



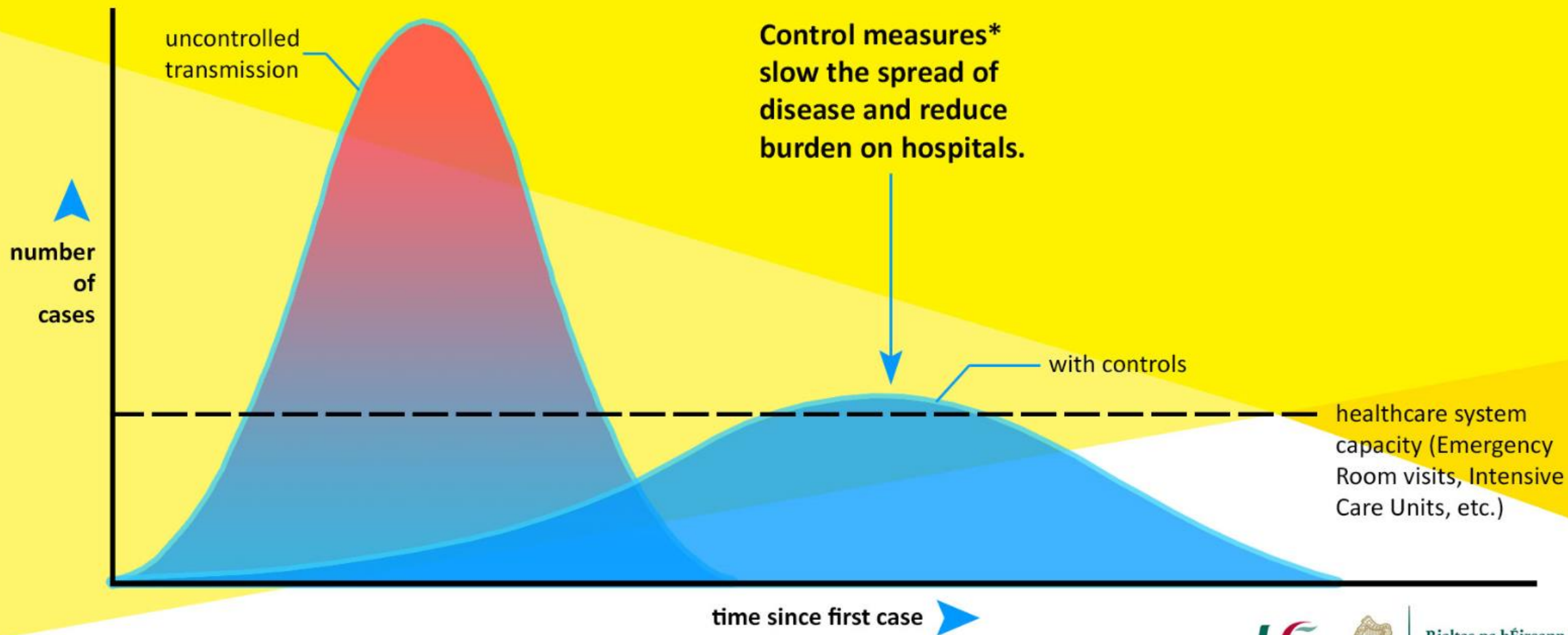
An Roinn Sláinte
Department of Health

COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

**Coordinating Public Health Communication to Citizens
and Staff**

Department of Health

Lower & Delay the Epidemic Peak



*Control measures include washing hands, working from home, limiting mass gatherings, minimising travel, etc.

What is happening?

- The Government is announcing additional measures to protect citizens by delaying the spread of COVID-19.
- The general public is asked to follow this advice and keep informed of this ongoing outbreak.
- We are actively working to delay the spread of this virus, so that our health system will be able to respond effectively.
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What does delay mean?

- We know that COVID19 (Coronavirus) is contagious and many people will catch it.
- Delay strategy is planned to slow down the spread of the virus and reduce the burden on GPs and hospitals.
- For example, if 1,000 people are going to catch the virus, the delay initiatives should result in 200 people per week catching the virus over five weeks, rather than 500 people per week catching the virus over 2 weeks.



Will delay measures eliminate COVID19 (Coronavirus)?

- It is estimated that all these social distancing measures will significantly reduce the demand for hospital capacity during the peak of the epidemic. This may also reduce the total number of cases and deaths.
- Experience from China indicates that the early decisive rapid coordinated and comprehensive implementation of social distancing measures are likely to be more effective in slowing the spread of the virus.
- The Irish Government has decided to implement these measures from today, 12 March.



What is social distancing?

- Social distancing aims, through a variety of means, to decrease or interrupt the spread of COVID-19. It does this by minimising contact between potentially infected individuals and healthy individuals.
- Social distancing is keeping a 2m (6ft) space between you and other people. You should not shake hands or make close contact where possible.



What are these measures?

- **Self-isolate - stay at home if they have 'flu-like symptoms (e.g. fever, cough, etc) regardless of travel or contact history.**
- **Social Interactions:** Reduce interactions outside the workplace by at least 75%
 - avoid crowded places;
 - increase interpersonal distance (ideally separation of at least 2 metres, not shaking hands, avoiding communal sleeping areas);
 - when in crowded settings, people should practice personal protective measures
- **Vulnerable Groups**
 - Protective self-separation for people at high-risk of severe illness from COVID-19, when the virus is in their community
 - These groups include: people aged 75 years and over; Adults and children with long-term medical conditions including cardiac and respiratory conditions; immunosuppressed, compromised respiratory function; residents of nursing homes & disability settings
- **Mass Gathering restrictions**
 - Involving more than 100 people if located indoors
 - Involving more than 500 people if located outdoors
 - Museums, galleries and tourism sites will close.
- **Closure of Schools, Creches, Childcare Facilities and Higher Education Institutions**



Do I shut down my business?

- Employers/employees should prepare to work from home, where possible.
- Reduce workplace contacts by 25%
 - flexible hours;
 - staggering start times and break times;
 - teleworking arrangements;
 - using email and teleconferencing;
 - reduce face-to-face meetings and gatherings.
- If an employee develops 'flu-like symptoms they should immediately be separated from others, instructed on respiratory etiquette and sent home (not using public transport, if possible).
- See advice from the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation



Can I take public transport as normal?

- Public transport will continue but the public is asked to follow guidelines on social distancing
- Yes, but try to travel off peak and practice social distancing.
- If you are experiencing symptoms, do not use public transport. Self isolate and call your GP.



Should I wear a mask?

- There is no evidence to show that masks protect healthy people from COVID-19.
- Masks are required for healthcare workers in clinical settings.



Our ask of you

- Interrupting the transmission of this virus requires an all of society approach
 - Share insights
 - Drive behavioural change in your institutions
 - Influence your networks to reassure, endorse and amplify today's announcement's

