Avi (Dr Khalil Betz-Heinemann) / 22.04.2020

PROJECT RATIONALE FOR ENDING COVID19 IN THE UK

COVID19 is currently spreading exponentially, in a mostly-unchecked fashion, throughout the world. Infection doubling rates are currently as high as 2-3 days. In basic models, such unchecked growth means the disease infects most of the world in just a few months. Current statistics indicate that 15-20% of people who get the disease require hospitalization for respiratory failure for multiple weeks, and often need intense and attentive care from medical professionals. These medical professionals are at severe risk while treating these highly infectious patients, and have an order of magnitude higher mortality rate than the patients themselves as a result. Treatment and care looks like oxygen therapy or intubation for weeks in highly-specialized ICUs / OSCMS 2020

The services on which our lives depend are being pushed to the limit by the coronavirus outbreak and the knock-on effects of the interventions used to manage it. The strategy being used by the UK government to avoid the country being totally overwhelmed by the outbreak is one of gradual mitigation. This strategy spreads the pressure on public services and other institutions over a longer period of time. However, this strategy by itself does not contain and end the virus. In addition, without the certainty of testing whether a person is infected, people cannot make the best decisions needed to support their communities to avoid further crises. On top of this the harm caused by long term quarantine measures such as self isolation increases. In order to stop the outbreak, the transmission has to be stopped. The alternative is for the pandemic to continue and for the country to be gradually overwhelmed. / NE Complex Systems Institute 2020

The first step is to identify individuals who have the disease and isolate them so that others are not infected. It is possible in principle for a test to be produced rapidly and cheaply and then applied massively to identify cases limiting the need to use other approaches such as lockdowns. Once a large number of tests are available, massive specific testing can begin toward achieving the desired outcome of stopping the outbreak. The next step will then involve tracing the spread of the outbreak through contact with infected individuals. But first mass testing needs to be prepared. The alternative is for the pandemic to continue and for the country to be gradually overwhelmed / EndCoronaVirus.Org

As the UK government is currently 'firefighting' on the back foot and has no plans to roll out massive testing. It is up to the people of this country to step in and mobilize. This can be done by identifying what is required to rapidly build cheap testing capabilities, identifying the resources required to build testing capabilities, identifying the decision makers required to access these resources, identifying persons and institutions capable of applying pressure to get these testing abilities built and ready to act in coordination.

- PREDATE: 16/03/2020 – 21/03/2020
  Author's research blogs evaluating government response to COVID19 in the UK
- UPDATE 1: 22/03/2020
  Have identified OpenCovid19 Initiative where they are prototyping rapid easy testing.
- UPDATE 2: 23/03/2020
  Group of UK MPs call on government to introduce mass testing – but are ignored.
- UPDATE 3: 23/03/2020
  UK government increases quarantine without a robust for ending corona virus with least harm.