



April 13, 2020

UVA COVID-19 Model Indicates Social Distancing is Working

Today, the University of Virginia Biocomplexity Institute released an overview of the Virginia-based COVID-19 model. Below are some highlights from the presentation delivered today.

- Based on the data, current social distancing efforts are working.
- Under current conditions, Virginia as a whole will have sufficient medical resources for at least the next couple months.
- Lifting social distancing restrictions too soon can lead quickly to a second wave.
- Further modeling could demonstrate the effectiveness of test-trace-isolate policies.
- Various mitigation scenarios were considered in the model, including “slowing growth” versus “pausing growth” and lifting social distancing restrictions on April 30 versus June 10.
- Short-term projections are shown, as well as projections through September.
- Hospital demand and capacity vary by region.
- The situation is rapidly changing and as such, the model will need to be updated regularly.

The full presentation is available [here](#).

Virtual Virginia Education Resources Expanded to Meet Needs

Today, the Governor announced that he has proposed funding to expand Virtual Virginia (VVA) to allow all school divisions across Virginia to use this program. The VVA program offers online courses and digital content to Virginia’s students and educators. VVA currently has enrolled over 6,000 students, and in collaboration with WHRO, plans to expand enrollment seats for school divisions through June 30, 2020. Currently, VVA has content for 81 high school credit-bearing courses available. There are plans to expand the program’s offerings to include elementary and middle school content and courses beginning in May 2020 and continuing into the 2020-2021 school year.



The expansion of Virtual Virginia provides support to school divisions in this crisis situation by providing a platform with which they can provide students and teachers with online access to instructional content. VVA course content will be made available to any school division that chooses to enroll students and teachers into the program at no cost to the school division. School division teachers will be provided space within the VVA platform to choose and create course content, share content between participating divisions, and edit content to personalize instruction. School division teachers will facilitate their own content modules and classes. This does not impact students already enrolled in Virtual Virginia courses taught by Virtual Virginia teachers. All resources and course content currently in VVA and any new material created by VDOE and VVA staff will be available to all participating divisions.

For more information, click [here](#).

Governor Northam Provides Updates on Nursing Homes/LTC Facilities, Budget Recommendations and Testing

In addition to the information above re: expansion of Virtual Virginia and release of the UVA COVID-19 model, below are the highlights from Governor's Northam briefing.

Updated COVID-19 numbers

- Virginia currently has 5,747 cases of COVID-19, an increase of 473 over the past 24 hours. The number of deaths related to COVID-19 is 149, an increase of eight since yesterday.
- Virginia has racial data for approximately half of the cases. Of these (3,121), 921 or 30% are African Americans and of the 149 deaths, 33 or 22% are African Americans.
- In an effort to increase reporting of racial data, the health department is working with electronic health records companies, hospital partners and clinicians.
- For further COVID-19 data for Virginia, visit [here](#).



Nursing homes/LTC facilities

- Dr. Laura Forlano shared that of the 97 outbreaks of COVID-19 in Virginia, 53 have been at nursing homes/LTC facilities. These outbreaks have included 554 cases and 34 deaths. For more information about this data, visit [here](#).
- To help address the need for additional resources to fight COVID-19 at LTC facilities, the Governor has introduced a budget amendment that would increase the rates for nursing homes by \$20 per Medicaid recipient per day. The General Assembly will act on this and the Governor's other budget amendments when they reconvene for the veto session on April 22.
- Staffing for nursing homes continues to be a challenge. Use of the Medical Reserve Corps volunteers is being considered to help address the workforce needs.

Testing

- Turn-around times for testing continues to be a challenge. Sec. Carey shared that a task force is currently surveying testing capacity at facilities across Virginia.
- He shared that some hospitals now have in-house testing with turn-around times of as little as 10 hours.
- The goal is to have test results within 15-20 minutes.

Alternative healthcare sites

- The Governor shared that they are working closely with healthcare system leadership to expand capacity within existing hospitals and within hospital footprints via tents outside hospitals to meet the anticipated needs that will come with the surge of COVID-19 in Virginia.
- While three sites have been identified for alternative healthcare facilities if needed, the Governor has not yet activated efforts to construct those facilities at this time.

Legislative action

- The Governor reported that he has now acted on 1,291 bills passed by the General Assembly, including the budget.



- He introduced 144 budget amendments for the legislature's consideration next week.
 - Among these, 49 are language amendments that relax some of the requirements for Virginia's colleges and universities.
 - He has also proposed 83 budget amendments that will freeze funding for new initiatives and programs, totaling \$874.6 million in FY2021 and \$1.4 billion for FY20-22.

Business restrictions

- The current restrictions on recreation/entertainment businesses expires on April 23. The Governor shared that he plans to extend these restrictions and will announce additional detail on Wednesday.
- The Governor continues to work with our surrounding states so that, to the extent possible, we have consistent business restrictions. This includes Maryland and D.C., as well as North Carolina.

Other updates

- The Governor was asked about his amendments to delay the ban of "games of skill" for one year.
- He shared that over the past four weeks, he has heard from businesses requesting that the ban passed by the General Assembly be delayed.
- In addition to delaying the ban for one year, the Governor has also proposed to tax these games, which is expected to generate \$125-\$150 million that will go toward efforts to fight homelessness, support healthcare needs and provide small business support.

To watch the Governor's briefing, click [here](#).