

GRoute Covid-19 cases unchanged

Alida de Beer

There has been no increase in positive Covid-19 cases in the Garden Route in the past week. The number remains at 55 as at Wednesday 15 April at 00:01.

None of the 13 cases in George has been hospitalised. A few individual cases *George Herald* has reported on are doing well and are either recovering or have recovered, as reported last week.

The Western Cape total now stands at 676.

Hospitalised cases in the province stand at 37 with 18 of these in intensive care.

A total of 192 recoveries have been recorded (in line with NICD guidelines on recoveries) in the province.

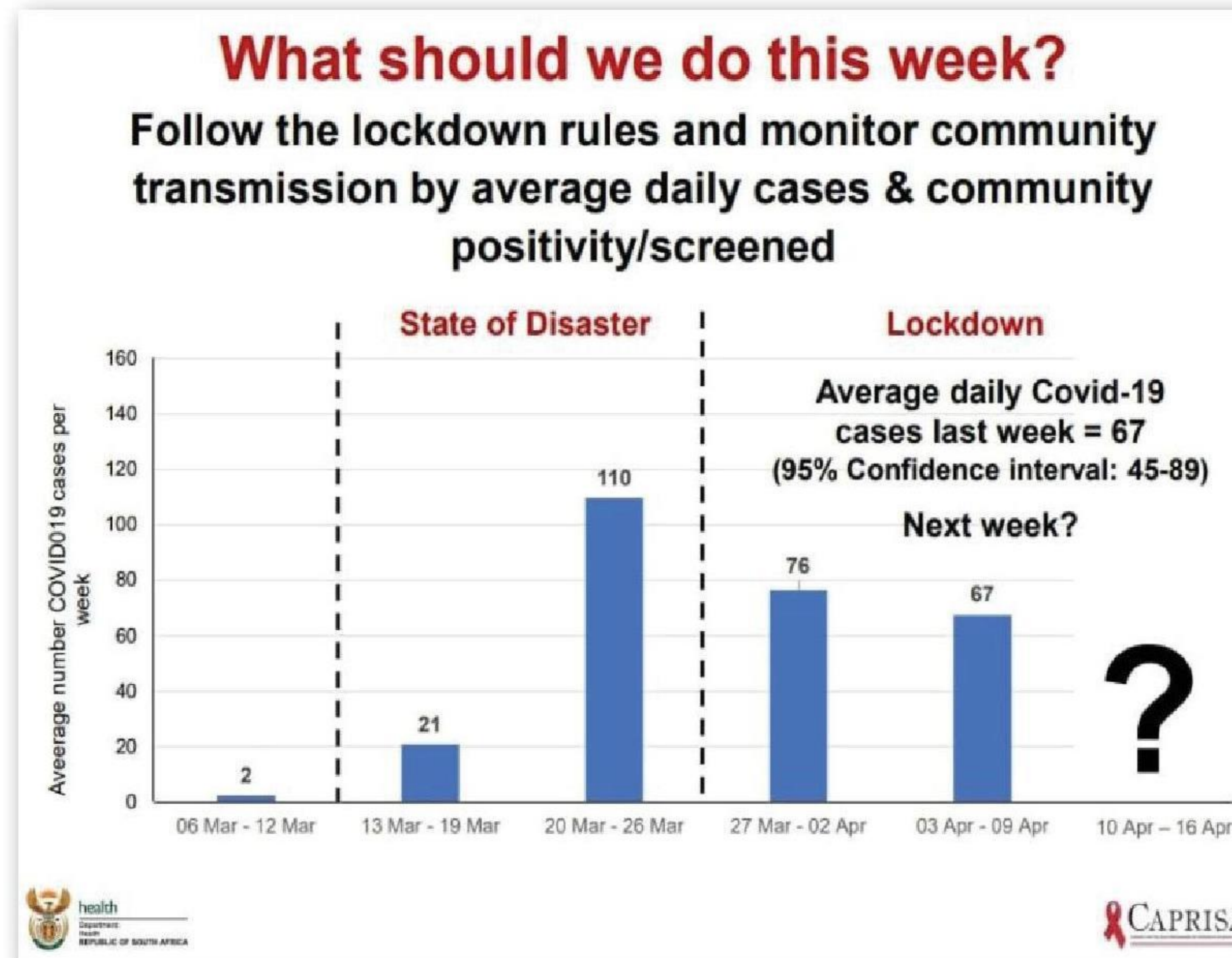
National figure

As of Tuesday 14 April, the total number of confirmed cases in South Africa is 2 415 and 27 people have succumbed to the virus.

A total of 87 022 tests have been conducted up till Tuesday. According to the Worldometers website, 410 people in the country have recovered.

'Critical time for decisions around lockdown'

Information gathered about the Covid-19 community transmission rate between 10 and 16 April (the past week) will be critical in the government's decision-making about next steps around lockdown.



Decisions around lockdown will be guided by the infection rate between 10 and 16 April.

This is according to Prof Salim Abdool Karim, chairman of the ministerial advisory committee on Covid-19, who spoke at a media briefing earlier this week. He said with increased testing since lockdown, they hope to know by 16

April if their interpretation of the statistics in terms of the average transmission rate is accurate.

Currently, each Covid-19 case infects an average of one other person and according to their calculations an average of 67 new infections per day take place. The epidemiological criterion for lockdown is 90+

infections per day. "If we see between 10 and 16 April 90 or more cases on average per day, then we need to continue the lockdown."

If between 10 and 16 April we see 90 plus cases on average per day, the lockdown needs to continue.

If it is below 90, a systematic easing of the lockdown could be considered. If it is ended abruptly, all the benefit achieved of curbing the infection rate could be undone. He said South Africa's Covid-19 infection curve is different from that of other countries. Daily infections stopped increasing exponentially since lockdown was instituted.

"Every country, once they reached 100 infections, have a



Prof Salim Abdool Karim chairs the ministerial advisory committee on Covid-19.

virtually non-stoppable epidemic and a rapid, exponential increase in the number of infections."

In South Africa there was an increase up till 26 March, when lockdown was instituted.

The country was poised for a rapid increase, but instead the epidemic curve turned and the number of cases declined and went into a plateau, despite the fact that there was a sharp increase in testing.

■ A reader was puzzled because the figure for George had changed from 14 last week to 13 and Mossel Bay from 19 to 17. He wanted to know if this meant that those who have recovered were being subtracted.

The Health Department responded as follows: It can happen that cases are allocated to another sub-district in accordance with the residential address of the person who was tested and not the sub-district where the person was tested. All positive cases are documented, therefore healthy patients are not subtracted from the sub-district total.

Numbers In Western Cape Districts

Cape Town Metro

Sub-districts

Western.....	202
Southern	141
Northern	32
Tygerberg.....	61
Eastern.....	42
Klipfontein	35
Mitchells Plain.....	16
Khayelitsha	19

Sub Districts Non-Metro:

Garden Route

Bitou	5
Knysna.....	13
George.....	13
Hessequa.....	5
Mossel Bay	17
Oudtshoorn.....	2

Cape Winelands

Stellenbosch	16
Drakenstein.....	6
Breede Valley	6
Langeberg.....	1
Witzenberg.....	1

Overberg

Overstrand	9
Theewaterskloof.....	1

West Coast

Saldanha Bay Municipality.....	3
Swartland.....	2

Unallocated: 9

Other provinces

Gauteng	909
Kwazulu-Natal	489
Eastern Cape	174
Free State	98
Limpopo	24
Mpumalanga	22
North West	22
Northern Cape	16
Unallocated	18