4.17.20 Notes from the Governor’s Briefing:

- Total hospitalizations continue to go down, "just a tick." Net change undeniably on decline, same for 3-day average.
- ICU admissions are down.
- Number of intubations is down.
- The number of new COVID-19 cases remains at about 2k per day. This has remained steady for a while.
- Deaths as of April 16: 630. 590 from hospitals, 40 nursing homes.
- Reiterated the importance of controlling the spread as medical treatments and a vaccine are created.
- Again said testing and tracing will be the guidepost for reopening and requires Federal partnership.
- We are currently in Phase 1 of reducing the infection rate and ramping up the hospital system. We will soon be starting transition to Phase 2, which consists of planning reopening, testing/tracing/isolating, and reducing the infection spread rate. In the meantime, have to stabilize the state's finances.
- Currently do not have a testing system capable of meeting volume need. NYS has 301 laboratories and hospitals licensed for virology testing, must have them operate in a coordinated way.
- Reiterated challenges in obtaining supplies for testing due to international competition.
- Need a fully synchronized, statewide testing system.
- Exec Order will direct all public and private labs to coordinate and work together.
- On stabilizing state finances, the Governor reiterated that Federal bills have provided no unrestricted funding for states posing a challenge for reopening.
- Governor named this as a transformational period and said we must make changes when reopening society. Must learn from impacts on the public health system, especially as it pertains to increasing bed capacity and emergency response capacity.
- Must reimagine the workplace, provide a safer public transit system, and have smarter public interactions.
- Also spoke on the importance of slowing down and taking the time to catch up with family.

Q&A:

FEDERAL/PRESIDENT:

- National Governors Association has publicly requested $500 billion for states. They have not discussed specific allocations but the Governor said they must be proportionate to state need.
- On comments made by President Trump that some states can reopen, Governor Cuomo clarified that states with fewer cases can reopen faster.
- Bernadette Hogan brought up a tweet directed at the Governor from the President, accusing NYS of lying about projected numbers. This led Governor Cuomo to explain to the President that projections had come from the CDC and NYS had only reacted to these numbers. "Were we foolish for relying on your projections, Mr. President?" he asked. The Governor went on to explain that Federal resources were being put to use and argued he has continuously thanked the President for his help. Furthermore, Cuomo emphasized the need to separate emotions and politics from actions, as this is not the time to do so.
- Governor Cuomo requested the President take responsibility for Federal projections, as well as fund state/local governments and testing as action is still necessary to recover from the pandemic.

COVID-19 RELATED:

- The state has not calculated the rate of infection in areas upstate.
- The Governor reiterated the importance of reopening the economy as soon as possible, as well as the possibility of regions with lower death rates opening sooner than others. He also focused on the importance of balancing economic and personal need with public health need.
- The Governor said there are people who represent NYS in China that have been helping in figuring out the supply chain of required materials. However, international competition cannot be managed.
- On the subject of farm labor protections, the Governor said changes that did not require state funding would be considered over those that did.
- When asked about NYC Mayor de Blasio’s claims that beaches will be shut down for the season, the Governor reiterated the importance of regional coordination as it pertains to reopening and shut downs. He claimed a lack of coordination could lead to the public traveling to open areas and further spreading the virus. In an emergency, the Governor said he could issue an Executive Order mandating regional coordination.
- The Governor said it would be "logical" to think the reopening plan will take into consideration differential levels of infection in other areas. He said places with less cases may possibly open earlier than other parts, but need to figure out how to do so safely.
- As it pertains to the next wave of essential businesses, the Governor says these have not been determined yet.
NURSING HOMES:

- The Governor hopes to conduct mass testing of staff at nursing homes but says we do not currently have the capacity to do so.
- Malatras said nursing home transfers have been decided by the COVID-19 Task Force as a way of balancing the system, focusing mainly on downstate.
- Malatras reiterated that protections of privacy were key to data reporting delays.
- On the subject of misreporting, Malatras clarified data is reported directly from nursing homes on a daily basis.
- When asked about families being unable to obtain information on relatives in nursing home facilities, DeRosa stated an Executive Order will soon be issued mandating the release of information to families. She said the order is needed to ensure compliance, as some facilities have been found to be breaking DOH guidelines on the matter.
- On the proposal to send nursing home residents returning from hospitals to alternate locations, Zucker emphasized that facilities are their homes and proper precautions are being taken to limit spread of infection.
- Malatras stated nursing home data for April 14 and 16 will be released later today, as there were some delays.
- Zucker said DOH has been working on the issue of ensuring PPE stock is met, as well as the issue of testing and staffing. He also mentioned a COVideo surveillance program to ensure nursing homes are taking the proper precautions.

MISC:

- Mujica claimed the state is looking at cash numbers at the moment and ensuring funding for the pandemic. He also said cash spending controls will be put in place to ensure funding could continue until tax revenue comes in in July. The state will be releasing a financial plan that reflects revenue loss and projections without additional Federal revenue. A release date was not mentioned.
- HOSPITALS: CDC has reduced PPE guidelines, but according to Zucker these did not increase infection rates.