

Study examines the most effective COVID-19 control policies

29 December 2020

With the arrival of effective vaccines for the COVID-19 virus, the end of the pandemic is on the horizon but in the short term the virus continues to spread.

A timely new study published today by *PLOS ONE* examines the effectiveness of COVID-19 control policies in 40 jurisdictions including countries and U.S. states.

Among the conclusions is that significant social costs must be incurred to reduce the growth of the virus below zero. In most jurisdictions examined, policies with a lesser social impact including cancellation of public events, restrictions of gatherings to fewer than 100 people, and recommendations to stay at home, are not enough in themselves to control COVID-19. Socially intolerable measures such as stay-at-home orders, targeted or full workplace and school closings are also required.

The study is authored by Anita M. McGahan, University Professor and the George E. Connell Chair in Organizations & Society at the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management and Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, Wesley Wu-Yi Koo, an assistant professor of strategy at INSEAD, and Phebo Wibbens, an assistant professor of strategy at INSEAD.

The study used a model to generate estimates of the marginal impact of each policy in a jurisdiction after accounting for the overall portfolio of policies adopted by the jurisdiction, the levels at which the policies are implemented, the rigorousness of compliance within the jurisdiction, the jurisdiction's COVID-19 infections, COVID-19 deaths, and excess deaths, and the performance of the portfolio of policies in other jurisdictions. Eleven categories of COVID-19 control policies were examined including school closings, workplace closings, cancellation of public events, restrictions on gatherings, closing of public transport, stay-at-

home requirements, restrictions on internal movement, international travel controls, public information campaigns, testing, and contact tracing.

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More information: *PLOS ONE* (2020). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0244177](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0244177)

Provided by University of Toronto

APA citation: Study examines the most effective COVID-19 control policies (2020, December 29)
retrieved 15 May 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-12-effective-covid-policies.html>

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