

Assessing Operation Warp Speed: What's working, what's not

Is [Operation Warp Speed] working?

Roughly five months after top U.S. health officials coalesced around the idea of a public-private effort to accelerate the development, manufacturing, and distribution of Covid-19 vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics, an answer to that question remains out of reach. But with billions of federal dollars already spent on the effort, it's possible to take stock of the initiative's progress, or lack thereof.

Here's an assessment of the work so far.

If all goes well, the fast-tracking of vaccine development, which normally takes years, will have been telescoped down to about a year. To date, the fastest a vaccine was ever developed was four years.

Operation Warp Speed, or OWS, has already spent about \$10 billion.

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Basic questions about what is being done and why are often not laid out. It's not crystal clear, for instance, why OWS picked the vaccine projects to fund that it did, or how the process was handled.

The trial protocols for the studies, which would explain what and how analyses are being done, have not been published. However, for the trial of Moderna's vaccine, data on the diversity of the participants are being regularly made public.

Key public health professionals across the country have been in the dark about how Covid-19 vaccines, once available, will be distributed and administered.

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