

# North Carolina's Road to Reopening: Aligning Health Policy and Business

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# Overview

- **COVID-19 Response and Reopening Overview**
- North Carolina Updates
- Best Practices and Other State Responses

# Operating in a COVID-19 World

- Two opposing problems:
  - Fear of COVID-19 overwhelming health system resources, motivating shelter-in-place declarations across country
  - Shelter-in-place orders, mandatory business closings, and virus fears hurting local economy and small businesses
- Path forward:
  - Build infrastructure for health system to test, trace, and manage COVID-19, as well as non-COVID care
  - Enable public-private sector collaboration for a phased reopening that promotes meaningful steps to reduce virus spread

# Key Components of COVID-19 Response

## Non-Medical Interventions

- Physical distancing
- School and event closures
- Isolation and quarantine
- Contact tracing
- Other public behavioral changes

## Surge Capacity

- Supply chain management: swabs, personal protective equipment
- Community-based care for mild to moderate cases, including telemedicine
- Hospital/ICU/ventilator care for severe cases

## Diagnostic Development

- Near-term: diagnostic (PCR) testing capacity
- Emerging: Point of care/real time testing
- Coming: Tests for exposure and immunity (serum IgM/IgG studies)

## Effective Treatments

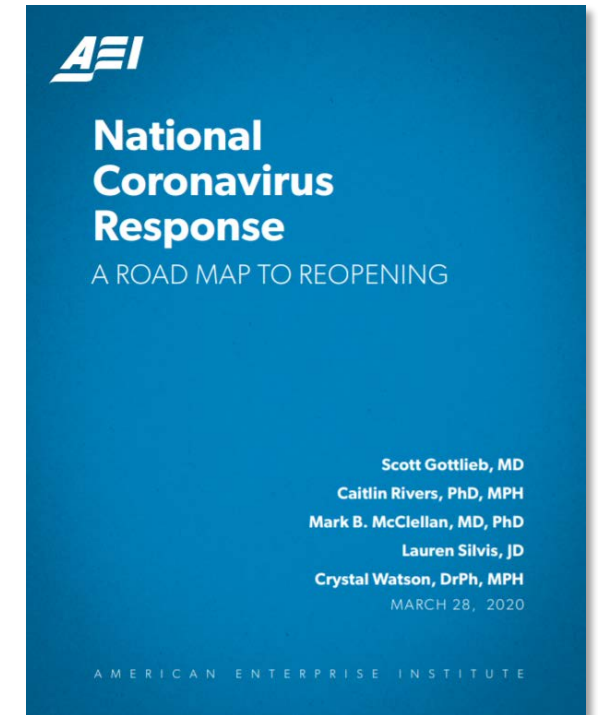
- Evidence-based supportive care
- Antiviral agents
- Immune globulins, antibodies
- Immune mediators
- Future: vaccines

## Economic and Personal Wellbeing

- Virtual and home-based approaches to deliver medical, social, education services
- Financial support for affected families and industries
- Addressing mental and behavioral health needs

# National Coronavirus Response: Reopening Phases

- **Phase 1:** Slow transmission through social distancing, increase testing and surveillance capabilities, ensure health system functionality
  - **Move to Phase 2 with:** 1) 14 days of case reductions; 2) Hospitals can safely treat patients; 3) Appropriate levels of testing
- **Phase 2:** Relax physical distancing, re-open some businesses, implement case-based interventions, identify immunities, continue to care for high-risk populations
  - **Move to Phase 3 with:** Development of vaccine
- **Phase 3:** Full Reopening



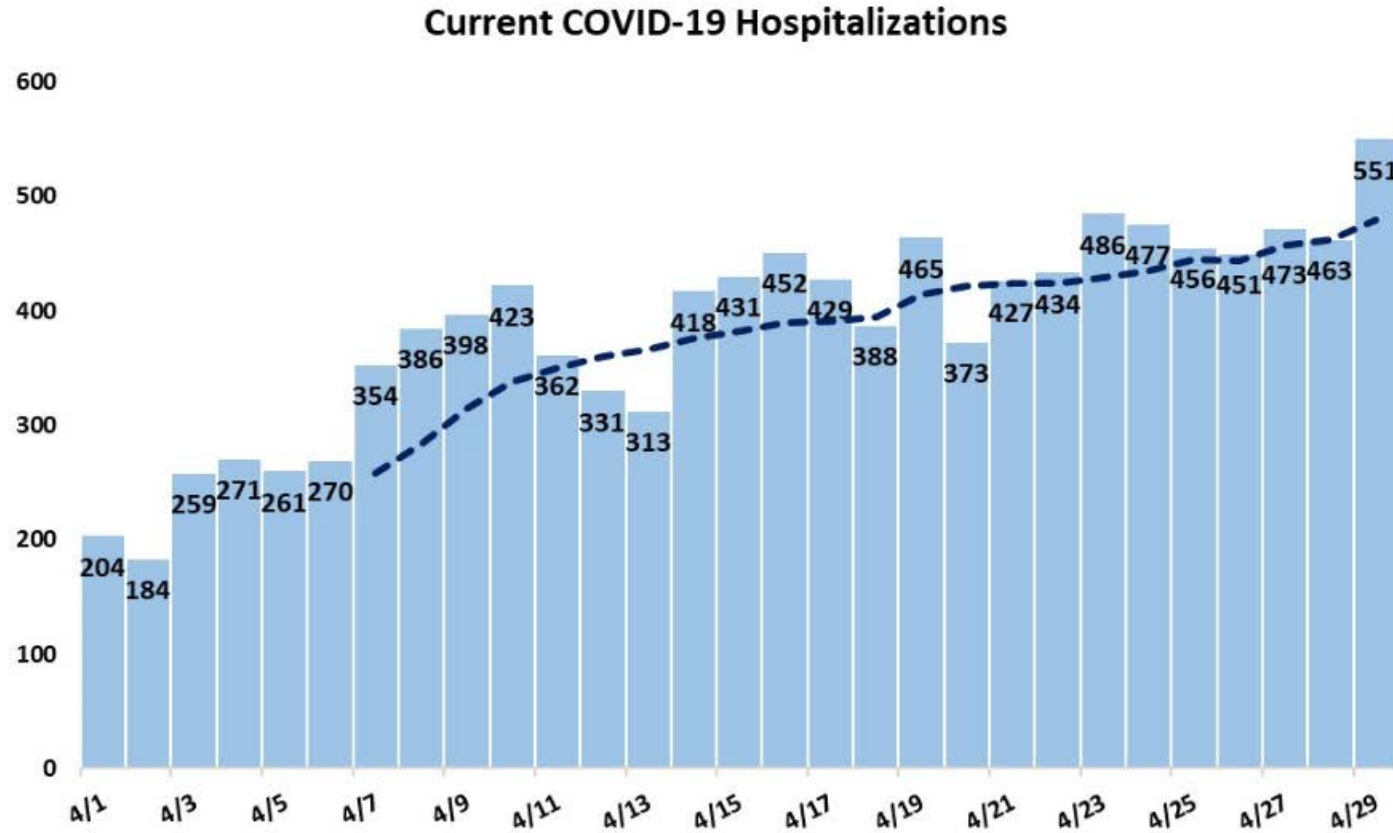
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# COVID-19 Impacts on North Carolina

- **Impact on health infrastructure:** many health care practices are under pressure right now, either from COVID patients or dealing with reductions in revenue; some smaller practices are likely to close
- **Impact on non-COVID conditions and health status:** non-essential and routine care has largely been postponed; those with chronic health conditions may be adversely affected
- **Impact on employer purchasing going forward:** the effect of COVID on health insurance costs and benefit design isn't yet known

# Where is North Carolina at Now?

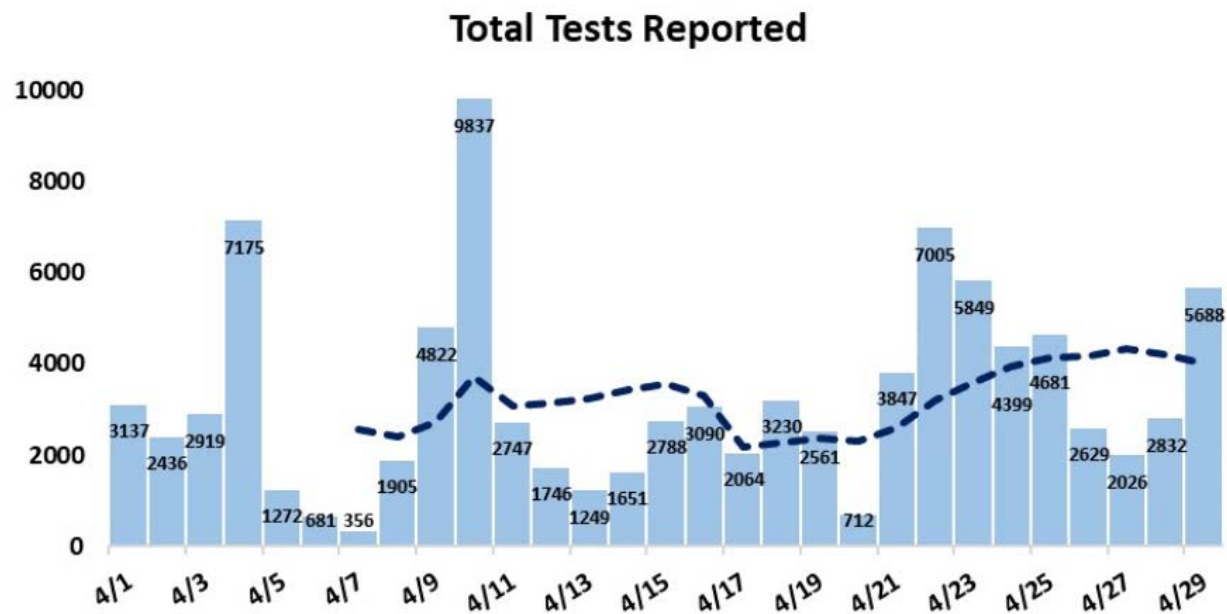


*\*Dashed line indicates 7-day rolling average*

- As of April 28:  
9448 cases, 354 deaths; state has completed 118,440 tests
- Hospitalizations stabilizing, but not yet decreasing



# Adequate Testing and PPE Availability Remains a Challenge for North Carolina



\*Dashed line indicates 7-day rolling average

Critical Supplies	Estimated Days of Supplies on Hand
Face Shields	36
Gloves	133
Gowns	0
N95 Respirators	1
Surgical Masks	62

- 30-day supply of all critical PPE is the goal

# Needed Next Steps for North Carolina

- Increasing COVID-19 testing and contact tracing
  - This includes widespread availability of testing and routine tests for high-risk workers
- Ensuring health care capacity for surge and general health needs
- Focus on achieving key milestones rather than reopening on any given date
- **Businesses are a crucial part of the public health response**

# Childcare Will be Challenging for Many Employees as Businesses Re-open

- North Carolina schools are closed for the rest of the school year; many daycares/summer camps/etc. are also closed
- North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is providing funding for free childcare for children under 12 of essential workers through May
  - However, childcare options for the summer remain unknown
  - Providing childcare safely is also a concern – children seem to suffer milder effects from COVID-19, but can spread the disease to parents and others

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# Many Best Practices for Businesses

- Increased sanitation and hygiene practices; frequent hand washing
- Reduce maximum capacity to enable social distancing
- Employee temperature and symptom checks
- Promote contactless transactions
- Encourage employees to wear masks
- Encourage customers to wear masks and stay home if symptomatic
- COVID-19 training for all employees on safety, cleaning, and sanitation protocols
- Potential workplace testing for high-risk/essential workers

# But, Best Practices Will Vary by Type of Business

- Some types of businesses can adapt more easily to social distancing and reduced capacity guidelines
  - **Restaurants/bars:** takeout/delivery service only; reduce capacity when re-opening; keep tables six feet apart
  - **Grocery/retail stores:** limit customers to 20% of normal capacity; encourage the use of masks/face coverings; establish social distancing guidelines for lines/checkout
  - **Salons, movie theaters, etc:** limit capacity but in situations where social distancing isn't feasible, wait to reopen until sustained case reductions

# Selected State Plans for Reopening

- **Georgia:** Many businesses (including theaters and restaurants) allowed to re-open with certain criteria; extended shelter-in-place order for high-risk populations
- **Texas:** Stay-at-home order expires Friday; phased approach to reopening
  - Retail stores, restaurants, movie theaters, malls, museums and libraries allowed to open Friday at 25% capacity
  - Second phase will occur if the state see two weeks of data indicating no COVID flare up; will allow businesses to operate at 50% capacity
  - **Provides detailed guidance for specific types of businesses**

# Strike Force to Open Texas

Convened medical experts and public- and private-sector business leaders to devise a plan for reopening:

*“The Chief Medical Advisors are working alongside a Special Advisory Council of 39 business leaders representing the state's regions and industries who are sharing innovative ideas to help businesses strategically open while containing the spread of COVID-19. The Council is collaborating with Working Groups to recommend strategies, statewide standards, and appropriate timeframes to open all sectors of the Lone Star State.”*

Texas’s plan includes:

- guidelines for vulnerable populations
- minimum health protocol checklists for businesses to follow in addition to federal and state workplace safety and employment laws, and
- a process by which rural counties can exceed business occupancy limits if virus reproduction rates remain below -- and hospital surge capacity remains above -- certain thresholds.



# North Carolina: Staying Ahead of the Curve

- Basing reopening on meeting certain metrics:
  - Sustained reductions in new cases and hospitalizations over 14-day period
  - Ability to implement widespread testing, mobilize contact tracing workforce, and secure personal protective equipment (PPE)
- We aren't there yet; stay-at-home order extended until May 8.
- Phased approach to re-opening:
  - Phase 1: stay-at-home order still in place but with more commercial activity.
  - Phase 2: stay-at-home order lifted with businesses and places of worship complying with strict safety protocols and capacity limitations.
  - Phase 3: increased capacity permitted at businesses, places of worship, and entertainment venues.

# Thank You!

## Contact Us



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