



Decisions by top officials responding to President Donald Trump's edict to protect "America first" contributed to a global delay in Covid-19 vaccine donations and a lack of effort to assist low- and middle-income countries, according to five current and former U.S. officials who worked under Trump on the federal pandemic response.

The failure to view the Covid threat in global terms left some nations — including those where the Omicron variant emerged in recent weeks — lacking inoculation and much more vulnerable to mutations, the officials said.

They described a White House and its health agencies fixated on one goal: obtaining enough drugs and protective gear to shield the American people from Covid-19. But that strategy, pushed directly by Trump and his senior aides, neglected to seriously consider the threat of variants and spread of infections if lower-income countries were left unprotected, the officials said.

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