

PLANNING FOR A NEW NORMAL: Considerations for Nova Scotia

MAY 8, 2020

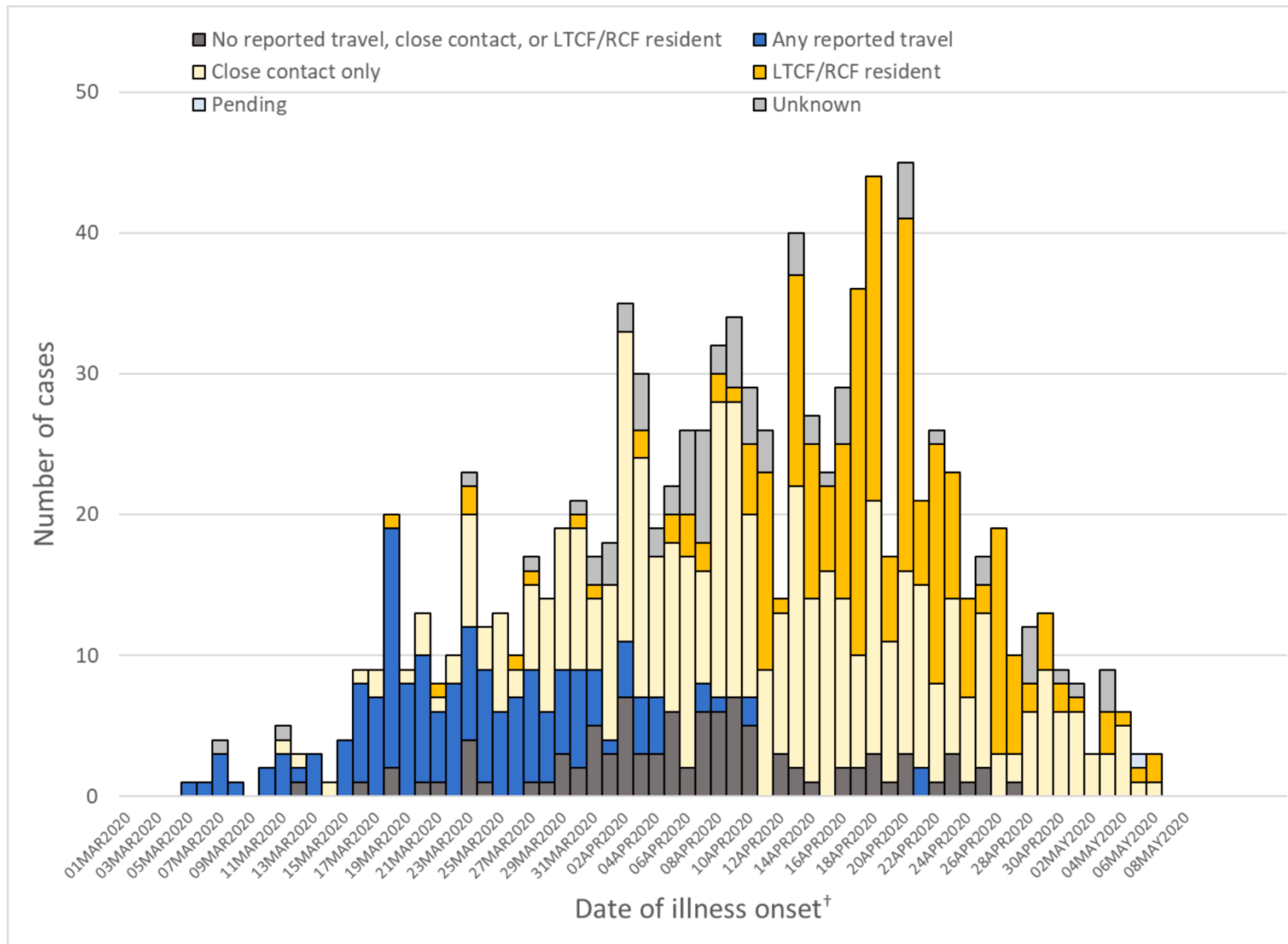
This a national framework developed by Canada's chief medical officers of health and public health advice to provinces and territories. This is not the Nova Scotia plan to re-open.

Considerations for reopening

- Public Health Agency of Canada's recommendations and guidelines to lift public health measures
- Consultation with sectors
- Adherence to existing public health measures
- Province's COVID-19 epidemiology

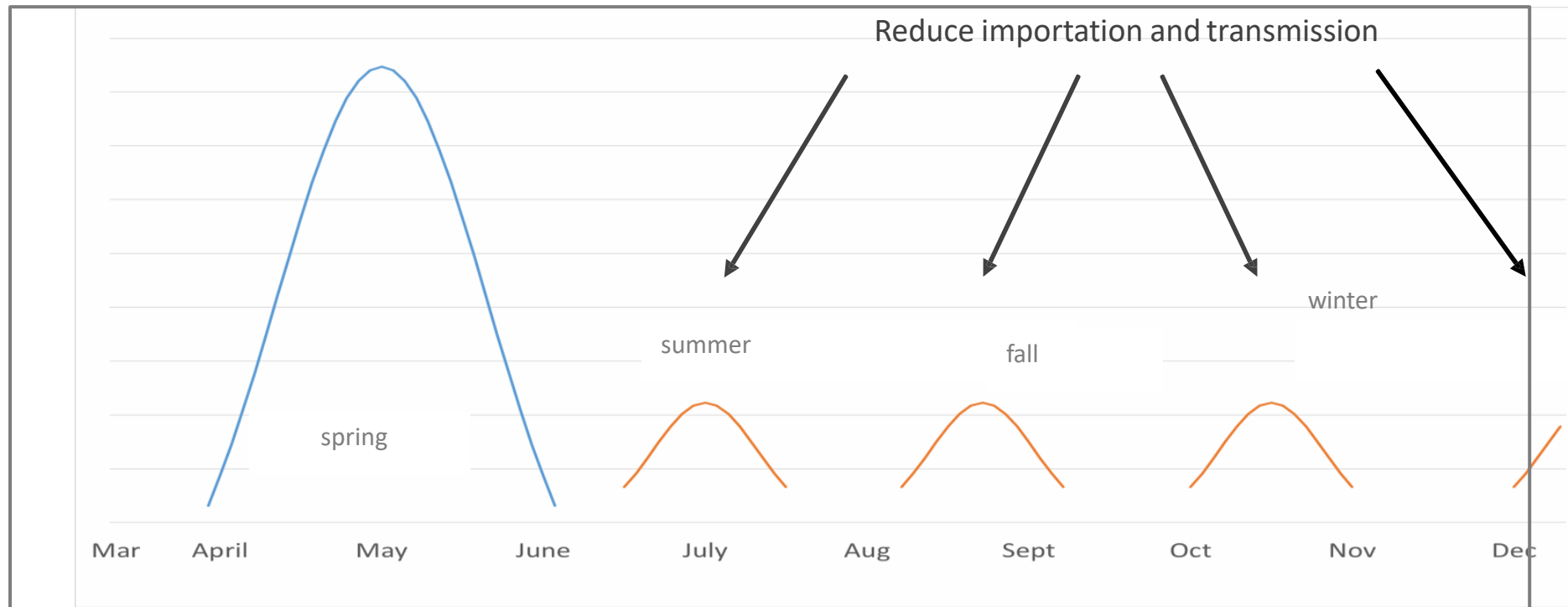
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NS cases by exposure (as May 6, 2020)



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Our Ambition: Early, Rapid Epidemic Control



With early epidemic control, responses to outbreaks will likely continue to be required over time

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Core personal public health measures must remain in place throughout all phases:



Ensuring physical distancing when outside of the home



Practising good hygiene (hand hygiene, avoid touching face, respiratory etiquette, disinfect frequently touched surfaces)



Staying informed, being prepared and following public health advice



Limit non-essential travel



Increasing environmental cleaning & ventilation of public spaces & worksites



Staying at home (not going to school/work) and away from others when symptomatic and following public health advice



Considering use of non-medical mask or face covering in situations where physical distance cannot be maintained



Wearing medical mask if symptomatic and in close contact with others or going out to access medical care. If not available, non-medical mask or face covering

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Our goals:

- There is some risk of increased transmission with reopening sectors of society
- We must **balance this risk with the need to increase economic and social activity** for the health of all Nova Scotians.
- Every attempt will be made to minimize risk by rapidly identifying cases and contacts as they emerge.

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Readiness to lift public health measures

Assessment based on 7 criteria from the Public Health Agency of Canada:

1. Epidemic control
2. Health-care system capacity
3. Public health capacity
4. Management of outbreak risks
5. Workplace prevention
6. Managing risk of bringing new cases N.S.
7. Community awareness and engagement

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Readiness to lift public health measures

- Developed draft list of system indicators based on the 7 criteria – weekly risk assessment will inform reopening.
- Risk assessment will show when levels of outbreak activity and system capacity are ready to relax measures.
- This is not imminent (not days). The first criterion is low-to-no cases for two incubation periods (28 days).
- Critical time – lifting measures depends on keeping virus out of high-risk facilities and no reintroduction into areas with low rates.
- Possible that some regions of province could be ready before others – risks to reopening different regions at different times given travel between regions.

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Consulting with stakeholders

- Consulting with businesses and organizations directed to close as part of pandemic response.
- Sharing public health principles and providing information to help organizations develop plans to safely reopen when public health deems it safe to do so
- Businesses and sectors asked to adapt public health guidelines for their own circumstance and develop plans for re-opening to public.

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Consulting with Stakeholders

- Restaurants and Drinking Establishments
 - Restaurants Canada
 - NS Restaurant Association
 - Business Associations
 - NS Business Labour Economic Coalition – 138 business leaders from across the province
 - Cape Breton & Halifax Partnerships
 - Sydney Chamber of Commerce
 - Private Campgrounds
 - Campground Owner Association
 - Cosmetology
 - Cosmetology Association of Nova Scotia
 - Personal Care Services
 - Fitness establishments
 - Unregulated Health professions
 - Podiatrists
 - Regulated health Professions
 - Dental Offices
- Golf Courses
 - Canadian Federation of Independent Business
 - Casinos
 - Private Campgrounds
 - Licensed Childcare
 - Veterinarians
 - Sport, Art and Cultural Organizations
 - Canadian Federation of Independent Business

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Considerations for Nova Scotia

- Feasibility
- Minimize the number of COVID-19 cases to prevent a resurgence that leads to:
 - morbidity and mortality
 - overwhelmed public health and health-care systems
- Reduce negative societal impacts of pandemic response
- Stimulate economic activity
- “Rollbacks” may be necessary – assessing the tolerance for these will be key

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Once all criteria have been met, start with a set of interconnected elements that are feasible, minimize social disruption and stimulate economic activity including:

Allowing some businesses to open	Allowing day cares to operate	Allowing additional outdoor activities to resume	Allowing non-urgent health care services to resume	Allow small essential cultural gatherings (e.g., funerals)	Increase permissible size, type of gatherings (NS specific)
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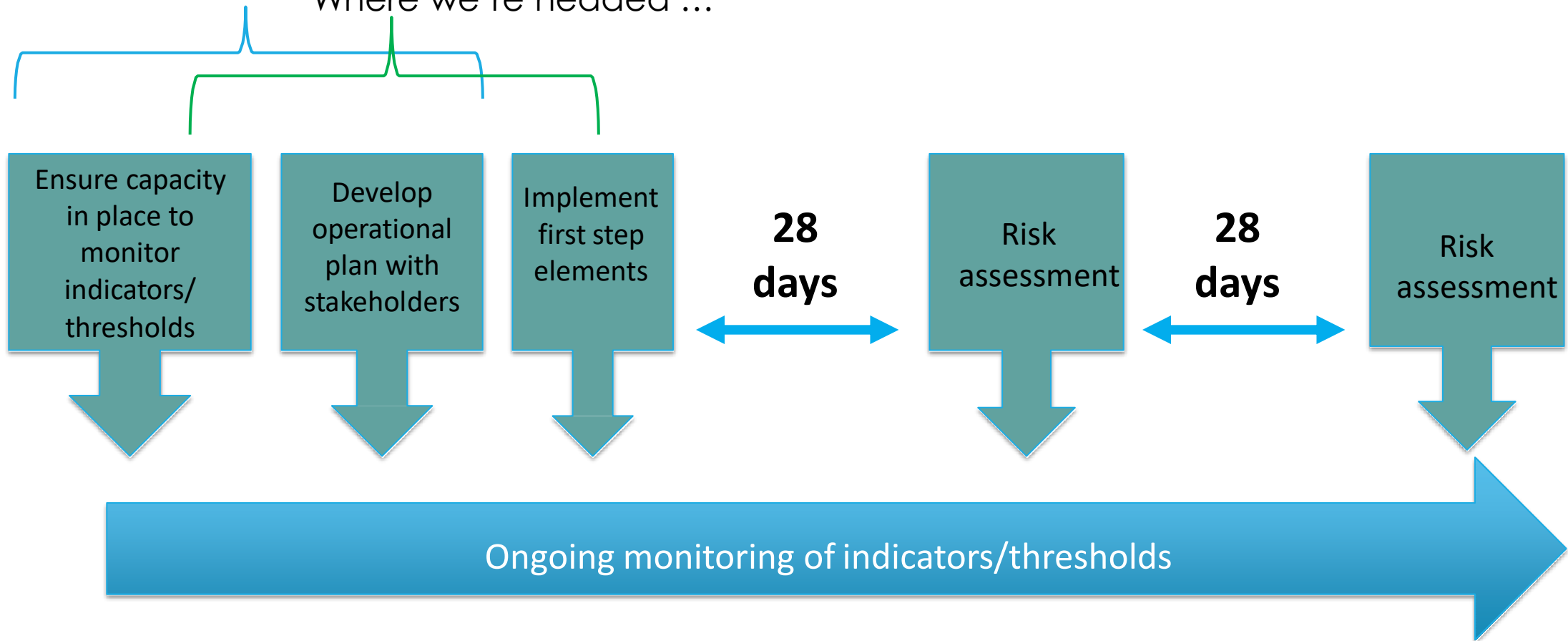
Phase 1: Elements

Would be proposed only if specific conditions could be met that would lower the risk of transmission (e.g., by reducing contact intensity and number of contacts)

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Where we are now

Where we're headed ...



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Bottom line

- A decision to reopen will be based on meeting these public health criteria and not a “date.”
- Reopening will be slow – over multiple phases rather than all at once.
- Measures could be tightened again if reopening results in significant “flare-ups” of virus activity.

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Next Steps (tentative)

Ongoing work on Phases 2-5:

- **Phase 2:** TBD but could include larger gathering size and additional businesses; targeted at “low-risk” businesses
- **Phase 3:** TBD but could include increasing gathering size again and additional “moderate-risk” businesses/workplaces
- **Phase 4:** TBD but could include highest risk settings and another increase in gathering sizes
- **Phase 5:** Dependent on vaccine availability -- all business reopen as desired when vaccine/therapeutics are available

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