COVID-19 Update

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

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

Modelling 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 modelling 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.