

United States Senate

August 3, 2020

Robert R. Redfield, MD
Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
395 E Street, SW, Suite 9100
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Director Redfield:

As the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) helps lead the federal government’s response to SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 (hereinafter collectively “coronavirus”), there has been a lack of clarity on coronavirus data. This lack of clarity has fomented distrust and confusion among the American people, which international rivals have exploited to spread disinformation and reduce the effectiveness of our nation’s coronavirus response. Therefore, I write to request that CDC provide information to clarify specific areas in which disinformation and confusion have occurred. It is my hope that better dissemination of the facts can improve our response and Americans’ trust in the public health system.

Specifically, can you please clarify the following:

1. To what extent are repeated positive tests counted as “new” coronavirus cases by the CDC, other federal entities, and state entities?
2. Earlier this year, it was reported that the CDC and some states were combining the count of antibody tests with diagnostic tests. Has the CDC corrected this problem? If so, what steps has CDC taken to correct this problem? Has the CDC provided states with clear guidance to ensure uniform and accurate reporting? Have all states taken similar actions to correct this problem?
3. Federal and state mandates on federal, state, and private health financing programs and entities have created incentives for providers and hospitals to “up-code” by including coronavirus as a diagnosis in order to obtain higher or guaranteed reimbursements. What is being done by the CDC to reduce the risk that “up-coding” could impact CDC-reported coronavirus data?
4. How many Americans died from delaying, reducing, or being denied care due to “stay-at-home orders,” state “lockdowns,” and orders to stop elective care?
5. How have the reported incidents of suicide, drug abuse, and other diseases of despair and social isolation changed year-to-date from comparable periods from 2018 and 2019? If there has been a statistically significant change, has the CDC examined whether “stay-at-home orders” and state “lockdowns” have driven the change?

6. Of all the individuals who were treated for coronavirus in hospitals within states along the U.S.-Mexico border, how many were identified as foreign nationals? Please include data for both past and present patients and delineate patients by country of residence.
7. How many Americans have recovered from coronavirus? Is the CDC aware that other countries have released data on this point and the absence of clear recovery data from the CDC has created a point of confusion among Americans?
8. How effective are masks in preventing the transmission of coronavirus? Please provide data on the effectiveness of cloth masks, surgical and procedural masks, professional respirators (including N95 respirators), and eye and face protection equipment in preventing transmission of coronavirus.
9. Of those deaths attributed to coronavirus, how many of those deaths would have likely occurred at some point this year because of other causes?
10. What percentage of those who have contracted coronavirus are estimated to be asymptomatic?
11. What percentage of those who have contracted coronavirus are estimated to have mild symptoms or symptoms not requiring hospitalization?
12. Has the CDC studied or analyzed whether any protest rallies held during the period of March 2020 to the present contributed to or increased the spread of coronavirus? If so, please provide the underlying data, including the location of the increased transmission. If no, please explain whether the CDC expects to study this issue in the future.
13. Please provide what the CDC has found regarding the severity of coronavirus cases in children in the United States, the prevalence of child-to-adult transmission of coronavirus in the United States, and the death rate of American children who have been diagnosed with coronavirus. Of those American children who died of coronavirus, what percentage had underlying or preexisting medical conditions?

Sincerely,



Ted Cruz
United States Senator