Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic
Weekly Update (Paper 12)
17th April 2020, 1pm NZT

Current Status of COVID-19

Globally (Source: Coronavirus COVID-19 Global Cases by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at Johns Hopkins University (JHU))

- Cases: 2,157,108 (at 1pm NZT)
- Active: 1,469,542 (68.1%)
- Recovered: 543,519 (25.2%)
- Deaths: 144,047 (6.7%)

New Zealand (Source: MoH NZ)

- 1,409 Total Cases to date (1,086 Confirmed and 323 Probable cases)
  - 582 (41.3%) Active cases, of which 14 are currently in hospital (3 in ICU),
  - 816 (57.9%) recovered and 11 (0.8%) deaths.
  - New cases per day: have continued to decline since the high of 89 on the 5th April (See Figure 1).
  - Age group: 337 (24%) of total cases were aged between 20-29 years; Moreover, more than one-third (36% or 504) of total cases were aged 50 years or older (See Figure 2).
  - Gender: 776 (55%) of total cases were female (See Figure 3).
  - Ethnic group: 120 (8%) of total cases were Māori, 1044 (74%) were Pākehā, 157 (11%) were Asian and 64 (4%) were Pacific people (See Figure 4).
  - Testing: The total number of tests to date was 74,401. Yesterday 4,241 tests were carried out, and the 7-day rolling average was 2,674.
  - DHB Regions: 48% (682) of the total cases resided within the catchment areas of three Tāmaki region DHBs (of WDHB, ADHB and CMDHB) and the Waikato DHB (See Figure 5).
Figure 1: New cases per day

Figure 2: Cases by Age group

Figure 3: Cases by gender
Figure 4: Cases by ethnicity

- European or Other: 1044
- Asian: 157
- Māori: 120
- Pacific Peoples: 64
- Unknown: 24

Number of cases
Figure 5: Cases by DHB catchment
Comparing the latest data from several countries shows New Zealand has responded well to the pandemic so far, along with countries such as South Korea, Australia, Norway and Taiwan.

According to GRID (Global Response to Infectious Diseases) Index\(^1\), developed by an Australian company, **New Zealand has shown the best leadership and response** to this pandemic. This score reflects the health system readiness, community spread, efficiency of health care system, reliability of the information provided, and overall performance effectiveness of a country’s response.

Alert Level 3, what to expect:

As we are getting closer to 22\textsuperscript{nd} April, the potential lockdown endpoint, the NZ government has provided some clarity about how alert level 3 will look like:

- Minor extensions to bubbles (can expand their bubble to reconnect with close family/whānau, or bring in caregivers, or support isolated people)
- E-commerce reopens (retailers with electronic business capabilities)
- Takeaway food and drive-through available, as long as the business can take orders and payment online or contactless
- Continue to work from home if possible
- Funerals and weddings limited to 10 people
- Recreation: can go to your nearest beach or park. Staying overnight at a batch or holiday home is not permitted. Can go fishing from a wharf or the shore, but don’t cast off the rocks or fish from a boat (boating is not allowed). Can go to your nearest beach e.g., 45 minutes away.
- Partial reopening of schools: Early Learning/Education Centres and schools to open for children up to and including year 10. Most tertiary education will be through distance learning.
- Work places: keeping safety measures in place
- Travel: only allowed for permitted movement in your local area, cannot travel to another region for a recreation or work (unless for essential workers)
- Public venues still closed (e.g. libraries, museums, cinemas, food courts, gyms)

Highlights from the latest research studies

- \#Masks4all: Droplets generated by speaking can be as much as coughing, and the small ones can linger in the air and hence transmit the virus. So Mask4all should be seriously considered\textsuperscript{2}.
- Social distancing: New modelling study shows\textsuperscript{3} prolonged or intermittent social distancing may need to be maintained into 2022 to avoid exceeding hospital care capacities.
- Obesity: Another study in the US confirmed that obesity, along with age, was the biggest deciding factor in hospital admissions for covid-19 patients\textsuperscript{4}.

\textsuperscript{3} https://science.sciencemag.org/content/early/2020/04/14/science.abb5793?utm_campaign=SciMag&utm_source=JHubbard&utm_medium=Twitter