

**Update on COVID-19**  
**Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health**  
**April 3, 2020 at 3:45 p.m.**  
**Members' Lounge, Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.**

---

- As of 1 p.m. today there are 986 cases of COVID-19 in Toronto. This includes 812 confirmed cases and 174 probable ones. There are 89 cases hospitalized, and there are 42 in intensive care units.
- Approximately 27% are attributed to community spread. There have been 13 COVID-19 deaths in total thus far. I extend my sincerest condolences to the family and friends of all individuals who have died from COVID-19 in our community.
- Earlier today the province released COVID-19 modelling projections that stated there would have been approximately 100,000 deaths over the course of the COVID-19 outbreak without public health measures. The province also said that if we do everything that we can, fully implementing all available tools and public health measures, especially those that maximize physical distancing, we may reduce this number to something in the range of 3,000 to 15,000 deaths in Ontario from COVID-19.
- Toronto is home to about 20% of the population of Ontario. Using the provincial numbers, we would roughly estimate that Toronto may see somewhere between 600 to 3,000 deaths by the end of this pandemic.
- I know these numbers are stark. Seeing what our future may look like based on these data is sobering and even terrifying.
- But these are more than just numbers, they are our friends, our families and our neighbours. They are our essential workers, our healthcare workers, they are the people that work each and every day to keep us safe. Most of all, these deaths are preventable. This is exactly what keeps me up at night.
- We each have an opportunity and personal responsibility to prevent this from happening. This is why everyone who can, everyone who is not an essential worker or a healthcare worker, needs to stay home now.

- Everyone needs to be adhering to the public health measures put in place to save lives, to protect our healthcare system from not being overwhelmed and to restore our city. If we all do our part, if we all do as much as we can, we can still reduce these numbers. If we take care of our city's most vulnerable residents, we can also lower the virus spread.
- I sincerely hope the starkness and clarity of the provincial modelling numbers will be a wake-up call, to all of us, particularly to anyone who does not yet understand the gravity of our situation.
- Models help us to predict how diseases might spread and predict the future course of an outbreak. They also help inform our strategies to control outbreaks, to protect our community from virus spread. However, they are only as good as the information and assumptions on which they are based.
- With a new virus like the one that causes COVID-19, information changes every single day as we learn more about it and how it spreads. Our models need to be adjusted to reflect what we are seeing in our community.
- My team has reviewed available models and what they consistently show us is that with the absence of a vaccine, or effective treatments for COVID-19, we need to use other strategies to reduce the spread of this virus, and to ensure that our healthcare system is not overwhelmed. These strategies include the strict physical distancing measures that we have put in place and enhanced case and contact tracing and self-isolation.
- While we use models to inform our thinking on the kinds of interventions we can use to control virus spread, they also help inform thinking on how long these interventions and measures may need to be in place. We know that it takes time for our interventions to have an effect and unfortunately this won't happen overnight.
- So what do these modelling projections mean for Toronto? We use these mathematical, theoretical models together with our own city data, and the experiences and data of other jurisdictions. Taken together, they give us the best possible picture of what our future could look like, especially if we don't act now.

- For anyone who has been watching the news on COVID-19, you know that countries like Spain and Italy have case counts over 100,000 and high fatality rates. In the case of Italy, the death rate is estimated to be over 12%. What happens next in Toronto, our story here depends entirely on your actions.
- It is important to share the starkness of this information with you so you can understand why we must all get behind the physical distancing measures we have put in place.
- Most people want to do the right thing, however there are still hotspots in Toronto where people seem to be putting their individual needs before the needs of our community. They are still moving around the city and not practicing physical distancing. This is deeply troubling. I hope today's information will help them understand the gravity of our situation.
- This is why it is so important for as many of us as possible to stay home. This is the only way we will reduce virus transmission in our community so that we can: protect our city, to minimize the loss of life, to manage pressures on our healthcare system, and to get our city back as soon as we can.
- This message is for each and every person in Toronto. If you do not keep your distance from others and get behind these measures, you are putting at risk all of the people you care for. All the people we all care for.
- The sooner everyone complies with these measures, and the better we comply with these measures, the sooner we can make it through this challenge together. Please stay home, stay safe and take care of each other.