

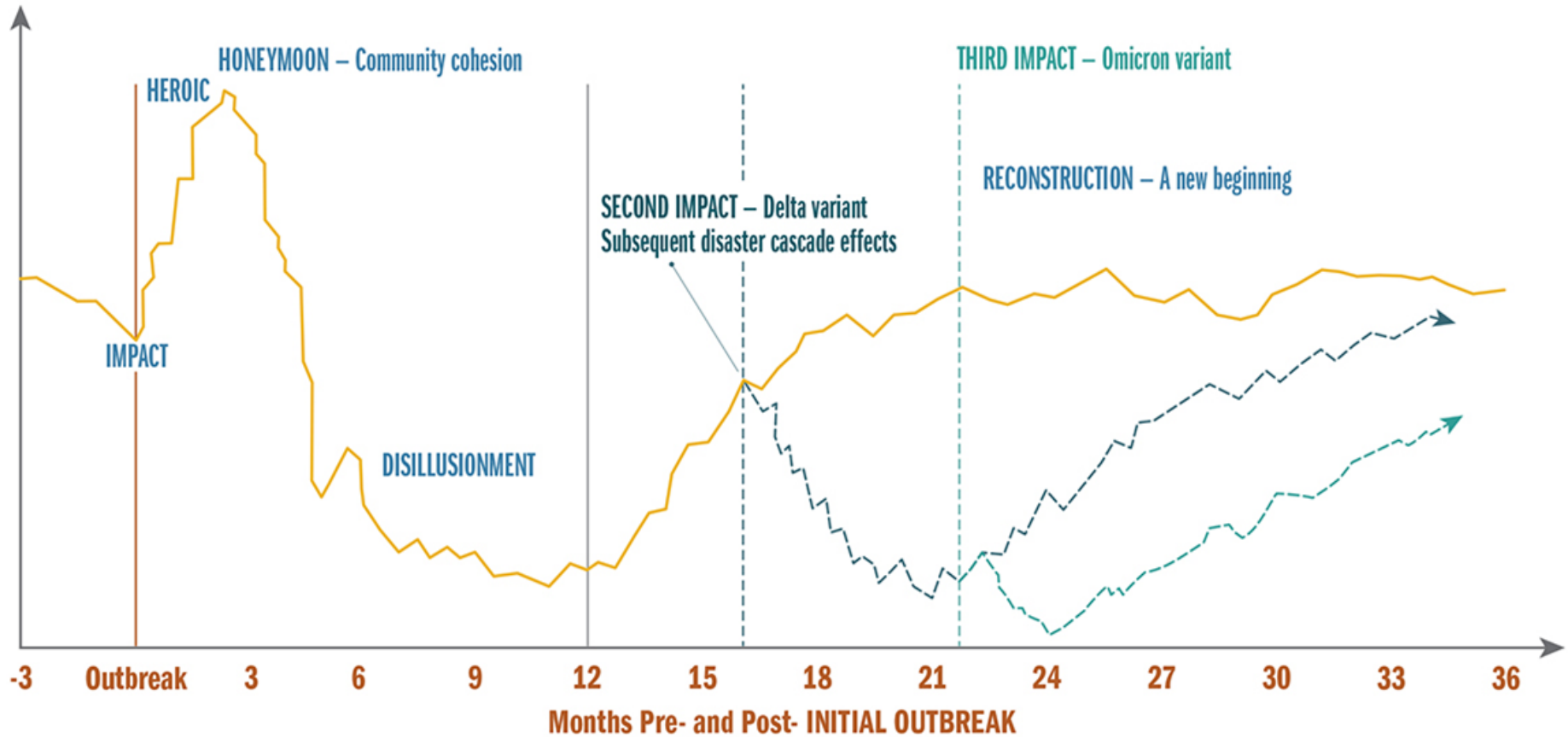
**January 2022**

**Behavioral Health  
Forecast Summary**

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# Reactions and Behavioral Health Symptoms in Disasters – COVID-19

Emotional Response – Lows to Highs



# Disaster Cascade effects

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- A disaster cascade is defined as the experience of multiple disaster “Impacts” within a 12-18 month time frame (multiple waves of the same disaster, or different types – floods, hurricanes, etc).
- Disaster cascades further tax already depleted emotional, physical, social and economic resources.
- ***The Omicron variant is now representing a THIRD large-scale impact within a 24-month time frame.***
- ***Behavioral Health outcome pathways are in a critical point of divergence.***
- Outcome pathways can include resilience (most common) as well as new acute symptoms, new disorders and even chronic dysfunction.

# Diverging Pathways

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1. Resilience (remains the most common outcome even in a cascade scenario)
2. Symptom acuity
3. New diagnoses or conditions
4. Chronic dysfunction (least likely outcome but also very much a reality)

Our personal and collective management of the omicron variant will influence our behavioral health experience. Resilience is a path that can be nurtured and developed.

# Key Takeaways

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- Long term build up of stress from the pandemic and associated consequences can have significant effects on how we:
  - process emotion
  - process information, and
  - interact with others
- Anxiety about the “end” or not of the pandemic (will it become endemic) and how do we live with it widespread but varied in degrees.
- Taking the time to process the grief and loss of the last two years (+) will be a central theme in our collective transition into recovery from the disaster cascade.

# Three Areas of Focus for January 2022

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1. Ongoing and potentially severe disruptions to healthcare, social, economic (supply chain) and educational systems caused by the Omicron (and potentially other) variants; Crisis Standards of Care and those implications as well.
2. Concerning behavioral health trends for children, youth and young adults.
3. Collective grief and loss related not just to the loss of individuals, but social and systemic losses as well and the processing of such as being integral to our recovery.

## Resources:

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DOH - Forecast and situational reports, guidance and resources:

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/NovelCoronavirusOutbreak2020COVID19/HealthcareProviders/BehavioralHealthResources>

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