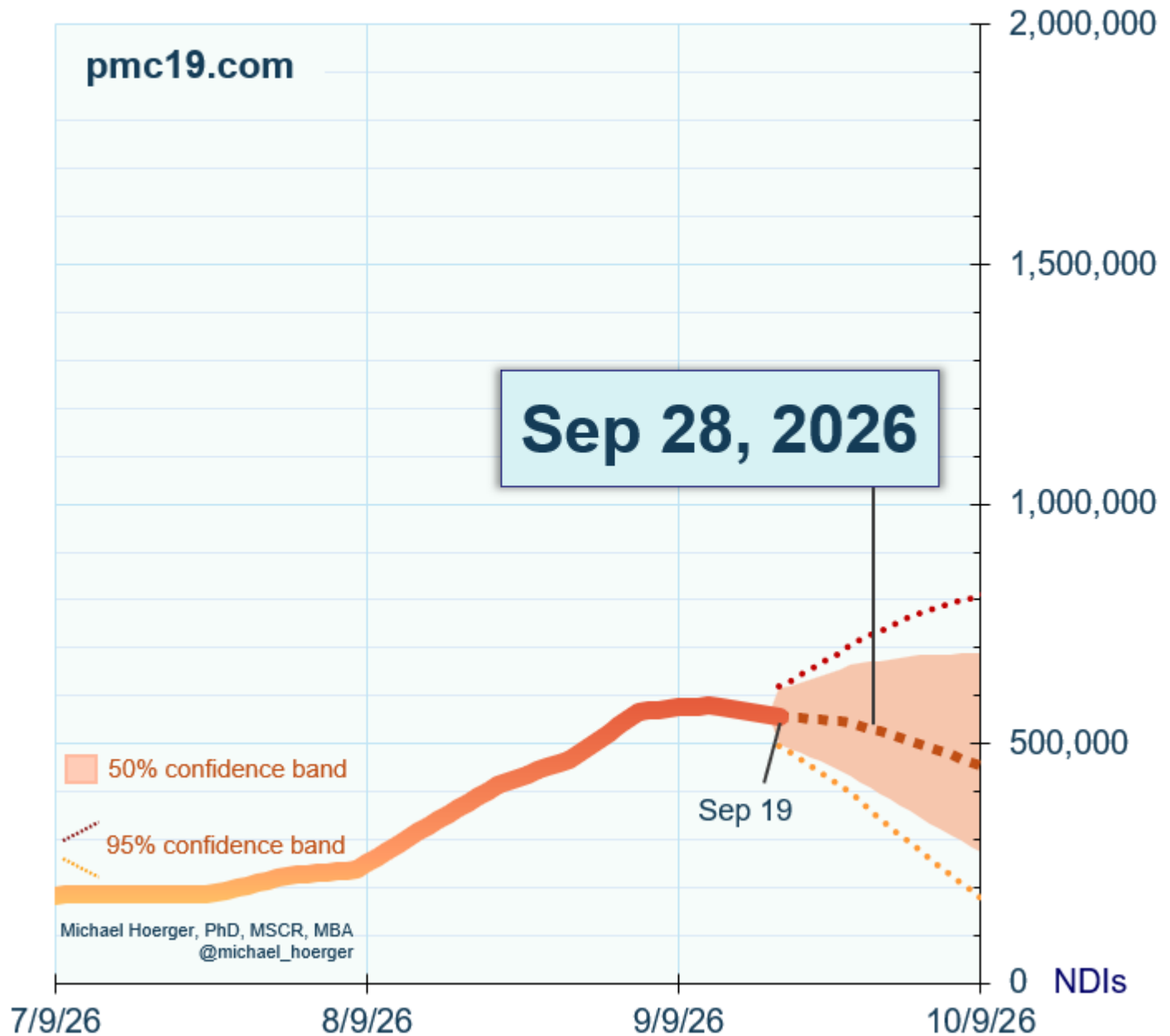
pmc19.com



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



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



The national peak likely fell between Sept 7-13, consistent with our earlier forecasts suggesting that time frame. With Biobot offline and 200 CDC outages, the forecast is more uncertain than shown. For example, the magnitude could be corrected higher, or there could be a secondary peak.

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.