Globally, between 31 Dec 2019 - 17 Mar 2020

- A total of 184,976 confirmed cases
- 159 countries and regions affected
- 7,529 deaths

Source: WHO
New Cases of COVID-19 since 1 February 2020

Source: WHO Situation Reports
Prepare the health system to face a significant increase in demand for care
“Flatten the curve”

The steep curve represents exponential spread of the virus – the local health system will quickly become overloaded beyond its capacity to treat people. The flatter curve assumes the same number of people get infected but over a longer period of time – a less stressed health system and potentially less deaths.
Rationale 1: severity profile of COVID-19

There is no data from populations with high prevalence of HIV, malnutrition etc.

Hypothetical estimate of numbers requiring hospitalization based on current size of outbreak:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of reported cases</th>
<th>20% (# people requiring oxygen &amp; ventilation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>27,980</td>
<td>5,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>14,991</td>
<td>2,998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>9,942</td>
<td>1,988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
<td>8,320</td>
<td>1,664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>7,272</td>
<td>1,454</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the following assumption: all severe (15%) and critical cases (5%) require hospitalization. These numbers represent the current situation (as of 17.03.2020) which will change as more cases are confirmed.
Rationale 2: measure the time from the appearance of the first few cases to a large outbreak…. approximately 2 weeks to prepare

Number of COVID-19 deaths per day in Italy and the Islamic Republic of Iran

Source: WHO Situation Reports
Get the health system ready: **TRIAGE**

**AIM: prevent transmission in facilities and homes; do not overburden system;**

- Isolate COVID-19 patients from other patients and ensure proper infection prevention and control in **facilities**
- Establish screening at all health care facilities (primary health care centers and hospitals)
- Mild cases must be managed and isolated at **home** whenever possible
- Maintain essential services for prioritized health needs beyond COVID-19

“COVID cabanas” set up outside hospitals in Utah for screening of patients
Credit: Business Insider

Triage tents
Credit: TODAYonline
Get the health system ready: **SPACE and SUPPLIES**

**AIM: ensure capacity to treat severe and critical patients while maintaining essential health services**

- Establish COVID-19 treatment areas with oxygen therapy and intensive care units with ventilation, where possible
- Anticipate number of beds needed
- Maintain a plan to expand capacity (repurposing of other facilities)
- Plan for continuity of supplies and management of waste

Credit: South China Morning Post

Engineers in Italy use a 3D printer to print oxygen mask valves when supplies ran short. [https://3dprintingcenter.net/2020/03/15/italians-support-the-fight-against-the-covid-19-virus-by-3d-printing-valves-to-medical-equipment/](https://3dprintingcenter.net/2020/03/15/italians-support-the-fight-against-the-covid-19-virus-by-3d-printing-valves-to-medical-equipment/)
Get the health system ready: protect **HEALTH WORKERS**

**AIM: protect health workers for continued care and service**

- Ensure [access to appropriate PPE](#) for health workers
- Bring in surge capacity and strengthen measures to prevent burnout (restricted working hours, access to psychosocial support)
- Provide [adequate compensation to health workers](#) and their families in the event of a health worker falling ill or dying

[Health workers in Italy](#) (Credit: AFP & Business Insider)
More information

WHO sources:

COVID-19 website: https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus

WHO Travel Advice: https://www.who.int/ith/en/

Email: EPI-WIN@who.int

Website: www.EPI-WIN.com