



# COVID-19 Update

Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, Acting Medical Officer of Health

April 10, 2020 at 11:30 a.m.

## Modeling Forecasts for Waterloo Region

- Models cannot predict what will happen.
- But models can help us understand what *could* happen, to help support decision making, so that we can plan actions that will enable better outcomes.
- All modelling has limitations.
- And, with any model, the farther out predicted, the more uncertainty there is in the predictions.
- I will present modeling forecasts regarding the number of deaths we could see in Waterloo Region, based on the modeling projections released by the Province on April 3, 2020.
- The projections released by the Province were developed by several experts at Ontario Health, Public Health Ontario, and researchers at Ontario Universities

- **Projected number of deaths over the course of the pandemic:**
  - Projected Ontario deaths:
    - In the absence of public health measures: 100,000 deaths
    - With public health measures: Up to 15,000 deaths
    - [Public health measures preventing 85,000 deaths]
  - Projected Waterloo Region deaths:
    - In the absence of public health measures: (Roughly) 4,100 deaths
    - With public health measures: Up to (roughly) 615 deaths
    - [Public health measures preventing (roughly) 3,485 deaths]
- **Projected number of deaths by April 30, 2020:**
  - Projected Ontario deaths:
    - In the absence of public health measures: 6,000 deaths
    - With public health measures: Up to 1,600 deaths
    - [Public health measures preventing 4,400 deaths]

- Projected Waterloo Region deaths:
  - In the absence of public health measures: (Roughly) 246 deaths
  - With public health measures: Up to (roughly) 66 deaths
  - [Public health measures preventing (roughly) 180 deaths]

- In addition to being very rough estimates (which are not meant as predictions, but rather as projections to support decision making), these are ‘point in time’ projections.
- Ontario will continue to refine its models, and we will continue to update our modelling as a function of that.

### **Status update and a change to dashboard reporting (re negative tests)**

- We now have 242 positive cases in Waterloo Region of which 77 cases are now resolved
- And locally we have tested 2,792 individuals
- Public Health Ontario Lab is no longer sending reports of negative tests to public health units.
- The province is transitioning to making it possible for people to check their COVID-19 test results online at [COVID19.ontario.ca](https://COVID19.ontario.ca)
- Because we will no longer receive reports of negative tests from labs, our dashboard will no longer report the number of negative tests in the Region starting today.
- Region of Waterloo Public Health will call all people with positive COVID-19 tests to inform them of their results. We will no longer be calling people to inform them of negative results.

### **Easter and Passover**

- For those who celebrate... this is an Easter and Passover experience none could have expected
- For those who celebrate, Easter and Passover are precious moments in the calendar that are shared with members of their wider families
- But unfortunately, this cannot be our experience this year.
- That’s because we know that the most effective ways of slowing the spread of COVID-19 are staying at home and physical distancing.
- So this means celebrating Easter and Passover **only** with members of our own households

- If we relax our measures... if we let up our guard... even momentarily... this can and will lead to an escalation of cases and unfortunately, an escalation of deaths in Waterloo Region
- This will also undo the good work we have done in practicing physical distancing in recent weeks.
- So as you celebrate Easter and Passover, please keep this in mind.
- Continue to celebrate with members of your household, and continue to check-in virtually with your wider family and friends.
- And thank you to all who celebrated the Seder last night while maintaining physical distancing.

## Ongoing measures

- As we continue with our measures and as we move through these important milestones in our calendars – birthdays, anniversaries and various other celebrations – we know that many of you want to know when this will be over...
- ...But the reality that is we don't yet know
- These measures are difficult, but they are absolutely necessary.
- This is a moment in our lives that none of us will forget. In the years to come, let us remember this time for having **worked together** and for having done the **best we could**... for ourselves... for those we care about... and for the most vulnerable in our community.