



## GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA

# Minister Wilson COVID-19 Update 15th May

Friday, May 15th, 2020



Good Afternoon,

Today there were 244 test results received by the Ministry of Health; and 1 was positive for COVID-19.

As I indicated in a press release yesterday, Bermuda has regrettably lost another victim to COVID-19. My sincere condolences go out to the family and friends of that individual at this difficult time.

Bermuda now has 123 total confirmed positive cases. Their status is as follows:

- there are 45 active cases, of which
- 38 persons are under active public health monitoring, and
- 7 persons are hospitalized; of which
- 2 are in critical care;
- a total of 69 have now recovered, and

- the total deceased is 9.

The average age of all of our confirmed positive cases is 60 and the age range of all of our positive cases is from 18 to 101 years.

The average age of persons hospitalized is 76 and their age ranges from 68 to 89 years.

The average age of all deceased cases is 74 and the age range is 57 to 91 years.

The source of all local cases is as follows:

- 39 are Imported
- 72 are Local transmission, with known contact
- 7 are Local transmission with an unknown contact, and
- 5 are under investigation

While there are some cases for which a contact or source has not been identified, this is not sufficient to constitute community transmission. Therefore, Bermuda's WHO-assigned country status remains "Local Transmission – Cluster of Cases".

The plateau in figures shows us that as a country we have done an excellent job of containing COVID-19. This is as good an outcome as we could have hoped for in the midst of a global pandemic. It gives us confidence that the interventions we implemented have had a dramatically positive impact on our management of this pandemic so far.

However, we mustn't let this good outcome make us complacent. I reported our real-time reproduction number on Wednesday as 0.47... Today, given the recent cases, the reproduction number has gone up to 0.99.

It is still below 1, but the rapid increase is a stark reminder of how volatile the reproduction number is in a tiny population such as ours, and why we cannot rely on it exclusively to inform all of our decisions.

It also reminds us that we have to remain scrupulous with our prevention efforts. This is going to be a long journey... it is up to all of us, to make it through successfully.

I will now provide further statistics regarding the hospital...

There have been 37 admissions for COVID-19 over the pandemic so far. The highest number of COVID-19 patients KEMH has had at any one time is 16. There have been no cases of COVID-19 at the Mid-Atlantic Wellness Institute (MWI).

To date, 536 MWI and KEMH patients have been tested for COVID-19. All patients in two of KEMH's long term care units have now been tested.

There have been 60 surgeries (emergency, urgent and cancer-related) performed over the last four weeks and 53 babies born between April 1 and May 12.

I would like to take this moment to thank all of the BHB staff for their tireless work during this pandemic; not just regarding COVID-19 management and care, but also for carrying out some of their usual duties under

these unusual and, as we well know, highly stressful circumstances. Thank you for all that you do.

The Premier has already touched on the issue most prominent in people's minds right now...When we will move on to Phase 2.

Understandably, everyone wants to know when Government is going to progress us to the next phase. But what I want to stress is that this much of the decision depends on YOU, Bermuda. YOUR actions decide for us when we move forward. The power to determine how quickly we progress from phase to phase lies in YOUR hands.

As such, I want to encourage everyone to wear a mask at all times when you are not at home or exercising; sign up to HealthIQ.bm; practice physical distancing (which means putting 6 feet of distance between yourself and others); and frequently wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

If we do not do these things, we cannot move on to the next phase.

We all want to move to the Phase 2...but we want to do this safely.

Because the real-time reproduction number can fluctuate the Ministry of Health will be using a number of criteria or 'indicators' to measure whether it is safe to proceed from phase to phase.

We have proposed a combination of indicators to measure how we are doing with our prevention and capacity, and how we've done in minimizing COVID spread.

Behavioural measures that will be monitored will include face mask wearing, physical distancing compliance, number of people reporting on HealthIQ and the proportion of cases that can be linked to clusters.

Performance measures will also be used to confirm that it is safe to move to the next phase. For example, the country classification must remain at "local transmission" or less and there must be a small number of cases reported, minimum hospitalizations and critical care cases.

We will be sharing more on this next week after Cabinet makes certain determinations.

Additionally, the Ministry of Health is currently finalizing guidance for each sector's re-opening. For Phase 2, this includes guidance for retail establishments, personal services, and so on, which we will announce next week.

In the meantime, stay safe and be well, Bermuda.

And, remember, Phase 1 has not been a green light to party. It was an amber light to proceed with caution. Let's show that we know how to prevent COVID in our day to day actions, so we prove that we're ready for Phase 2.

Thank you.

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