



PRESS STATEMENT

The Minister of Health

The Honourable Kim N. Wilson, JP, MP

Wednesday 15th April 2020, 5.30pm

at Berkley Institute

Good Afternoon,

Thank you, Premier.

Between late yesterday and today there were 80 test results received; of those 24 were positive for COVI-19 and 56 were negative. Thankfully, there were no deaths.

I can confirm that of the 24 new positives, 23 were associated with the outbreak at Matilda Smith. On one hand, there is a good thing about this finding which is that it represents a cluster of transmissions, as opposed to untraceable transmission in the community. Nevertheless, it is disheartening news for all concerned and out of respect for patient confidentiality, we will not share information on the

number that were residents or staff. The public can be assured that the public health team is actively working with the rest home to contain the situation for all concerned.

I would remind the public that we must not put an emphasis on any setting or facility that is found to have an outbreak. This is a virulent disease and its transmission is not the fault of a facility. We must be sympathetic to those affected and desist from putting additional strain on the persons having to manage the situation.

With these new cases, Bermuda's total confirmed positive cases is now 81. Their status is as follows:

- 33 have now recovered
- 34 persons are under active public health monitoring, but who do not require hospitalization, and
- 9 persons are hospitalized.

The total deceased stands at 5.

The average age of all of our confirmed positive cases is 56. The median age is 57, and the age range of all of our positive

cases is from 18 to 91 years. The age of persons hospitalized ranges between 67 and 82 years, and the average age is 74.

Out of the 81 positive cases confirmed to date, 36 are males, and 45 are females.

Regarding testing, one question which keeps coming up seems to be: *“Why can’t we test the entire population?”*

The reason we are not doing this is because if we test people too early, the virus may not show up in the test and they could get a false negative. So, for example, if someone were tested within a few hours of exposure when they had no symptoms, the test would not pick up the disease and they would get a negative result that is wrong. Consequently, that individual - thinking they did not have COVID-19 - may go out into the community and spread the virus to others unknowingly.

As previously stated, the Government will be implementing more extensive testing once all the necessary supplies are fully available on island. Until then, we will continue to test as

aggressively as possible all symptomatic persons and necessary close contacts.

We heard a lot last night from the Chief Medical Officer about contact tracing...She detailed the many complexities of the process. One of those is people remembering where they have been and who they have come into contact with over the past 14 days. This information is requested when they are telephoned by a Public Health Officer to do contact tracing because that individual has tested positive for COVID-19.

Obviously for the majority of the public, your daily diaries will look much the same while Shelter in Place is going on...with only trips to the grocery store or pharmacy, or to exercise within one kilometre (half a mile) from your home...unless, of course, you are an essential worker.

But keeping a simple diary of where you have been each day and who you have been in contact with is a very good way to keep track of your movements so that you have this information to hand in case needed. Also, most phones these

days have a tracking capability on them and can be used to generate daily or weekly reports for you.

This is a good habit to get into now for when we come out of Shelter in Place. Because contact tracing will continue beyond this period, until this pandemic is under control globally.

Other good habits to get into now are ones that keep you healthy – both mentally and physically. The healthier you are, the better chance your body has of fighting off the virus if you are infected.

I recognize that we are limited with our options for physical fitness by the Shelter in Place regulations...but there are still many activities that can be done:

- Online workout videos (there are so many options!)
- Dancing
- Skipping
- Using indoor fitness equipment if you have it in your home
- Wii Fit

- Jogging or walking for one hour a day between 7am and 7pm within a one kilometre distance of your home.

Please keep healthy and look after yourself. Get daily exercise. Prepare healthy meals with lots of vegetables – have fun and experiment with new recipes. Avoid or limit the use of alcohol and do not smoke or take drugs.

The Ministry of Health is currently conducting an Omnibus Survey to gather statistics on people's health, stress levels and healthy or unhealthy behaviors during this pandemic.

In closing, I want to thank those who have submitted videos so far so the *Who Are You Protecting?* campaign that I announced last night. We have had some really lovely entries so far.

A reminder that you can submit your entry via email to moh@gov.bm with the subject line *Who Am I Protecting?* or by Whatsapp to 504-6045. The deadline for submissions is Monday April 20th. They will be posted across social media and YouTube next week.

And, finally, I would like to appeal to residents to please follow the Sheltering in Place guidelines and directives. This means no play dates between your kids and other children in your neighbourhood. It means no popping over to your friend's house who lives down the road, and not having anyone in your home who does not live there. If anyone would like more details, they can be found at coronavirus.gov.bm.

Shelter in Place is a sacrifice for all involved. But it can be life-saving for every transmission it prevents. Stay home to save lives.

Thank you