



GREATER WASHINGTON PARTNERSHIP

FROM BALTIMORE TO RICHMOND
FOSTERING UNITY
ADVANCING GROWTH

COVID-19 Response and Community Resilience

*Board Meeting
October 21, 2020*

Pre-Read



Disclaimer

This publication contains general information only and neither Greater Washington Partnership nor any other party (including Greater Washington Partnership's contractors) are, by means of this publication, rendering accounting, business, financial, investment, legal, tax, or other professional advice or services. This publication is not a substitute for such professional advice or services, nor should it be used as a basis for any decision or action that may affect your business. Before making any decision or taking any action that may affect your business, you should consult a qualified professional advisor. Neither Greater Washington Partnership nor any other party (including Greater Washington Partnership's contractors) shall be responsible for any loss sustained by any person who relies on this publication.

Executive Summary

Executive Summary: Narrative Recap

- **Regional COVID-19 Experience to Date:** The region has seen an inconsistent approach to COVID-19 and employers face continued lack of clarity about how to handle safe return to work and return to school. Further, employers and schools are seeking cost-effective testing options but don't know where to turn to or how to implement.
- **COVID-19 Testing Modalities:** COVID-19 testing is evolving rapidly with new testing modalities like saliva and rapid antigen tests. Thanks to such cost-effective options, broad-based screening is becoming more viable for public and private institutions.
- **Economic Burden for Employers:** Employers face an economic burden from possible lost productivity when employees must be quarantined. Use of frequent screening tests promises early detection and rapid isolation which will reduce transmission and downstream costs.
- **A Comprehensive Response:** There is a need to go beyond one-off PCR testing loops and develop a multi-modal "all-in" approach to screening, intervention, and return from quarantine policies and processes.
- **Recommended COVID-19 Strategy for The GWP:** We propose that The Greater Washington Partnership develop a COVID-19 Services Clearinghouse for the Capital Region:
 - Prepare a curated compendium of COVID-19 resilience services to connect buyers (employers, schools) with suppliers (e.g., testing labs, COVID-19 resilience assessment and planning services).
 - Raise funding, convene experts to design the compendium, establish a public health advisory panel, and advise employers, schools, and community leaders.
 - Commit \$2-3M over 3-6 months to stand up the Clearinghouse, recognizing that this may evolve into a new *Inclusive Public Health Initiative*, alongside Mobility, Inclusive Growth, and Capital CoLAB
- **Sustainability & Call to Action:** There are several mechanisms to fund these efforts and create a sustainable model. The GWP Board needs to discuss alignment to mission, sustainability considerations, and speed to impact of this proposal.

Executive Summary: Situation, Recommendation, and Potential

GWP can accelerate recovery in the Capital Region by establishing a COVID Services Clearinghouse, requiring \$2-3M over 6 months to provide actionable guidance to employers and schools

SITUATION RECAP

- The region has not seen a consistent response to COVID-19 recovery – and there is no end of the pandemic in sight
- An estimated 240,000 tests per day – 8 times the current testing level – would be needed to begin safely reopening
- Current test costs (~\$60-120/test) are a significant burden to employers, and staff productivity losses are adding up
- Social costs are also considerable, with 75% of public school districts not planning to reopen this fall
- The science is evolving, creating options to reopen safely when deploying more affordable screening (~\$10-20/test)
- Employers and schools are seeking clear guidance and access to proven COVID testing and resilience services

RECOMMENDATION: LAUNCH COVID-19 CLEARINGHOUSE

- Consolidate latest public health guidance that is actionable for employers and schools
- Support employers and schools in the Capital Region as they plan for safe return to in-person activities

GREATER WASHINGTON PARTNERSHIP'S ROLE

- Serve as catalyst that “connects the dots” through a Clearinghouse
- Compile a compendium of leading practices and curate a database of COVID services vendors
- Engage employers and schools in planning efforts

IMPACT STATEMENT

- Amplify public health messaging among employer and school leaders
- Connect employers with cost-effective testing options
- Accelerate safe return to in-person activities

EFFORT & LONG-TERM POTENTIAL

- Commit \$2-3M to operate the Clearinghouse for ~6 months, incl. hiring 3 new staff and engaging public health advisors
- The Clearinghouse has the potential to transition into a lasting *Inclusive Public Health Initiative* led by GWP

Questions for Discussion at the Board Meeting

As you review this pre-read, please consider the following questions which we will discuss at the Board meeting

1. To what extent are we prepared to take action now, given the pandemic will continue to affect employer and school operations across the region for the next 9-12 months?
2. Do you concur that of the COVID resilience efforts GWP could engage in, advocacy and standing up a COVID-19 Services Clearinghouse are aligned with our mission and desire to have impact?
3. Given a choice, are we prepared to quickly raise funds and commit resources to develop a “public good” which benefits both our member organizations and the communities we live in?



**GREATER
WASHINGTON
PARTNERSHIP**

FROM BALTIMORE TO RICHMOND
FOSTERING UNITY
ADVANCING GROWTH

Pre-Read

The Greater Washington Partnership's Goal

Address immediate COVID-19 resilience needs with sight set on long-term impact

Short-Term Goals:

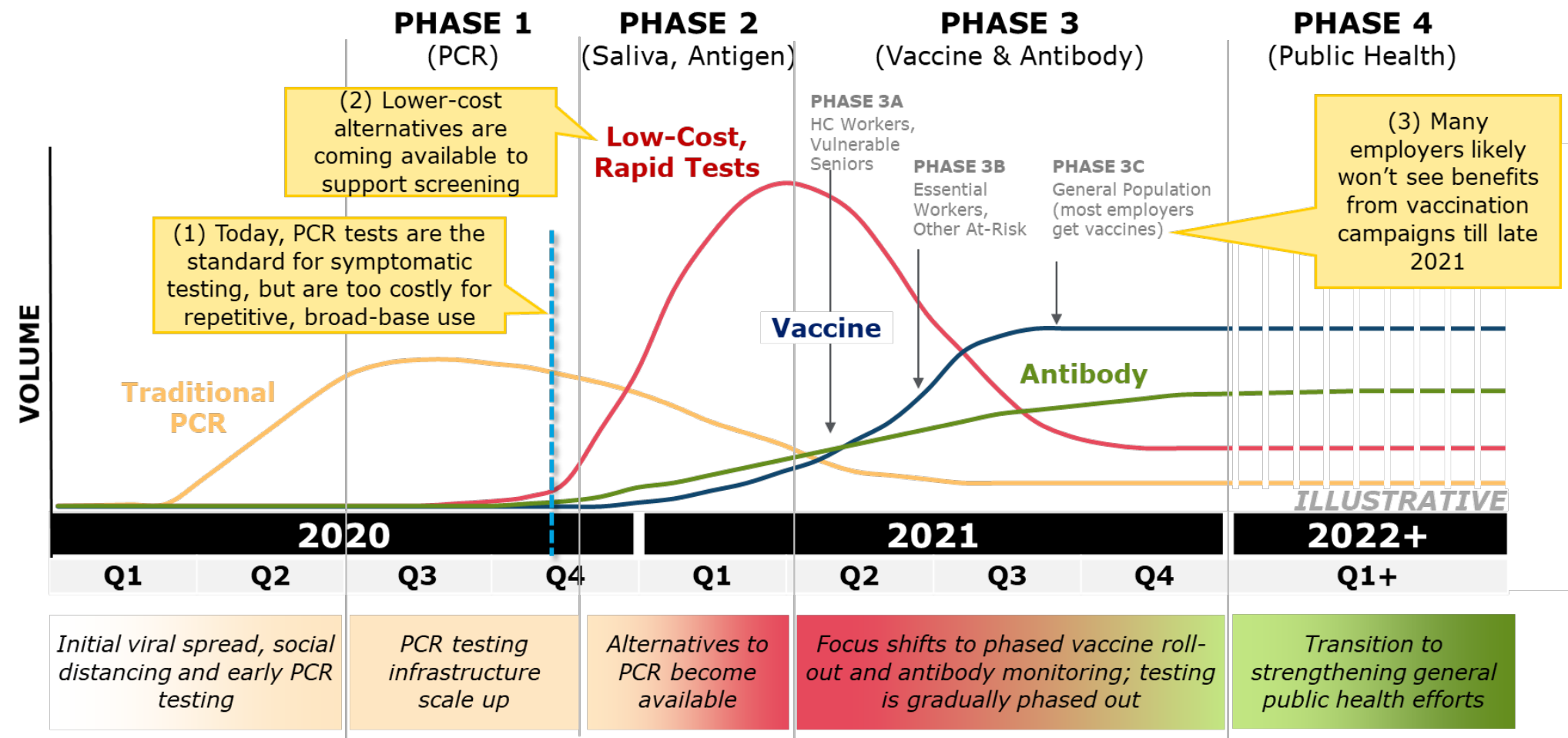
Accelerate a **safe return to physical locations**, including schools and workplaces, by providing community with the **most up-to-date testing and response options**, while simultaneously building **multipurpose infrastructure** that supports the evolving needs of COVID-19 response and recovery, as well as **future public health needs** in the region.

Long-Term Goals:

Become the **leading authority on regional reopening and resilience** by developing resources and expertise that can be used by coalitions around the world **for COVID-19 and beyond**.

Vaccines Won't Change the COVID-19 Trajectory for 6-9 Months

The pandemic will stretch through 2021 and beyond, even as testing and vaccination efforts unfold



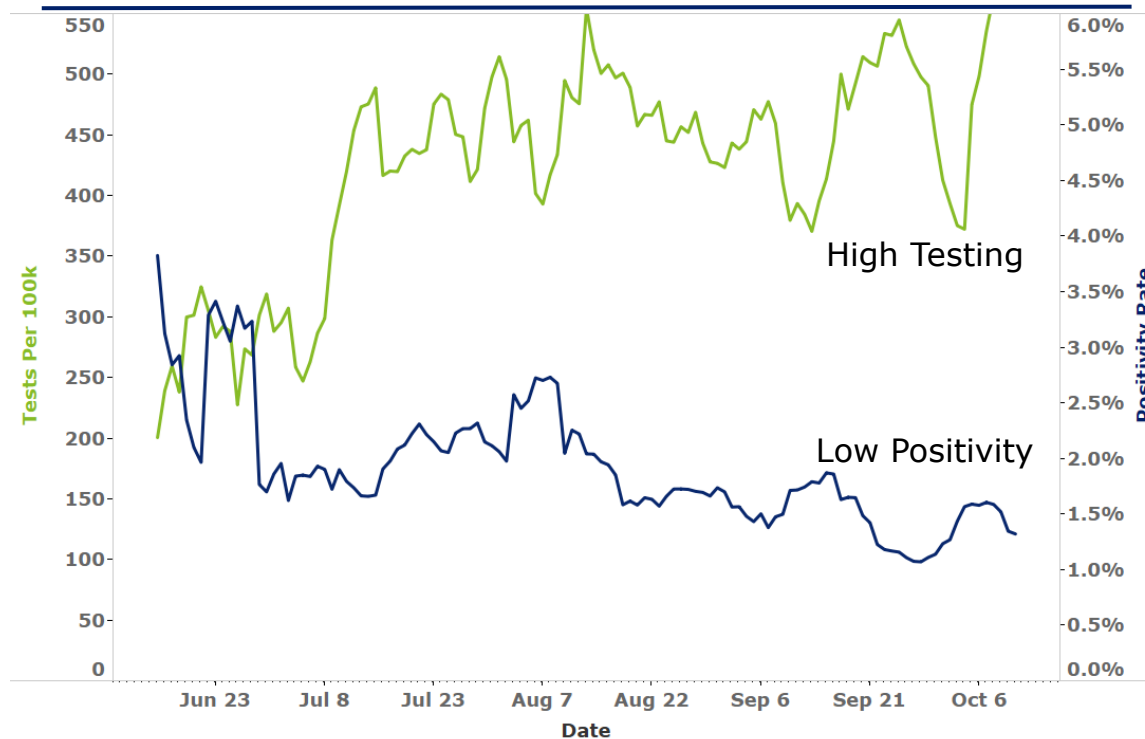
Notes: 1) [COVID Tracking Project](#) – 7-day rolling average of all tests as of 18 September; 2) PCR test curve based on data from [John's Hopkins COVID Data Center](#). All other volume figures are relative based on expert guidance

Current State – Where Are We with Testing?

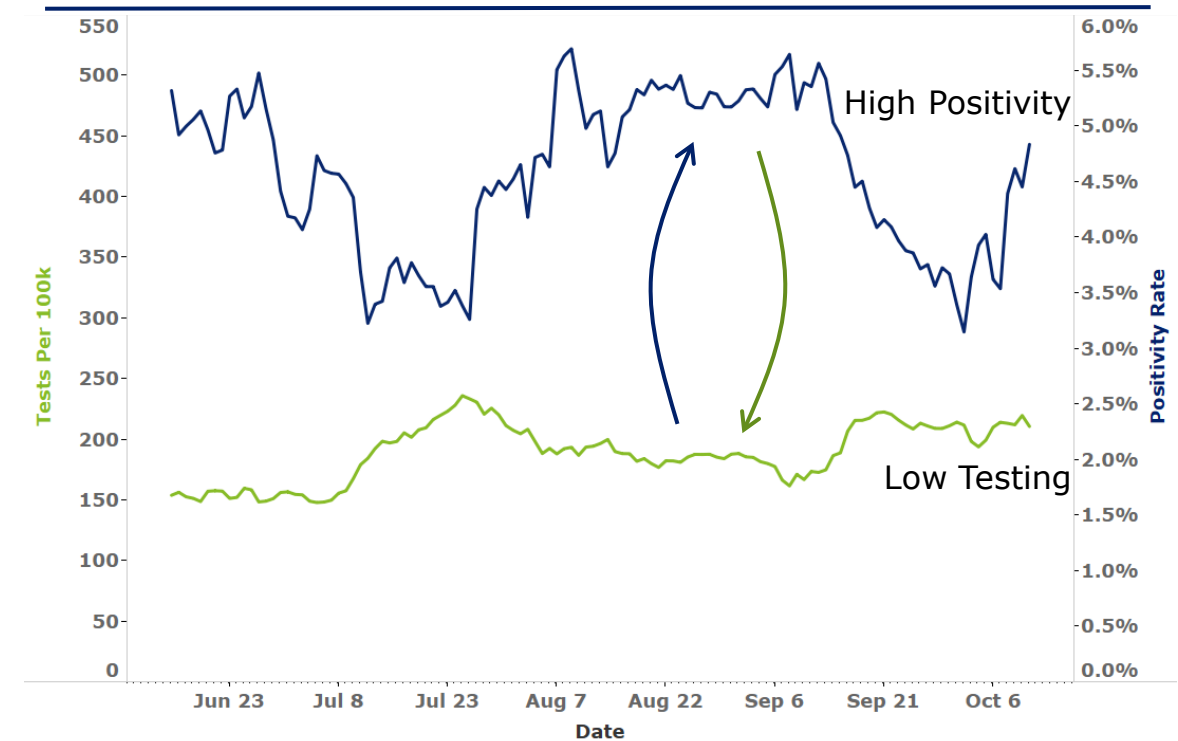
Test volume and test positivity rates still vary widely in the Capital Region¹⁻⁷



WASHINGTON D.C. (8 Wards)



VIRGINIA (8 Counties)



Notes: 1) Capital Region population considered incl. 8 wards in Washington D.C., 12 counties in Maryland, and 30 counties in Virginia. Footnotes 2,3, and 4 apply to these 50 counties. Footnotes 5,6,7,and 8 apply to a sub-set of these counties, as limited testing was available at the county level; 2) Cumulative Case data is as of 10/11/2020; 3) Cases Per 100k is 7-Day Average as of 10/11/2020; 4) Monthly % Change in Cases Per 100k is % change between 10/11/2020 and 9/11/2020; 5) Positivity Rate is the 7-Day Average Positivity (positive cases / tests) as of 10/11/2020; 6) Monthly change in positivity rate is cumulative change in positivity between 10/11/2020 and 9/11/2020; 7) Tests Per 100k is the 7-Day Average Daily Tests Per 100k population as of 10/11/2020; 8) Monthly % Change in Tests Per 100k is % change between 10/11/2020 and 9/11/2020

Current State – What Are the Challenges Today?

There is no consensus on how to return to public spaces and group activities safely

CHALLENGES TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY



Public schools are not yet reopening which is posing risk to equity for low and middle income students and delaying return to work



Employers are unclear on actions needed to return to work, due to lack of clear guidance on safety and reopening best practices



Limited access to reliable, fast testing at reopened workplaces and schools, posing risks to employee health and well-being



Cost pressures challenge employer and school efforts to purchase necessary PPE, testing, and supplies, particularly within small businesses

OPPORTUNITIES



Take action in anticipation of an extended period of uncertainty until the pandemic wanes many months after beginning vaccinations



Avail clear, consistent public health guidance for different types of local organizations to guide return to work planning



Facilitate access to COVID services, including matching supply and demand for such services



Provide up-to-date trend data to enable procedure adjustments as conditions evolve in the region

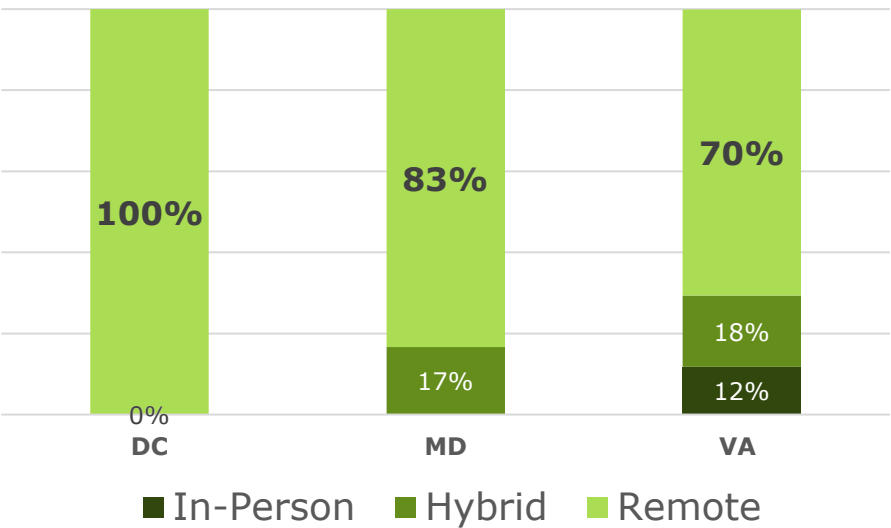
In addition to these challenges, we are observing a “market failure” in which supply and demand for tests are not well matched

Current State – Community View / K-12 School Reopening

Many public schools are still operating remotely which impairs parents’ return to work; this is particularly true in diverse communities where remote working options are less prevalent

Schools in the Capital Region are still largely remote

Current Status of Capital Region Public Schools
(Oct, 2020)^{1,2,3,4}



- 75%** Of counties / wards in the region not reopening K-12 public schools this fall; most higher ed in region did not return to in person instruction⁴
- 6** Counties in the region have commenced phased reopening, without testing⁴
- 25%** Of parents in DC are unlikely to send their children back to school due to perceived risk⁵
- 40%** Of parents surveyed in majority black wards and counties are unlikely to send children back to school due to perceived risk⁵

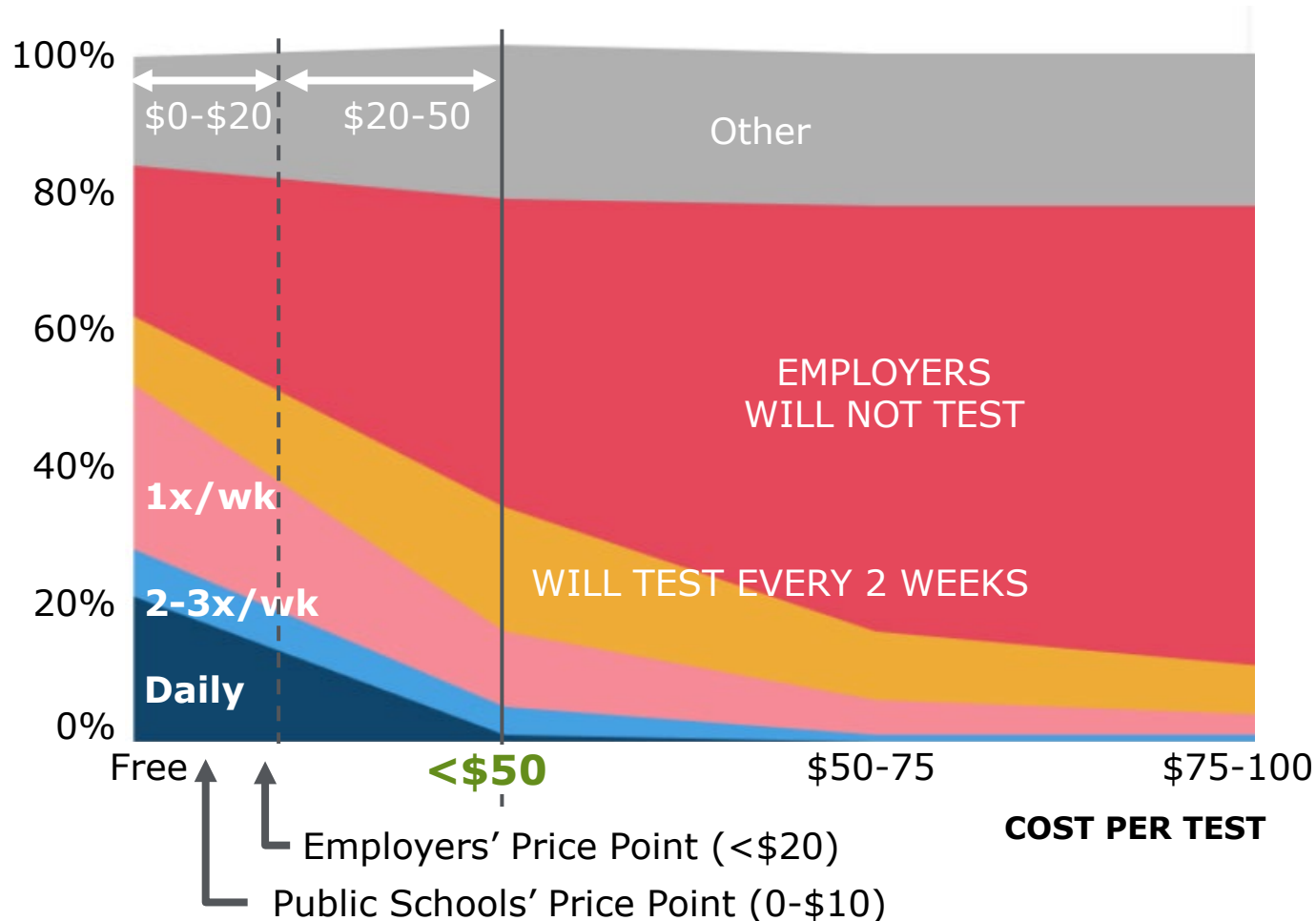
Schools are critical for effectively reopening the economy in the region

Notes: 1) Virginia DOE; 2) Maryland Public Schools; 3) DC Public Schools 4) WTOP – Capital Region Schools Reopening 5) Washington Post – Risks of Sending Kids to School (surveyed locations include Wards 7 and 8 and Prince George’s County)



Current State – Employer Perspectives on Testing

Regional employers need both a response strategy and access to affordable testing services





Employers need cost-effective testing options



Employers are seeking guidance...

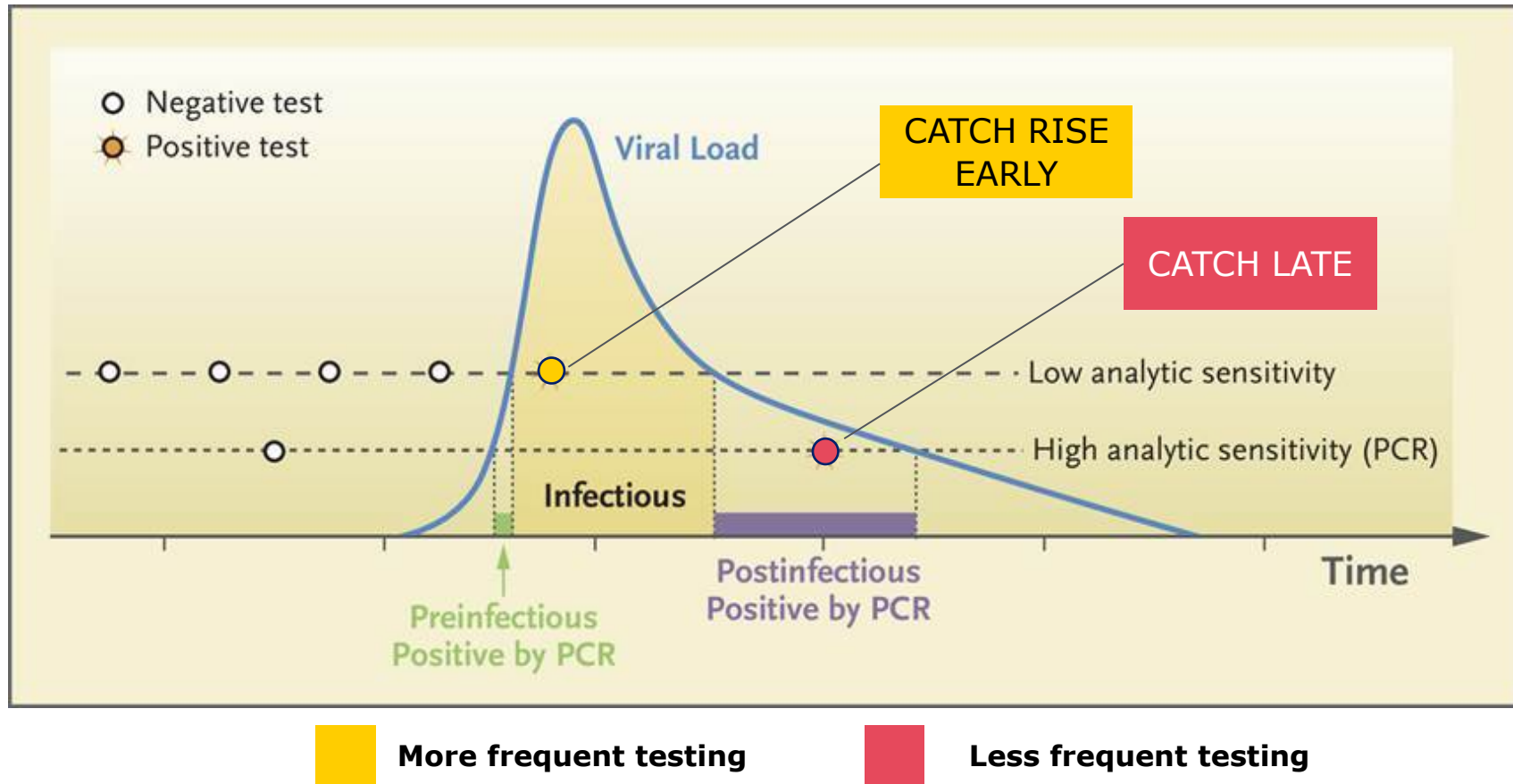
-  **Trusted Source** to assess and develop tailored approach for return to workplace
-  **Single Source of Truth** for the latest, relevant COVID-19 leading practices

...as well as access to testing services

-  **Onsite** testing convenience
-  **Frequent** to maximize detection
-  **Expeditious** to minimize time to results
-  **Cost-effective** for sustainability

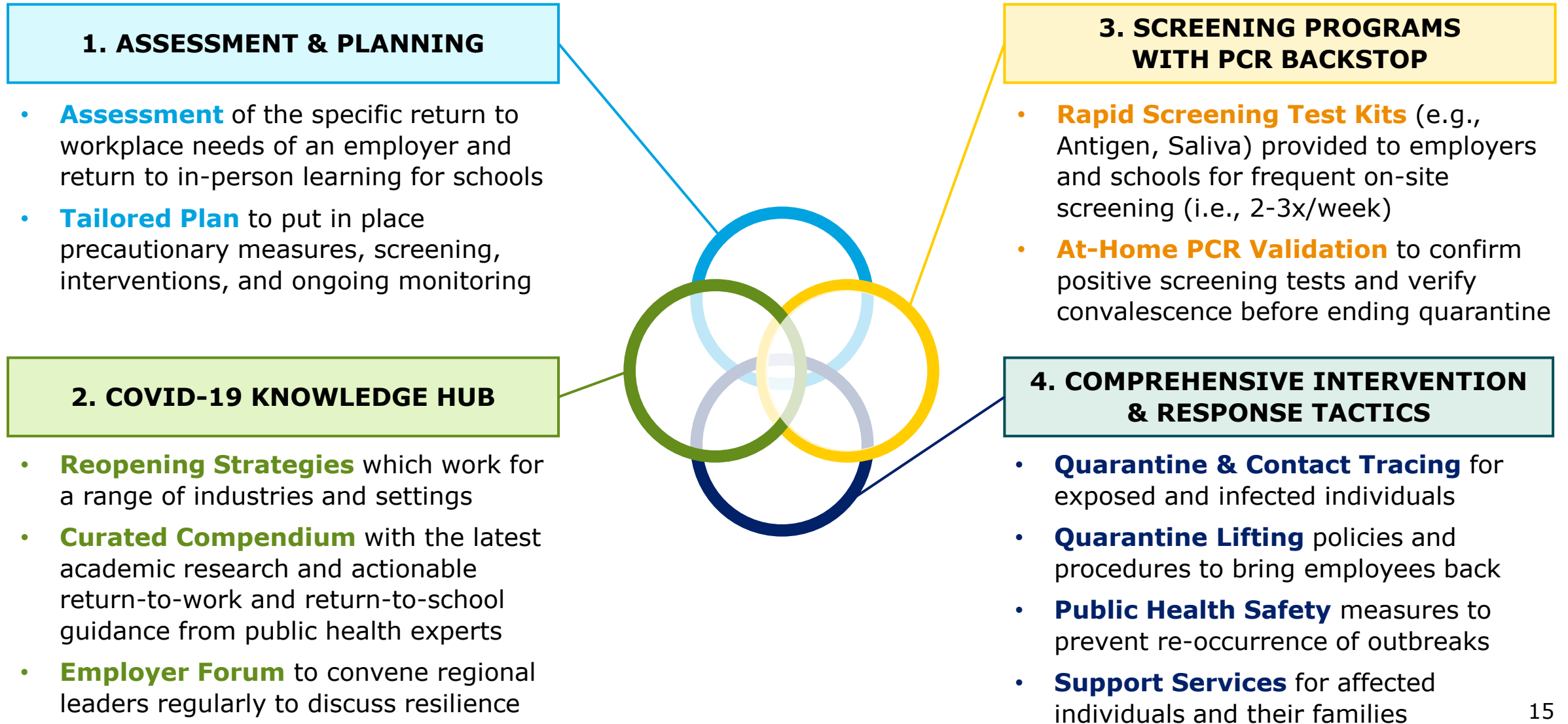
Forward Look – What's New In October 2020?

Repeat testing at lower sensitivity may be more effective than less frequent higher sensitivity tests; this opens new apertures for asymptomatic screening at a cost-effective price-point



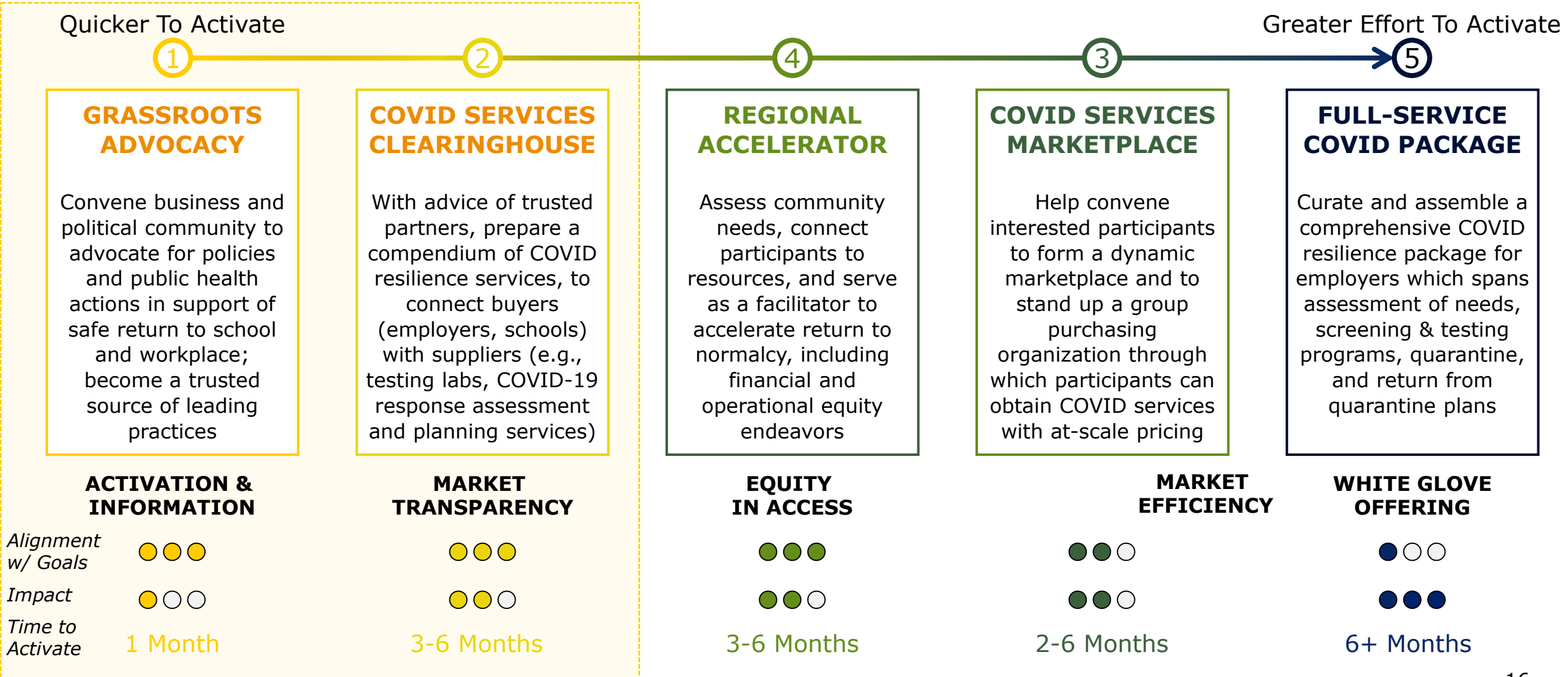
Forward Look – A Comprehensive Plan for Testing & Interventions is Needed

Rebooting the economy requires a multi-modal approach with frequent testing and interventions



GWP COVID-19 Resilience Efforts

Along a spectrum of COVID-19 resilience efforts, we recommend focusing on advocacy and standing up a regional COVID-19 Services Clearinghouse – see next page for more detail



← Recommended focus for GWP →

Recommendation – Stand Up a Regional COVID Clearinghouse

GWP can accelerate recovery in the region by establishing a COVID Services Clearinghouse, requiring \$2-3M over 6 months to provide actionable guidance to employers and schools

CLEARINGHOUSE DESCRIPTION

Support for employers and schools as they design and implement return to workplace policies

- Consolidates and updates latest public health guidance in a manner that is actionable for employers and schools
- Provides insight into tools available and their appropriate uses within a recovery strategy
- Supports employers and schools in designing return to work plans
- Helps connect employer and schools with solution vendors

GWP ROLE

Commit \$2-3M to operate a clearing house, develop database of vendors, catalog best practices, and engage employers and schools in planning

- Hire 3 additional GWP staff
- Engage external advisory services to design and stand up the information catalog
- Design offering to engage employers to validate and advise on return to work plans
- Assemble external public health advisory panel
- Promote offering through frequent publications

IMPACT

Accelerate safe return to in-person operation and amplify public health messaging among employer and school leaders

- A shared Clearinghouse is an efficient vehicle to keep current on latest policies and science (vs. each participant compiling)
- Participants now have access to one-stop-shop for reliable, validated, public health information
- Creating price and availability transparency allows the business community to make timely decisions toward reopening

The Clearinghouse project can seed a broader Inclusive Public Health Initiative which complements GWP's ongoing Mobility, Inclusive Growth, and Capital CoLAB efforts

Recommendation – Regional COVID Clearinghouse Key Activities

GWP will conduct several key activities to build and operate a Clearinghouse, develop a curated database of vendors, catalog best practices, and engage employers and schools in planning



Convene a public health advisory panel and actively facilitate developing actionable guidance and tools to support return to public spaces



Publish roadmap and recommended strategy for re-opening and conduct a summit with regional leaders to activate strategy



Design, build, and operate a compendium / database of vendors and services related to return-to-workplace, return-to-school, screening, testing, staff engagement, etc.



Advise members, public schools, and higher ed institutions on reopening policies and programming, including development of tailored ROI models to support decisions around screening



Engage in public relations to share and promote the work of the Clearinghouse and identify additional interested organizations and publish guidance and continued thought pieces



Specify a long-term regional response infrastructure plan to prepare for future public health crises