

What is intelligence?

The COVID-19 pandemic is nothing less than a war on healthcare infrastructure, and as any seasoned wartime leader will agree, intelligence is critical to win a war.

Intelligence allows everyone involved in a situation to have the reliable, accurate information they need to perform their duties as quickly and effectively as possible.



Image courtesy of foreignpolicy.com

How might we provide successful intelligence?

- 1.) Gather all relevant information from all possible sources available (academia, news, social media, human intelligence, etc.)
- 2.) Sort intelligence based on relevance and credibility.
- 3.) Identify trends, indicators, vulnerabilities, and warnings.
- 4.) Assess opportunity analysis.

Intel reports generated between 13 March and 22 May 2020:

Number of analytic reports disseminated: 23

Number of raw reports (contain minimal to no analysis) disseminated: 22

- Topics included: ambulance procedure, contact tracing, elective procedures, end of life patient support, epidemiologic curves, federal government response, healthcare worker infection, ICU protocol, infection control, messaging opportunities, PPE reuse, PPE supply chains, public perceptions of COVID, COVID resurgence, second wave occurrences, surge operation strategies, testing, vaccines, and visitor guidelines.

Challenges to intelligence reporting

- Time - the intel reported during this time period required hundreds of hours of work.
- Monitoring - good intelligence incorporates *all* information, which in today's age is like drinking from a firehose.
- Summarizing large quantities of data - a good report summarizes anywhere from dozens to thousands of pages of reporting in a few paragraphs.
- Determining intelligence gaps - to write helpful intel, you must know what questions need to be answered imminently, which can be hard to determine in the heat of crisis.
- Moving fast - leaders often needed info yesterday; reporting requires speed and agility.