Twitter Thread by Prof Francois Balloux

Prof Francois Balloux
@BallouxFrancois

"Herd immunity is back" may sound grand but I feel it is unnecessarily provocative and such sentiments won't help to engage in a much needed societal discussion. Incidentally, it is inaccurate.
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> Herd immunity is back. This article quotes its proponents, and then yours truly and @gregggonsalves on why in the absence of a clear way to protect the vulnerable from a raging storm of infection among the less vulnerable, it is a very dangerous idea 1/n https://t.co/5lkhaC34HK
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> — Bill Hanage (@BillHanage) October 6, 2020

'Herd immunity' is neither a strategy nor a policy. It simply describes the mechanism by which an epidemic wanes before everyone in a population has been immunised through vaccination or infection. As such, 'herd immunity' is part and parcel of any vaccination campaign.
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It is fairly unlikely we'll have 'infection blocking' vaccines available for everyone in the near future. This is even true for the richest nations on earth. This has been acknowledged by the UK government, which doesn't plan to vaccinate most of its population.
3/

As #COVID19 won't be eradicated any time soon, the question is what is the best strategy to minimise morbidity and mortality whilst controlling #COVID19. Those fall in a continuum ranging from indefinite suppression (Zero COVID) to preferential shielding of the most at risk.
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How to deal with #COVID19 is a complex question that has no unique answer, only painful tradeoffs. Using inflammatory language, politicising and demonising those who disagree with us on the best strategy to reduce harm and deaths is, I believe, unhelpful.
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