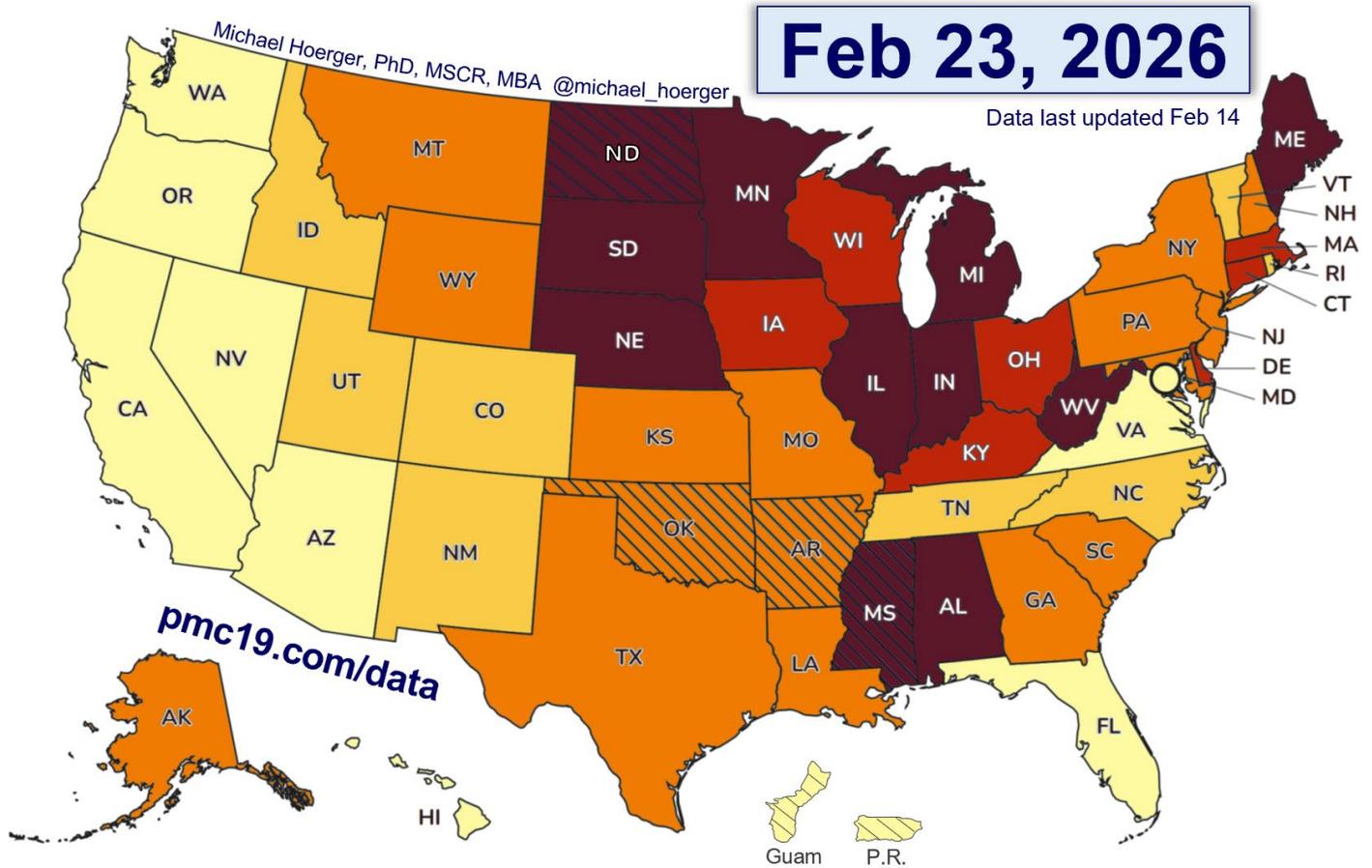# PMC U.S. COVID-19 Report for February 23, 2026. pmc19.com/data

Michael Hoerger, PhD, MSCR, MBA, Pandemic Mitigation Collaborative (PMC)

Cite as: Hoerger, M. (2026, February 23). *PMC U.S. COVID-19 Report for February 23, 2026*. Pandemic Mitigation Collaborative. http://www.pmc19.com/data
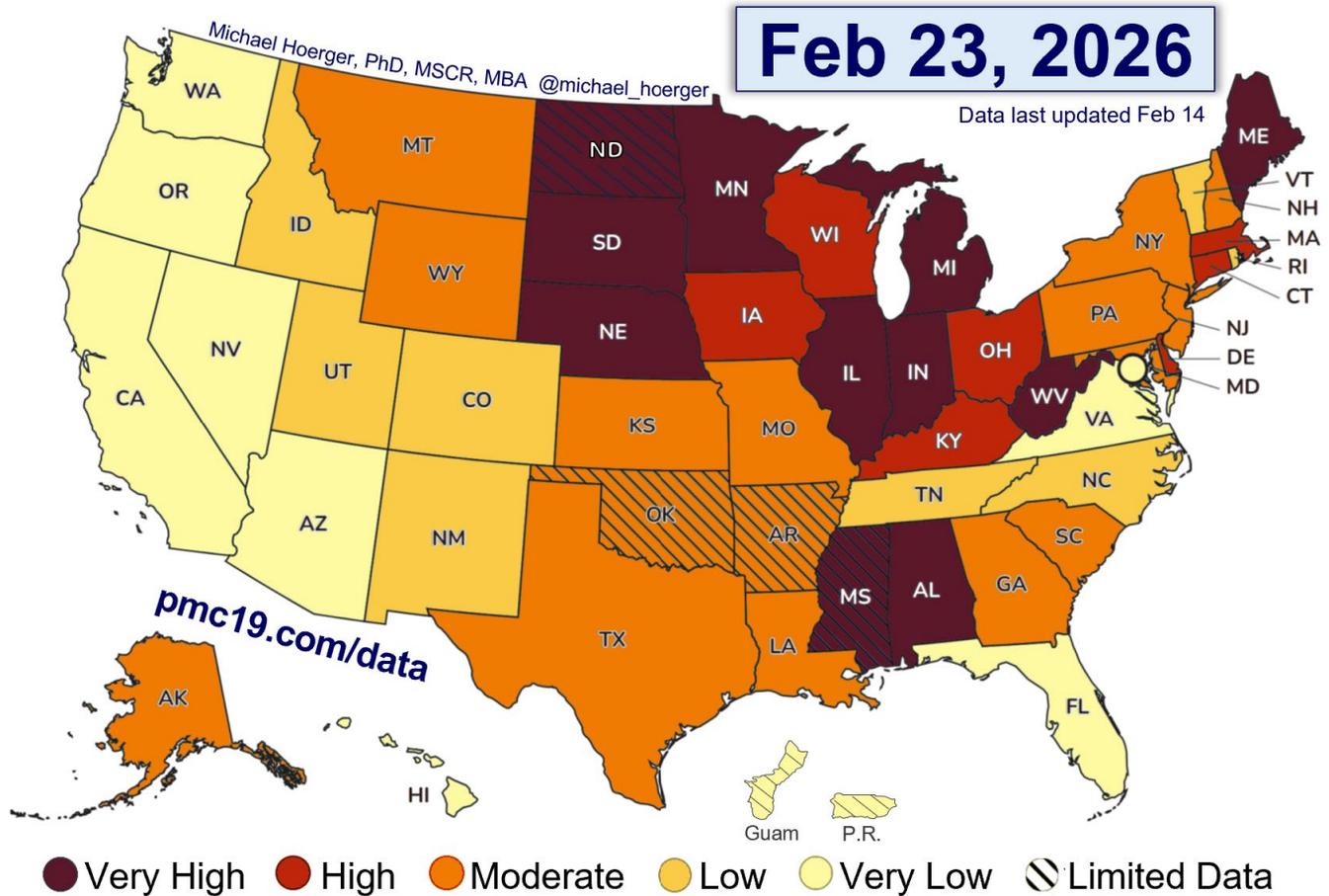
Announcements

News

- 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

- We will have a new empirical article published on February 24 in a top medical journal.

Data Quality

- The CDC (80% model weight) and Biobot (20% model weight) both reported this week.

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

Michael Hoerger, PhD, MSCR, MBA @michael_hoerger

Feb 23, 2026

Data last updated Feb 14

pmc19.com/data

Guam   P.R.

● Very High   ● High   ● Moderate   ● Low   ● Very Low   ⊘ Limited Data

On the back end of the 12ᵗʰ wave, transmission was subsiding before increasing ≈16% in the most recent week of reporting. The national rise is driven by increased transmission in the South. Transmission remains stable at very high levels in the Midwest, moderate levels in the Northeast, and low levels in much of the West.

COVID-19 State Prevalence Estimates

pmc19.com/data   *Feb 23, 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	**Very High**	1 in 27 (3.7%)	32%	61%	85%	98%
Alaska	Moderate	1 in 51 (2.0%)	18%	39%	63%	86%
Arizona	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Arkansas	Moderate*	1 in 61 (1.6%)	15%	34%	56%	81%
California	Very Low	1 in 158 (0.6%)	6%	15%	27%	47%
Colorado	Low	1 in 99 (1.0%)	10%	22%	40%	64%
Connecticut	**High**	1 in 37 (2.7%)	24%	50%	75%	94%
Delaware	**High**	1 in 41 (2.4%)	22%	46%	71%	91%
District of Columbia	Very Low	1 in 178 (0.6%)	5%	13%	25%	43%
Florida	Very Low	1 in 117 (0.9%)	8%	19%	35%	57%
Georgia	Moderate	1 in 56 (1.8%)	17%	36%	60%	84%
Guam	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Hawaii	Very Low	1 in 143 (0.7%)	7%	16%	30%	50%
Idaho	Low	1 in 68 (1.5%)	14%	31%	52%	77%
Illinois	**Very High**	1 in 25 (4.0%)	34%	64%	87%	98%
Indiana	**Very High**	1 in 26 (3.9%)	33%	63%	86%	98%
Iowa	**High**	1 in 29 (3.4%)	29%	58%	82%	97%
Kansas	Moderate	1 in 62 (1.6%)	15%	34%	56%	81%
Kentucky	**High**	1 in 37 (2.7%)	24%	50%	75%	94%
Louisiana	Moderate	1 in 55 (1.8%)	17%	37%	60%	84%
Maine	**Very High**	1 in 24 (4.2%)	35%	66%	88%	99%
Maryland	Moderate	1 in 43 (2.3%)	21%	44%	69%	90%
Massachusetts	**High**	1 in 34 (3.0%)	26%	53%	78%	95%
Michigan	**Very High**	1 in 28 (3.5%)	30%	59%	83%	97%
Minnesota	**Very High**	1 in 26 (3.8%)	32%	62%	85%	98%
Mississippi	**Very High***	1 in 28 (3.6%)	30%	60%	84%	97%

* Limited data reporting   Data last updated Feb 14

Last week, we reported Minnesota at 1 in 12 actively infectious. The CDC wastewater values underlying that projection have held; levels have declined quickly but remain in the Very High CDC range.

COVID-19 State Prevalence Estimates

pmc19.com/data   *Feb 23, 2026*

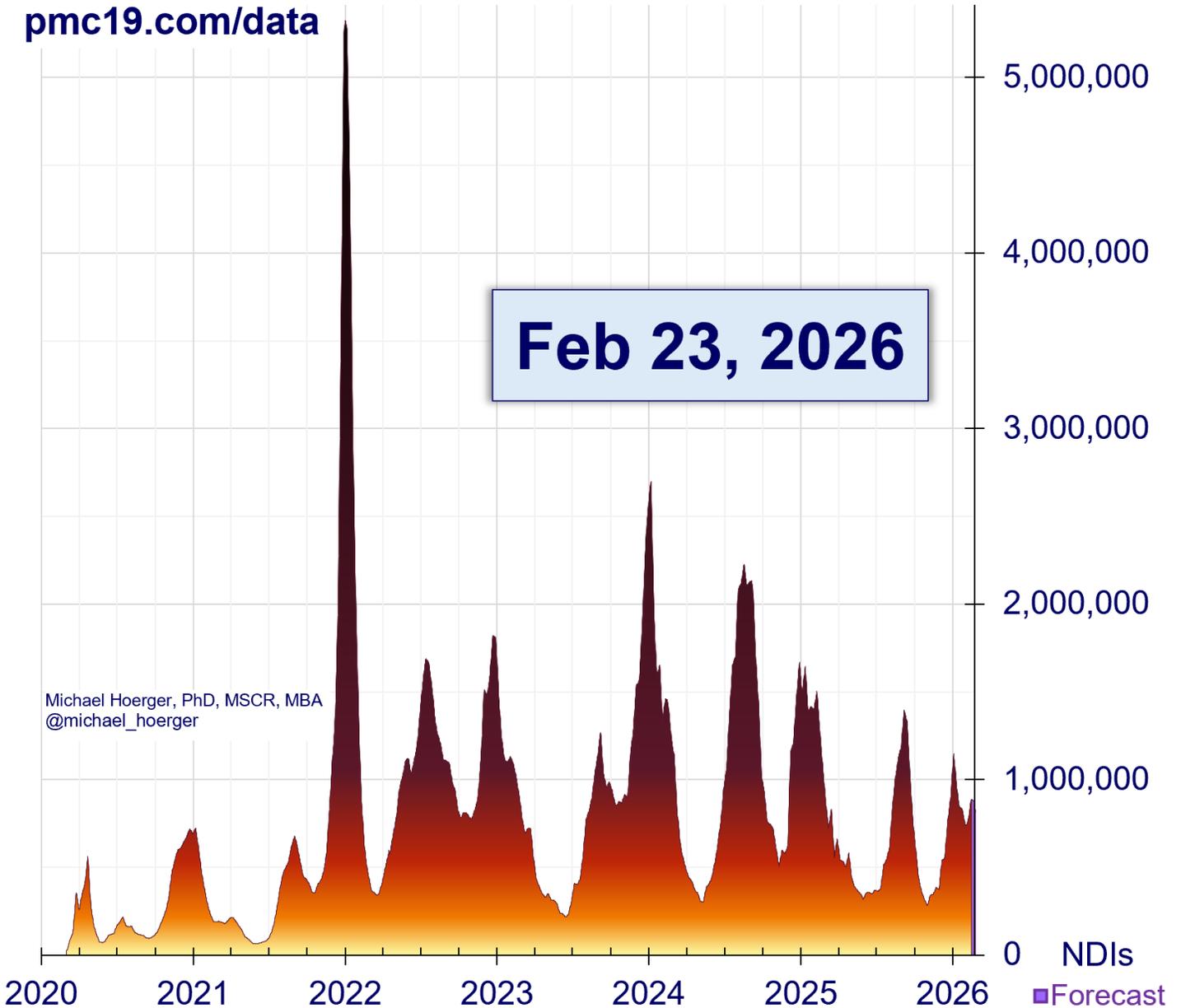| State	CDC Level	PMC Estimate, % Actively Infectious	Chances anyone is infectious in a room of 10 to 100 people			
			10	25	50	100
Missouri	Moderate	1 in 64 (1.6%)	15%	32%	54%	79%
Montana	Moderate	1 in 46 (2.2%)	20%	42%	67%	89%
Nebraska	**Very High**	1 in 18 (5.5%)	43%	75%	94%	>99%
Nevada	Very Low	1 in 122 (0.8%)	8%	19%	34%	56%
New Hampshire	Moderate	1 in 45 (2.2%)	20%	43%	67%	89%
New Jersey	Moderate	1 in 57 (1.7%)	16%	36%	58%	83%
New Mexico	Low	1 in 70 (1.4%)	13%	30%	51%	76%
New York	Moderate	1 in 44 (2.3%)	21%	44%	68%	90%
North Carolina	Low	1 in 76 (1.3%)	12%	28%	48%	73%
North Dakota	**Very High***	1 in 27 (3.7%)	31%	61%	85%	98%
Ohio	**High**	1 in 35 (2.8%)	25%	51%	76%	94%
Oklahoma	Moderate*	1 in 58 (1.7%)	16%	35%	58%	82%
Oregon	Very Low	1 in 215 (0.5%)	5%	11%	21%	37%
Pennsylvania	Moderate	1 in 55 (1.8%)	17%	37%	60%	84%
Rhode Island	Low	1 in 99 (1.0%)	10%	22%	40%	64%
South Carolina	Moderate	1 in 51 (2.0%)	18%	39%	63%	86%
South Dakota	**Very High**	1 in 20 (5.1%)	41%	73%	93%	>99%
Tennessee	Low	1 in 85 (1.2%)	11%	26%	45%	69%
Texas	Moderate	1 in 53 (1.9%)	17%	38%	61%	85%
Utah	Low	1 in 65 (1.5%)	14%	32%	54%	79%
Vermont	Low	1 in 72 (1.4%)	13%	30%	50%	75%
Virginia	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Washington	Very Low	1 in 114 (0.9%)	8%	20%	36%	59%
West Virginia	**Very High**	1 in 15 (6.7%)	50%	82%	97%	>99%
Wisconsin	**High**	1 in 41 (2.4%)	22%	46%	71%	91%
Wyoming	Moderate	1 in 46 (2.2%)	20%	43%	67%	89%

* Limited reporting; ND has no data, averages MN, MT, & SD   Data last updated Feb 14

Note that while Puerto Rico provides qualitative estimates, useful for the heat map, quantitative levels do not appear to be reported publicly. West Virginia has one site and is experiencing volatility in reporting (much like New Orleans, Louisiana during the summer wave); its extremely high wastewater levels suggest 1 in 7 infectious, but we have capped the estimate at 1 in 15.

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

pmc19.com/data

Feb 23, 2026

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NDIs

Forecast

The real-time data suggest one of the largest post-peak bumps in transmission to date. This may get corrected downward; a few states with increases have limited data by CDC criteria, few sites reporting, or high volatility.

National COVID-19 Estimates (U.S.)

Feb 23, 2026   **pmc19.com/data**

Infections

Proportion Actively Infectious	1 in 58 (1.7%)
New Daily Infections	851,000
Infections the Past Week	6,120,000
Infections in 2026	47,000,000
Cumulative Infections per Person	5.08

Long COVID

Long COVID Cases Resulting from New Daily Infections	43,000 to 170,000
Long COVID Cases Resulting from New Weekly Infections	306,000 to 1,220,000

Excess Deaths

Excess Deaths Resulting from New Daily Infections	240 to 400
Excess Deaths Resulting from New Weekly Infections	1,700 to 2,900

The U.S. continues to see an estimated ≈850,000 new daily infections amid percolating moderate relative levels of transmission. Weekly excess deaths remain near 2,000.

National COVID-19 Risk Table (U.S.)
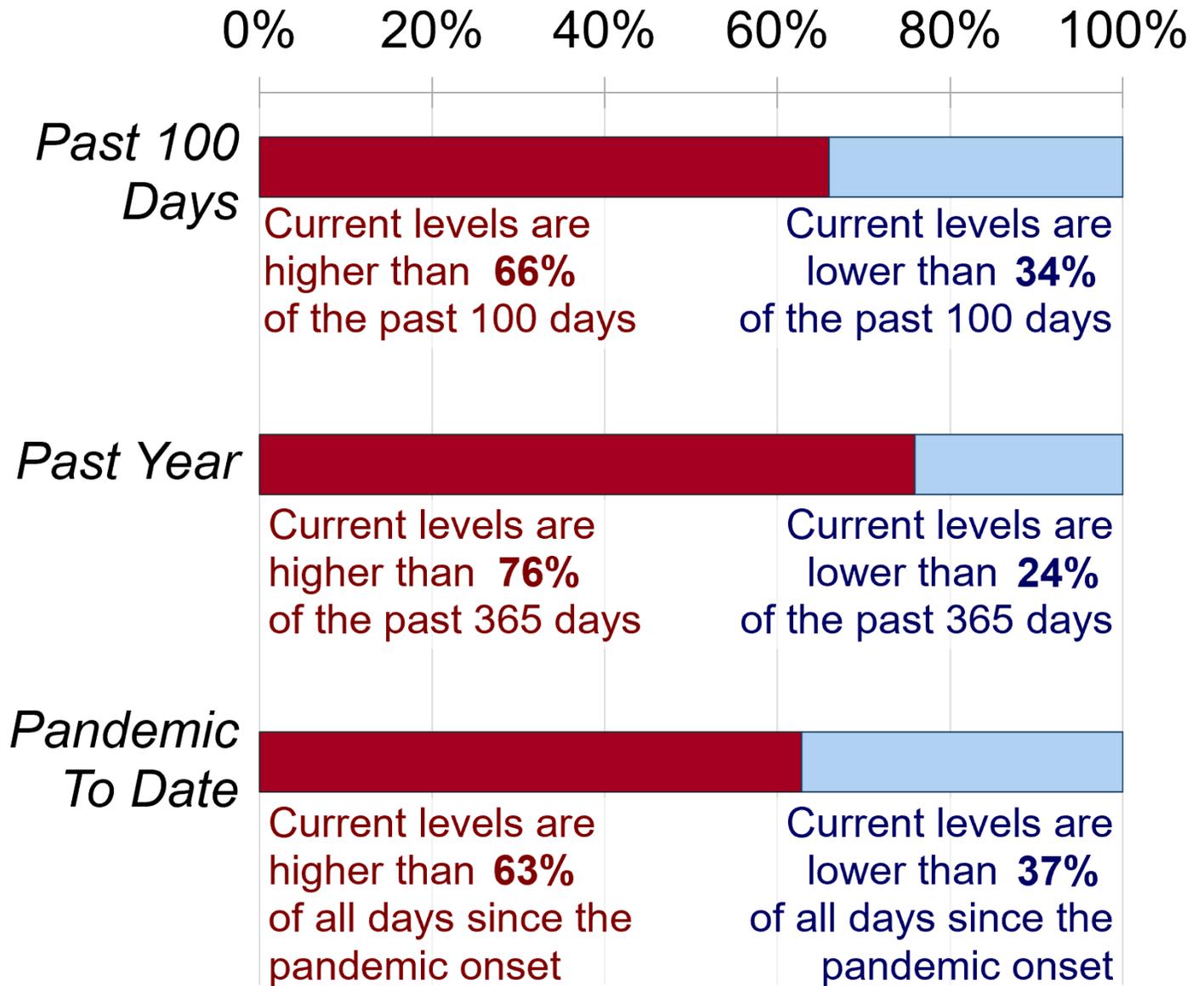
Feb 23, 2026   pmc19.com/data

Number of People	Chances Anyone is Infectious
1	1.7%
2	3.4%
3	5.1%
4	6.8%
5	8.4%
10	16.1%
15	23.1%
20	29.6%
25	35.5%
30	40.9%
50	58.4%
75	73.2%
100	82.7%
200	97.0%
300	99.5%

In a room of 25 people representative of the U.S. population, there would be a 36% chance of an exposure if there were no testing and isolation protocols.

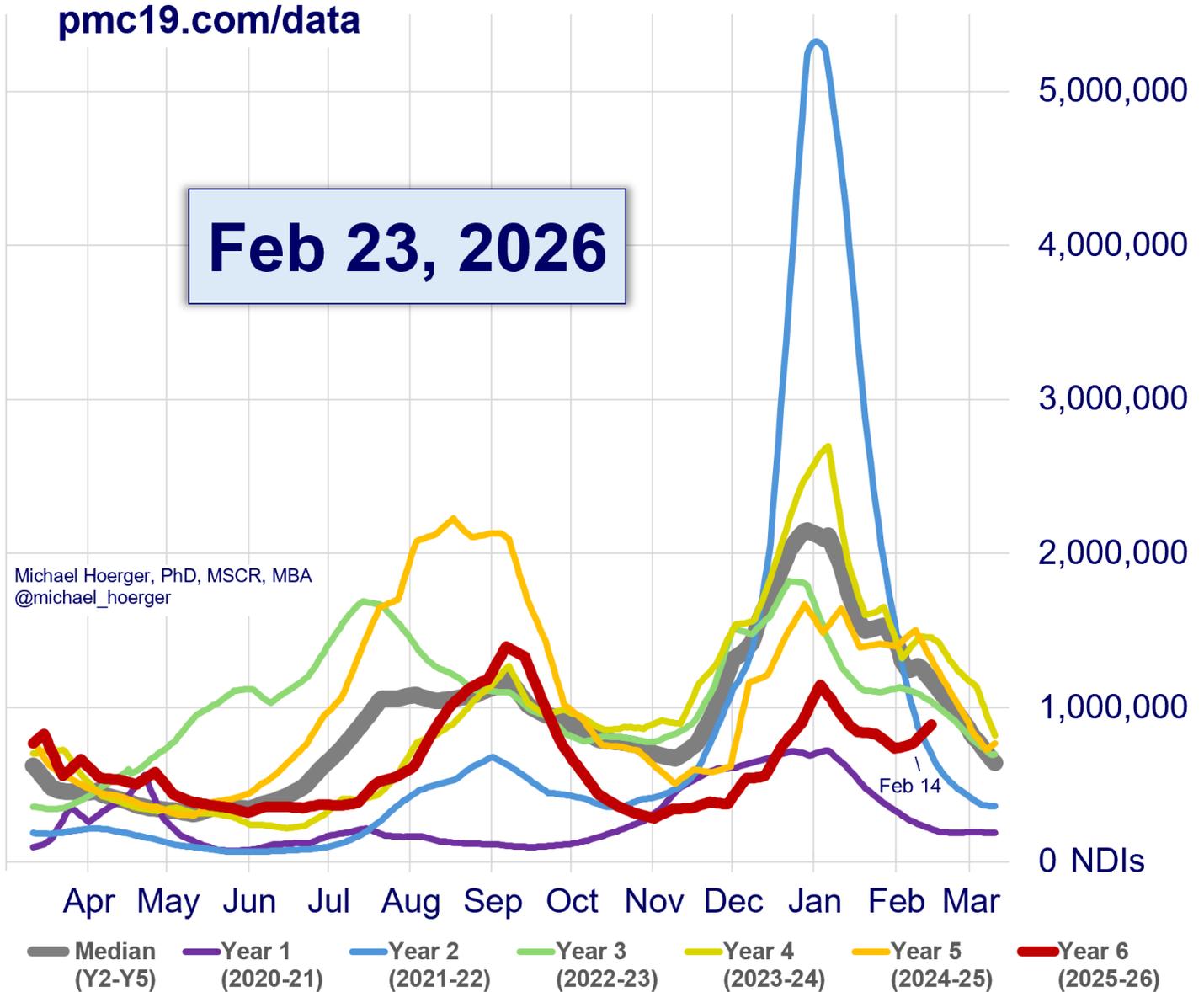# SARS-CoV-2 Relative Transmission "Barometer" (U.S.)

Feb 23, 2026   **pmc19.com/data**

	0%	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%

Past 100 Days

Current levels are higher than **66%** of the past 100 days

Current levels are lower than **34%** of the past 100 days

Past Year

Current levels are higher than **76%** of the past 365 days

Current levels are lower than **24%** of the past 365 days

Pandemic To Date

Current levels are higher than **63%** of all days since the pandemic onset

Current levels are lower than **37%** of all days since the pandemic onset

Current transmission is above average relative to recent months, the past year, and the entirety of the SARS-CoV-2 era.
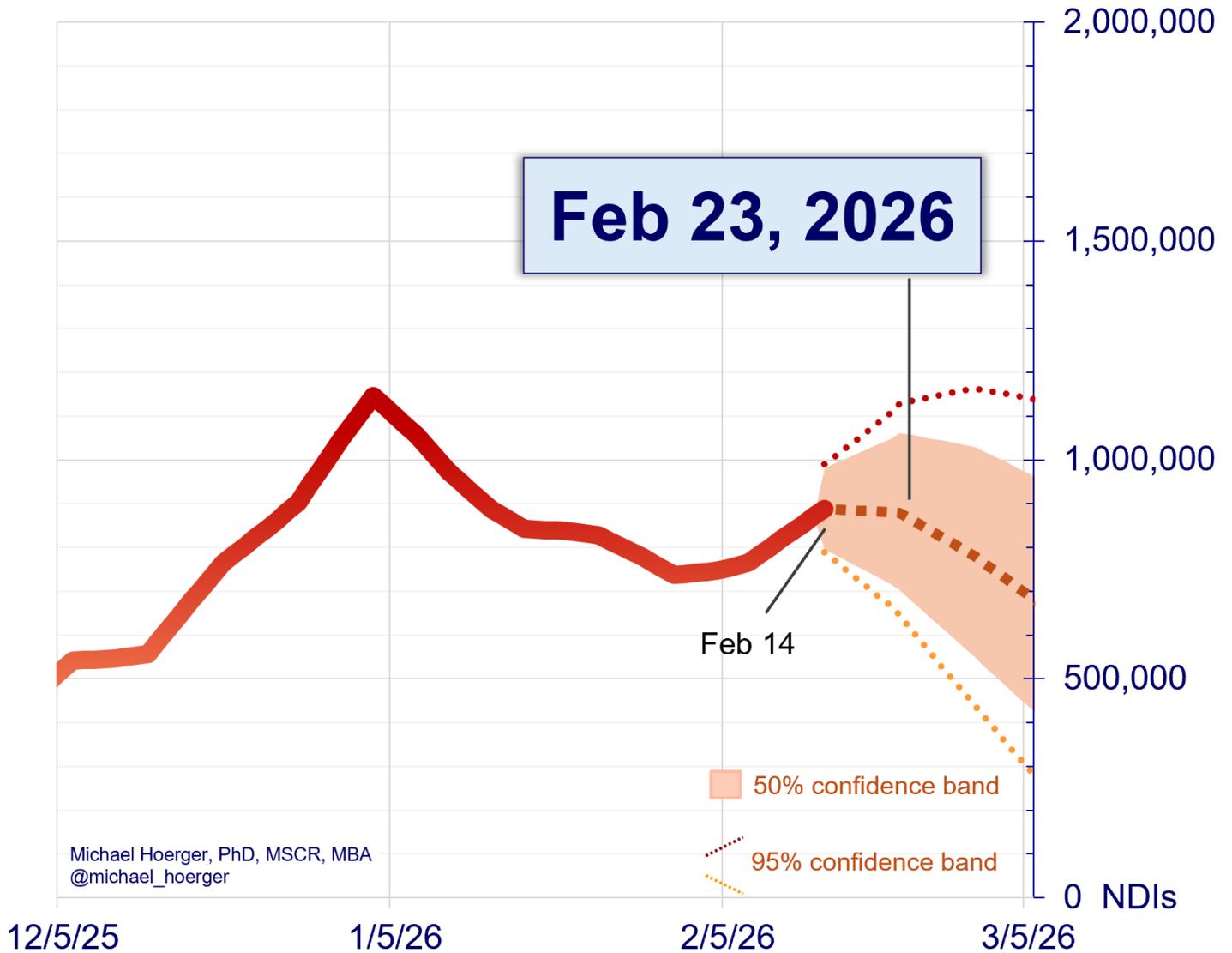
SARS-CoV-2 Year-Over-Year Estimates of Transmission (U.S.)

pmc19.com/data

As with the past 3 years, late January and early February transmission has percolated, rather than declined steeply. The reported increase at this time period is most similar to two years ago. Notice that in all prior years, transmission declined in late February.

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

pmc19.com/data

The real-time reported increase in transmission may get corrected downward; however, if accurate, it is atypical in magnitude. Transmission is declining in most states, and the bump is driven by larger increases in a small subset. Transmission is expected to decline in late February, as in prior years.

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.