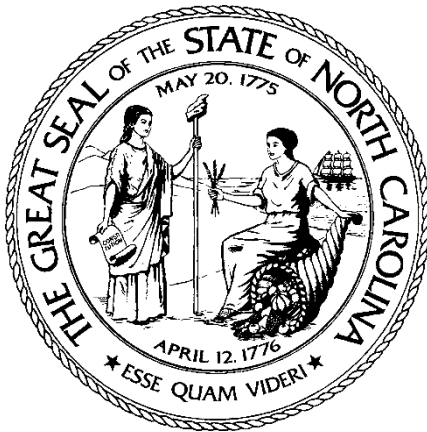


**JOINT LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE  
ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**



**COVID-19**

**Secretary Mandy Cohen, M.D.  
Department of Health and Human Services**

**March 10, 2020**

# Current Situation – as of 3/8/2020 according to World Health Organization

Location	Confirmed Cases	Deaths
Globally	101,927	
China	80,813	3,073
Outside of China (93 counties)	21,110	413
United States	213	11
North Carolina	2*	

\*Presumptively positive as reported by NC Department of Health and Human Services

# NC Preparation and Response

- Coordinating state efforts through Governor's Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Task Force
- Developing response plans and decision triggers that address a range of scenarios and actions
- Identifying and testing people under investigation
- Implementing control measures, including self-monitoring with local public health supervision, isolation and quarantine
- Activated a Joint Information Center and COVID-19 hotline
- Updating COVID-19 website: [ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus](https://ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus)

# Testing

- State lab able to run tests as of March 3
- CDC expanded testing guidelines last week
  - States, including NC have had inadequate testing supplies
  - As March 7, NC had supplies from CDC to test 190 people
- Testing supply needs are being addressed
  - NC DHHS worked directly with supply manufacturer
  - Agreements signed with UNC and Duke
  - LabCorp began testing March
  - CDC increased the cap for supply orders states could place

# Immediate Next Steps

- **Transitioning response operations to the State Emergency Operations Center to expand coordination across the whole of state government**
  - Similar to other states, we are evaluating declaration of emergency to allow for flexibility in resource allocation and additional authorities to aid in response preparation and execution
- **Ordering additional equipment for state lab to increase number of tests that can be run at same time**
  - State lab is first responder in identifying new outbreaks, initiating containment strategies, and supporting underserved populations
- **Evaluating overall budget needs to adequately respond**
  - Federal supplement approved last week

# Immediate Next Steps – Medicaid Policy

- Allow Medicaid providers to bill for defined telephonic services
- Update pharmacy policies to allow orders for 90-day generic and brand; remove refill limits; eliminate 30-day requirement to qualify for 90-day supply
- Allow reimbursement for masks for ill patients requiring frequent transportation/public presence (i.e. dialysis)
- Eliminate Prior Authorizations for oxygen equipment and related supplies (including CPAP, respiratory assist devices, ventilator)
- Reinforce copay not required at time of office visit
- Encourage providers to use home visits for vulnerable populations and group living
- Finalize first responders ability to treat with no transport 911 calls; study impact of developing reimbursement for paramedics/caramedics to evaluate and treat in the home

# Strategies Will Evolve

While we continue to practice containment, mitigation preparation is underway. Strategies do not occur in isolation.

Containment	Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individual level</li><li>• Provider guidance on risk assessment</li><li>• Monitor specific individuals for symptoms</li><li>• Isolation, quarantine, contact tracing procedures</li><li>• Might not prevent spread of disease, but delays spread providing valuable time to prepare</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community level</li><li>• Provide guidance on personal, environmental, and community measures to limit spread of illness</li><li>• Actions to increase social distancing, protect high risk people,</li><li>• Can blunt the intensity of epidemic so resources</li></ul>

# Leading with Compassion and Reason

- North Carolina has been preparing diligently well before we had our first case
- As testing is expanded, the number of confirmed positives will increase
- Rely on facts and not fear. Get accurate information
  - [www.ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus)
- Blame, stigma, and harassment should not be tolerated