

Peer Review: COVID-19 Tracker

The COVID-19 tracker is a mobile application designed in response to the recent COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of the application is to inform users of high and low risk areas of activities within their provincial and local regions. Upon opening, users are greeted to a color-coded map of the province, regional COVID-19 statistics and an intuitive, well-mapped UI implementing a minimalist design. This main page is well designed and appears to adhere to most of Don Norman's principles. A small criticism is a lack of documentation regarding the meaning of behind the colors used or alternatives for users who would be unable to differentiate between these colors (color blind). This may have been brought forth during the final evaluation under aesthetics, but I was unable to find out if it was addressed directly. This fix could easily be resolved through the implementation of a color and pattern-based form of differentiation along with a small legend. Additionally, there is some debate regarding the inclusion of all regional COVID-19 statistics immediately, rather than selecting those only pertinent to engaging in a local activity. Specifically, this is in reference to the "Confirmed Deaths" statistic, whereby it could be argued this is only designed to induce fear. Detailed statistics should be readily accessible, but only into their already implemented "More Information" feature. However, ethics is beyond the scope of this course.

Following the selection of the "Find Activities" button, a questionnaire is brought up asking several questions regarding family members and frequency of leaving the household. The implementation of this questionnaire brings forth my primary criticism, which is simply: What is the utility of including these questions? The primary argument for their inclusion is to assess the risk for at-risk members of the user's family or social circle. However, regardless of an individual's risk factors, exposure risk would still impact community infections and ultimately at-risk members. Additionally, its inclusion introduces a major hurdle for the applications reusability. If the user is required to repeatedly answer the questions every time they want to look up an activity, it would grow tiresome and the application would be discarded in favor of its competitors. Having a button that lists activities would be much easier to implement. This was discovered during the initial heuristic evaluation and proposed to be optional. To my surprise, its inclusion was still implemented into the medium fidelity model and not readily discussed during the final evaluation.

Once the user answers the series of questions and their city of interest, a local map replaces the provincial map along with related activities and their associated risk. As with the main screen, this page has been implemented wonderfully, albeit with a comparable color-coded rating system. Once a user has selected an activity, an overlay is displayed with details about the activity including risk, hours of operation, and description of the activity. A great feature that the group has included is the option to share a list of activities (or an individual activity) and their associated risk due to its novel nature and ease of use.

To summarize, their application was well done but needs to remove the questionnaire feature.