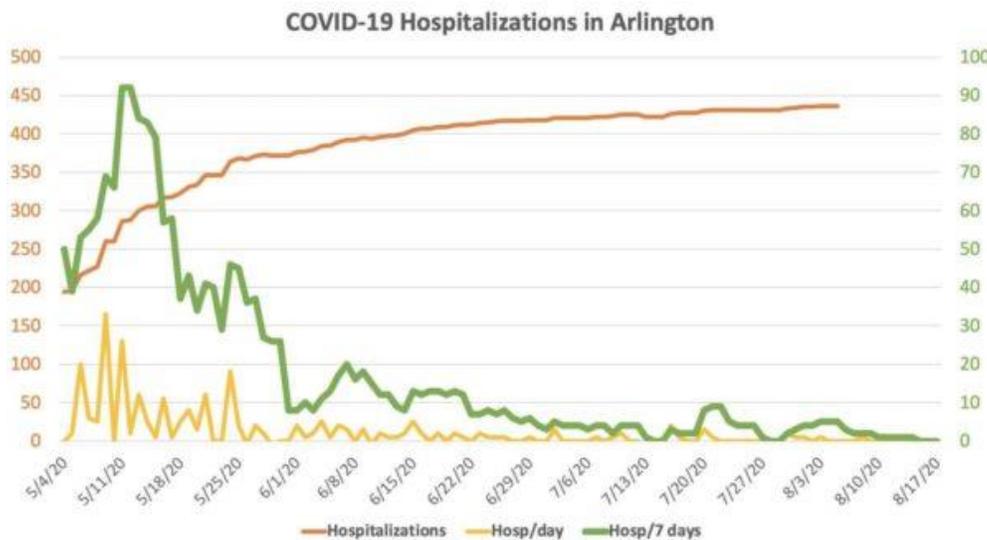


No New Hospitalizations Reported in Arlington, While Cases Near Summer Peak

ARLnow.com August 17, 2020

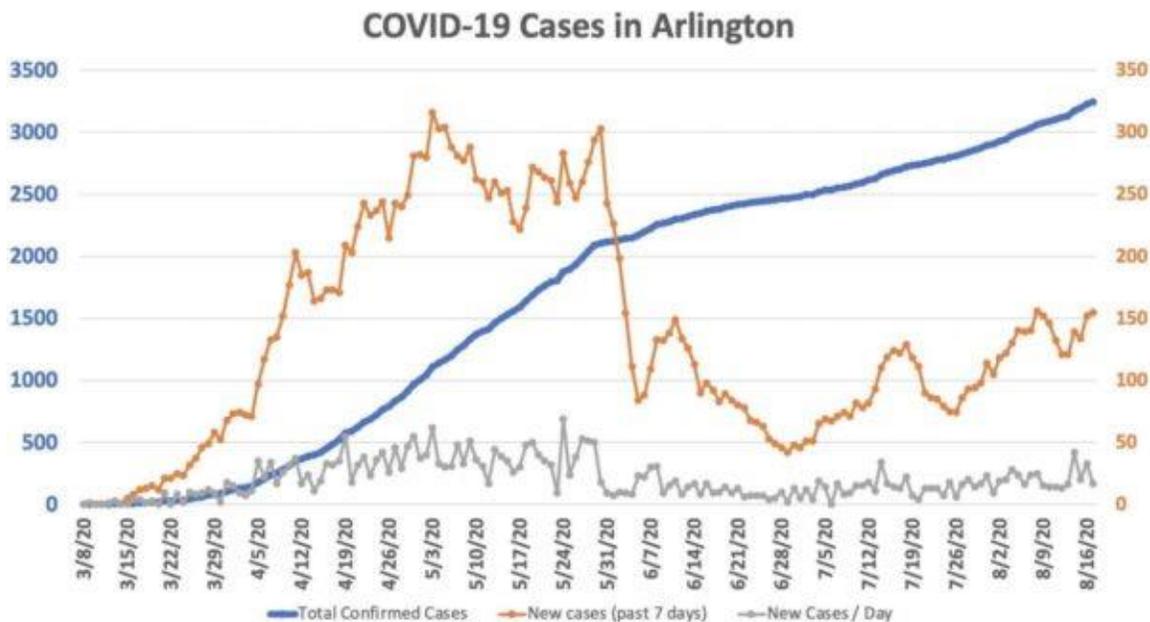


It has been nine days since Arlington County last recorded a COVID-related hospitalization, and more than two weeks since the last reported death, according to Virginia Dept. of Health data.

The data does not tell the story of those with significant illnesses that do not require hospital stays, nor does it say anything about the virus' potentially serious short- and long-term complications. It does,

however, point to a pandemic that is still infecting people locally but without the lethality that was evident earlier this year.

As of Monday morning, the seven-day total of new cases in Arlington had climbed to 155 — just one below the summer peak from a week ago. Thirty-three new cases were reported on Sunday alone. Arlington's seven-day test positivity rate, meanwhile, has climbed to 5.3% today from 4% on Aug. 5.



In a statement, Arlington's public health division said it is closely monitoring a rise in cases among younger residents, who are less likely to get seriously ill from COVID-19 than older people.

From Arlington Public Health spokesman Ryan Hudson:

Arlington County has seen an increase in cases among younger patients since July 1, particularly those in the 20-29 and 30-39 age groups (over half the cases reported today were among residents 20-39 years of age; 23 of the 42 new cases). This represents a new trend in the County's COVID-19 cases compared to April and May, when most of the new cases were in the age groups 40-64 and 65+. However, there is no evidence of a specific source or location that has put people at risk of infection more than others. Not being able to identify a single source, or a few sources, is the definition of community spread.

Public Health will continue to closely monitor this trend, but in the meantime, everyone needs to realize that when we gather together, we can have germ transmission. That is why it is important to remember that even though Virginia has lessened restrictions on gathering, it doesn't mean Arlingtonians should be relaxing behaviors we know will prevent spread of the COVID-19 virus – things like staying home as the preferred option, keeping 6 foot distances or more when venturing out for essential needs, and wearing face coverings. Public Health continues to work with our community to stress the importance of abiding by these personal behaviors.

Despite the lack of hospitalizations reported by VDH, Virginia Hospital Center ER chief Mike Silverman said in his weekly social media post on Friday that the Arlington hospital is actually seeing an uptick in COVID patients.

“The number of patients currently hospitalized today is up a bit compared to the typical baseline numbers we've seen the last 6-8 weeks,” Silverman wrote, adding that the hospital is “seeing a very slight upward trend of COVID positive patients diagnosed in the ER but it's the equivalent of about 1 patient more a day than a month ago.”

Nationally, a summertime spike in new cases has slowed, but experts [predict](#) total COVID deaths — currently around 170,000 — could reach as high as 200,000 by Labor Day.

Meanwhile, questions still remain about what will happen in the fall, as some [colleges](#) and schools reopen and as the [normal flu season takes hold](#). There are also questions about whether the coronavirus itself may change — during the 1918 pandemic, the flu virus mutated and [became more deadly](#) after a relatively mild [summer flu outbreak](#) — though many health experts have been [skeptical of reports](#) of significant mutations during the latest pandemic.

