

From: Fauci, Anthony (NIH/NIAID) [E]
Sent: Sun, 16 Feb 2020 22:28:19 +0000
To: Jon LaPook
Subject: RE: Coronavirus

Jon:

I have no idea what this guy is talking about. I have never said the R0 was close to 5 or 6. The R0 is about 2.0 to 2.2. Also, the situation is as we have discussed on several occasions. In the USA, the travel restrictions seem to be working with only 15 cases in the USA (13 travel and 2 spouses). But, as I have said, this could change. If we get substantial sustained transmission in a number of countries throughout the world, including the developing world, then sooner or later there will be significant leakage of infected individuals into the USA since you cannot restrict incoming travel from the whole world. The way we might be able to avoid a real global pandemic is if the non-China countries can contain the infections in their respective countries before there is widely distributed sustained transmissions. Once widely distributed sustained transmissions happen, a global pandemic is inevitable. What would a global pandemic mean? It depends on the true rates of morbidity and mortality. The currently reported mortality of COVID-19 is about 2%. However, there are several folds more cases than are coming to the official attention of health authorities, i.e. asymptomatic or minimally symptomatic infections. If you count these, the denominator gets much larger and the case fatality rate could drop to 1% of even 0.5 % or less. If that is the case, then this could be a very severe seasonal flu (0.2% to 0.4%; regular seasonal flu is 0.1%) or a typical pandemic like 1957 or 1968 (0.5% -0.9 %). We are not sure where it is going to land.

Hope this is helpful.

Best,
Tony

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-----Original Message-----

From: Jon LaPook (b) (6)>
Sent: Sunday, February 16, 2020 4:39 PM
To: Fauci, Anthony (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b) (6)
Subject: Coronavirus

Hi Tony,

I thought you would be interested to see a text (below my email) I just got from a very smart Wall Street guy who has been filling me in on reaction there. I've been doing my best on air to put the current situation in perspective - communicating that the risk in the U.S. is still relatively low while letting viewers know the situation is fluid and could change. How would you sum up where we are now?

Thanks,
Jon