



COVID-19 research update

April 6, 2020

The Health Policy Institute of Ohio is collecting the latest research so that Ohio policymakers and other stakeholders can make informed decisions on the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic. HPIO has also created a [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) resource page](#) to serve as a "one-stop-shop" for links to the Ohio Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other sources of frequently updated, reputable information.

Studies highlight COVID-related mental health challenges for children, healthcare workers

Recent research literature has examined the mental health impact of COVID-19, particularly on groups such as children and healthcare workers.

[A new commentary](#) (Lancet, March 27) highlights that children's mental health should be considered when designing and implementing strategies to combat COVID-19. When children are quarantined or separated from parents due to COVID-19, policymakers should consider: (1) establishing evidence-based guidelines and strategies to cope with COVID-19 pandemic-related mental health problems in children; (2) improving children's access to mental health services through nationwide networks of psychiatrists, psychotherapists, researchers and community volunteers; (3) conducting post-pandemic surveillance of mental disorders among children.

[A study of healthcare workers in China](#) during the COVID-19 outbreak (JAMA, March 23) found that people working in hospitals and other healthcare settings may experience increased symptoms of psychological distress and need additional support. The study measured symptoms of depression, anxiety, insomnia and distress among workers. Participants reported experiencing psychological burden, especially nurses, women and frontline health care workers directly engaged in the diagnosis, treatment and care of patients with COVID-19.

Study of 1918 flu pandemic finds that social distancing can help economy in long run

[A study of the impact of social distancing](#) (SSRN, March 30) during the 1918 flu pandemic found that cities that implemented non-pharmaceutical interventions, or NPIs, earlier and more aggressively may have seen faster economic growth after the pandemic. The authors found that pandemics reduce economic activity and that NPIs reduce mortality. According to the authors, "NPIs not only lower mortality; they also mitigate the adverse economic consequences of a pandemic."

Development of antibody tests

[A report summarizing the current state of development of antibody tests for COVID-19](#)

(Lancet, April 4) found that widespread availability of such tests will be key for decision

making related to public policy. Antibody tests will identify who has developed immunity to the virus. Labs and researchers creating these tests can use emergency use authorization issued by the FDA to expedite making them available. The technology for antibody tests is "generally harder to get right" compared to the tests for detecting viral RNA, the authors found. Several tests are in development, but scaling up production to meet global demand will be challenging.