



Briefing Note

Date: April 23rd, 2020

Prepared for: ONWA Staff & Senior Management, Chapters, Councils & Community Partners

Prepared By: Policy, Research, and Evaluation Portfolio

Issue: Briefing of Press Conferences – Provincial/National COVID-19 Announcements

Purpose: To inform ONWA, ONWA Chapters and Councils and community partners on recent developments on COVID-19 for April 23rd, 2020.

As of 4:30 pm Thursday, April 23rd, 2020

- Globally: 2,707,131 cases (+75,348); 189,725 deaths (+5,659)¹
- US: 876,129 (+27,412), 49,648 deaths (+1,989)
- Spain: 213,024 (+4,635), 22,157 deaths (+440)
- Italy: 189,973 (+2,646), 25,549 deaths (+464)
- Canada: 41,791 cases (+1,601); 2,141 deaths (+167)²
- Ontario: 12,879 cases (+634); 713 deaths (+54)
 - 6,680 resolved, 877 hospitalized, 233 in ICU, 185 on ventilators.³

Summary of Key National & Provincial Press Conferences:

Ministry of Health Emergency Operating Center (MEOC) COVID-19 Conference Call

- Europe 1.2 million cases, approx.: 112 000 deaths.
- Norway Denmark, Germany slowly lowering number of cases.
- UK, Turkey, Russia exceptions seeing increasingly high cases.
- US approx. 849 000 cases, 47 000 deaths. Hovering around 25 to 35 000 new daily cases.
- Some states indicating they want to ease restrictions.
- Ontario cases slightly lower than last 3 day average
- Increase hospitalized (+58) but decrease in ICU (-10) and those on ventilators (-7).
- LTC homes jumped by 5 now at 132 outbreaks. Retirement homes dropped by 1 to 63.
- Healthcare workers. 1499 cumulative. Hospitalized 60 cumulative, up by 2. ICU still 19.
- Lab tests 6800 pending. Up from 1700. Completed 10300. Up by 1000. Highest regions are TO, Peel, York, Ottawa, Durham, Windsor.

¹<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

²<https://www.covid-19canada.com/>

³https://covid-19.ontario.ca/?_ga=2.66843437.2079880679.1587402079-217522806.1582483804



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- Highest per capita regions (over 100 cases/100 000 population), Lennox, Norfolk, Windsor, TO, Lambton, Durham.

Prime Minister (PM) Trudeau Government of Canada Announcement:

- This will be another difficult day, we are thinking of those in Nova Scotia, yesterday I spoke with the families with some of the loved ones that were lost. Their strength is remarkable.
- For Torontonians, we remember the victims of the van attack 2 years ago today.
- These are tough times, but there are reasons for hope, We need to be thinking not just of next week, but next months. We need short, medium and long-term plans.
- 1.1 billion dollars for a national research and medical strategy with 3 pillars.
 - Pillar 1: \$115 million for vaccine development
 - Pillar 2: \$662 million for research on clinical trials for a vaccine
 - Pillar 3: \$350 million to expand national testing and modeling for COVID-19 immunity task force.
 - Lead by a leadership group of top health experts and scientists.
 - Will be testing over a million Canadians over next 2 years
- Testing is key, 20 000 tests daily, but testing must increase further before we can reopen the country.
- We are seeing terrible tragedies in LTC facilities across the country. We are failing our parents, grandparents, and elders.
 - There have been requests for both Ontario and Quebec for military assistance for LTC homes.
 - We will support provinces to get control of this situation. But this is not a long-term solution, we should not have soldiers taking care of seniors.

Federal Ministers and Health Officials Press Conference

- We know there are people who had COVID-19 but were never tested because they showed little to no symptoms.
- We also know that there are blood tests that can detect antibodies against the virus that can tell us who has been infected.
- We need data and research to help us better understand the extent of community spread of the virus, give us better sense of what to expect during a possible second wave of the virus, and give us a better picture to help us guide how we can ease Public Health restrictions.
- Announcing a Canada-wide study to track COVID-19 infections that will better equip us to plan over the next few months and contribute to our ability to manage COVID-19 well into the future.



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- Canadian Institute of Health Research funding will help better understand the mental health challenges Canadians are facing as a result of living with COVID-19 and how and what measures can help with these challenges.
- Funding will also accelerate the development and testing of vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics, and measures to contain spread of the virus.
- Investment of \$40 million that will allow Genome Canada and CGen to coordinate a COVID-19 genome sequencing effort across Canada.
- Scientists will sequence 150,000 virus samples in 10,000 human host genomes to understand how the human body responds to the virus and to track the evolution of the virus as it spreads.
- Providing National Research Council \$29 million for Human Health Therapeutics Research Centre facility in Montreal to ready the facility for the production of vaccines for clinical trials – provide infrastructure and operational support to prepare vials for individual doses as soon as a vaccine is available.
- Further \$23 million for the University of Saskatchewan's International Vaccine Centre – support pre-clinical testing and clinical trials of COVID-19 vaccine candidates.
- Announcing \$600 million towards a strategic innovation fund, the COVID-19 stream, to deliver direct support to Canadian companies for large scale projects. Help companies with promising vaccine treatment move to clinical trials as well as expand Canadian biomanufacturing opportunities so we can manufacture a vaccine here in Canada when its available.

Premier Doug Ford's Press Conference

- Federal government has approved our request for military help in long-term care (LTC) homes.
- Working on determining how to prioritize which LTC homes get military assistance.
- The role of the military is to support frontline workers in any capacity that they need.
- Province has extended numerous emergency orders for another two weeks.
- Positive news in the coming days for garden centres and similar businesses.
- Next testing goal is 14,000 tests/day and will ramp contact tracing to be working alongside the testing.
- Considerations are being made about when it will be possible to start performing certain surgeries again – but before that can happen we need to see testing levels up to 14,000 tests/day, ramping up contact tracing, surveillance in communities in terms of testing asymptomatic peoples, and getting the number of daily cases down.
- Announcing the [COVID-19 Action Plan: Protecting Vulnerable Ontarians](#)
 - Series of actions to be put in place in over the next 48 hours and coming days, targeted at enhancing screening and testing in these settings.
 - Over the next 48 hours, a combination of enhanced screening and reduced exposure measures will stabilize outbreaks in these settings; increase screening



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of visitors, staff, and residents; make the use of masks mandatory in high risk settings; provide additional guidance and training in the use of personal protective equipment; and in certain high-risk settings, will limit staff to working for just one employer

- Next steps will address the need to control infection, manage outbreaks, and limit spread of the virus, this includes enhanced testing, contact tracing, further limits on staff mobility, enhanced guidance of PPE usage and conservation, training and education on how to deal with an outbreak, developing alternate plans to move clients or close locations, and better supporting the provinces' homeless shelters.
- Third pillar of our plan will focus on maintaining staffing levels and managing staffing shortages, stabilizing the work force, and protecting capacity by leveraging workers with equivalent skills from other community agencies

Ontario Medical Officer of Health Press Conference

- 57% of cases are women vs. 42% of cases are men
- 45% of cases are in people 60 years or older
- 60% of cases are in the Greater Toronto Area
- 12.5% of cases are in healthcare workers
- 10,214 tests completed in the past 24 hours
- Over 14,000 tests completed in LTC facilities (residents and staff)
- 21 long-term care homes have done testing on asymptomatic residents and staff
- 31 infection, prevention, and control interventions in progress (things like training etc.)
- Hospitals have redeployed staff to help LTC homes in need
- Hoping to have the data from LTC and retirement homes separated out from the data sets so we can get a better sense of the general public's numbers
- Continuing to focus on LTC homes but also a new focus on congregate settings and remote and rural communities (including Indigenous communities)
- Congregate settings will have much of the same process as LTC homes
- There will be an assessment of infection control practices (are they up-to-date?); looking at the facility (is it set up for outbreak modality?); do they have amount of staffing they need both in the time of no outbreak and during time of outbreak?; availability of PPE?; and ensuring timely testing to assess and develop interventions accordingly to bring outbreak under control or eliminate it from getting into the settings
- Variety of clientele in these congregate settings, some more vulnerable than others, want to be cognizant of that as we ask local Public Health units and ministries to partake in that risk assessment to make sure we get the majority of the right resources, to the right centers, at the right time



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Provincial Press Releases April 23rd , 2020

Ontario Delivers Action Plan to Increase Protection for Vulnerable People and Those Who Care for Them. April 23rd, 1:30 pm. <https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/04/ontario-delivers-action-plan-to-increase-protection-for-vulnerable-people-and-those-who-care-for-the.html>

Ontario Extends Emergency Orders to Help Stop the Spread of COVID-19. April 23rd, 8:45 am https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/04/ontario-extends-emergency-orders-to-help-stop-the-spread-of-covid-19.html?utm_source=ondemand&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=p