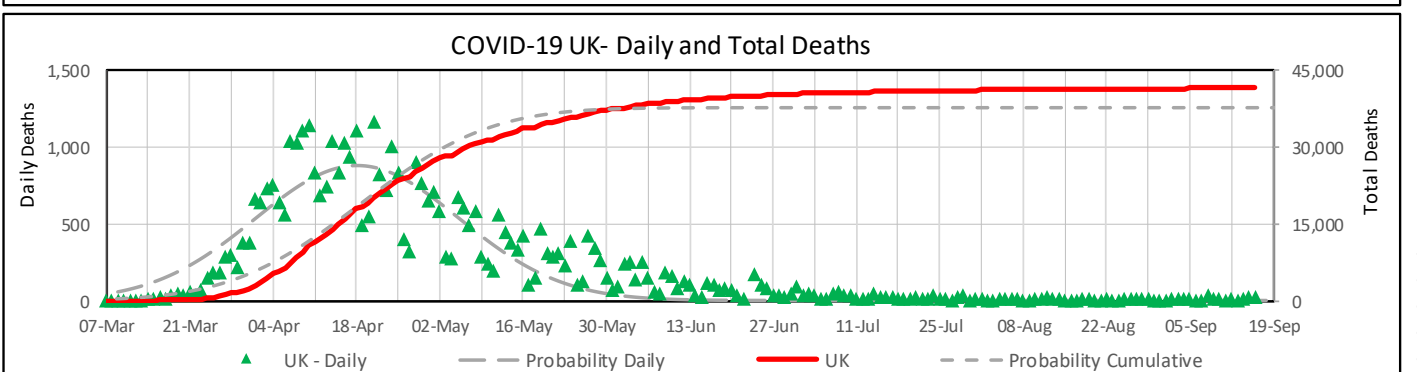
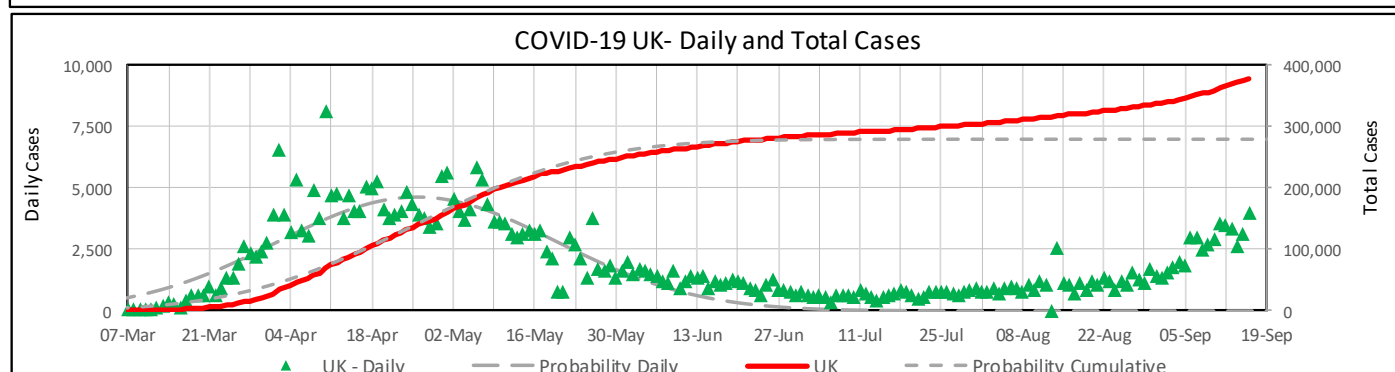
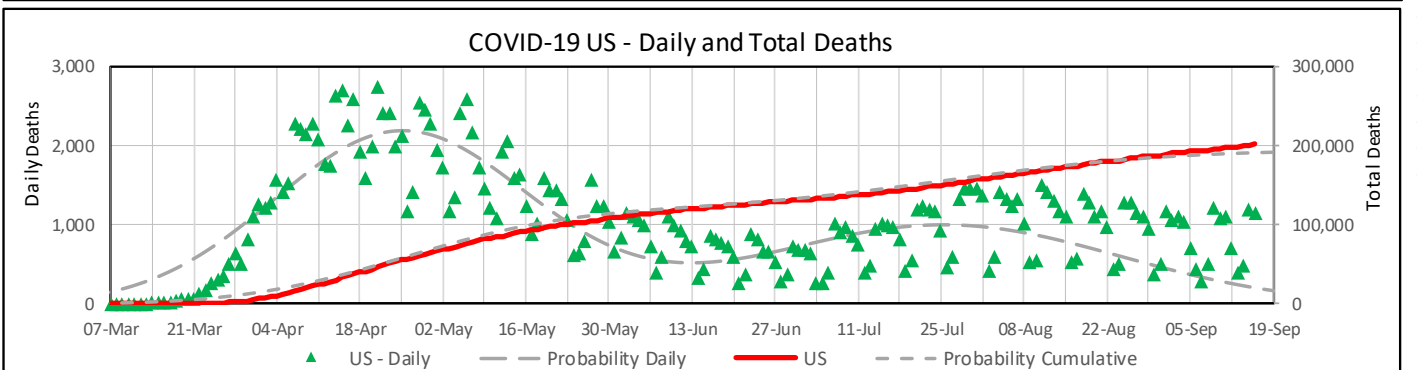
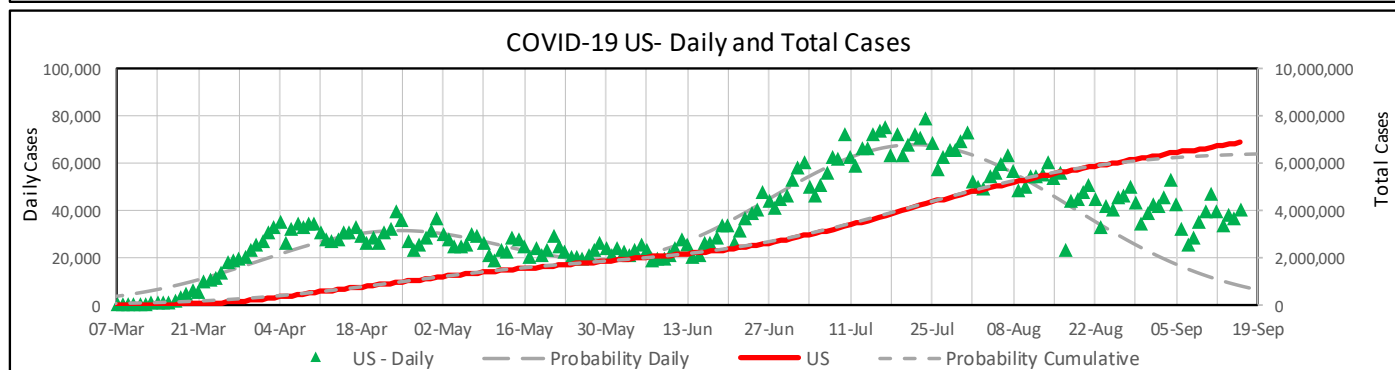
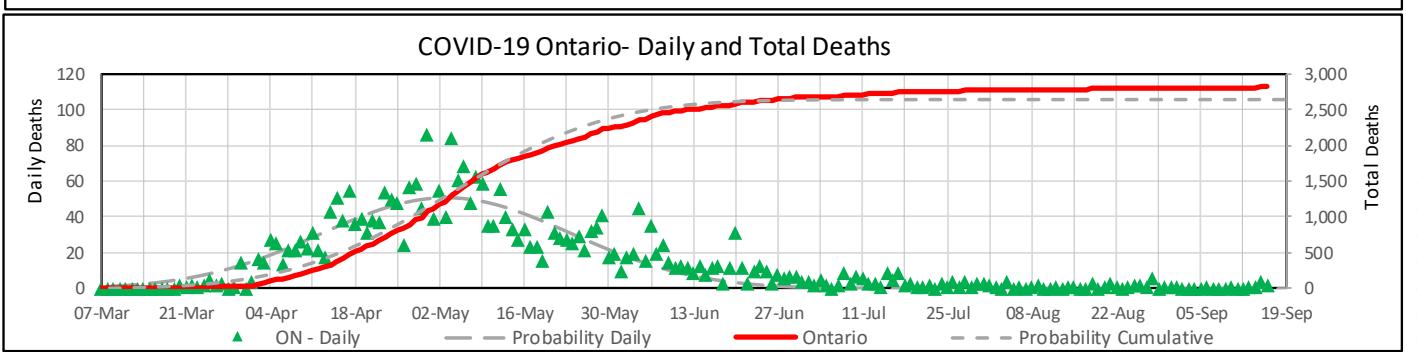
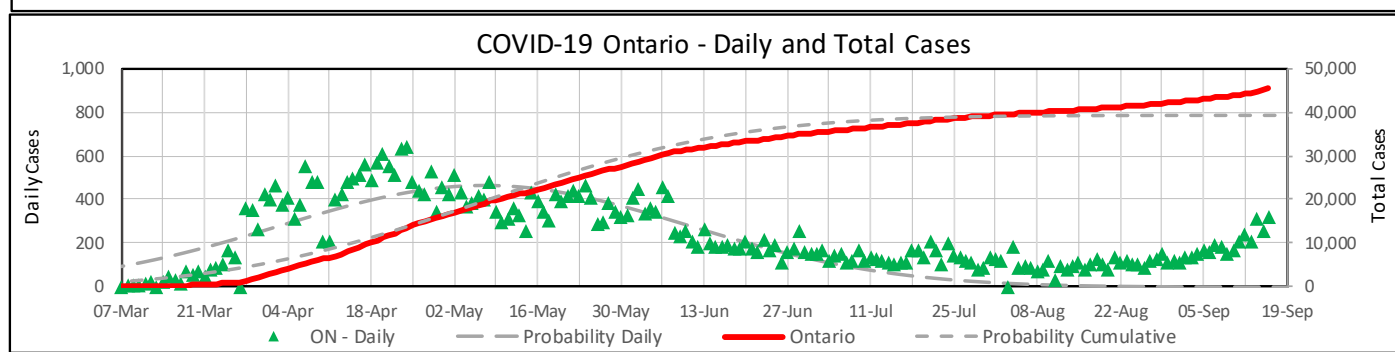
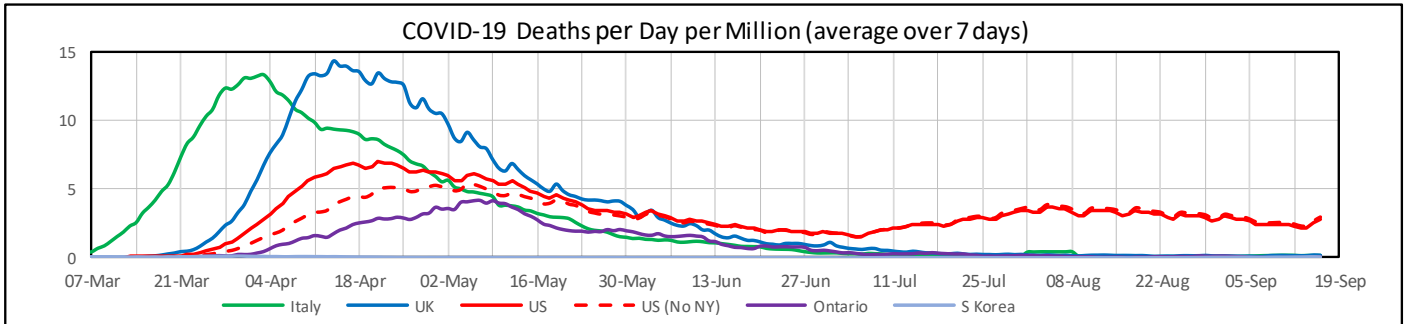
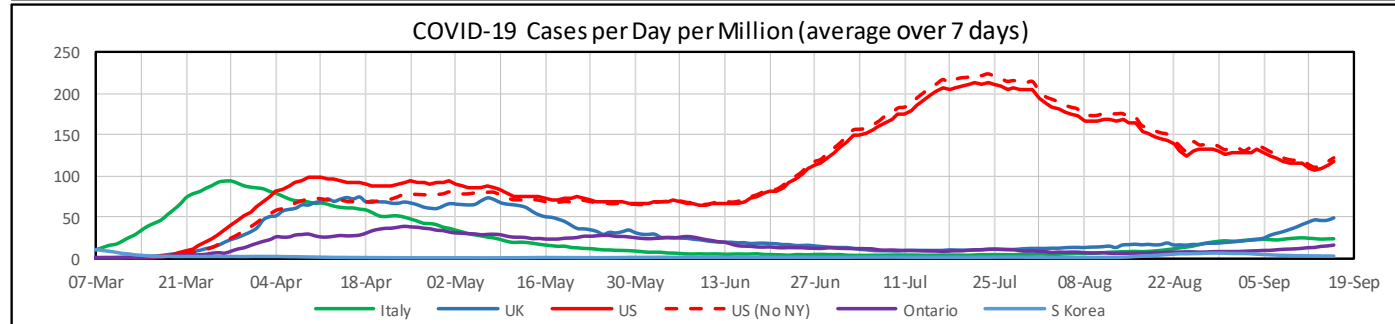
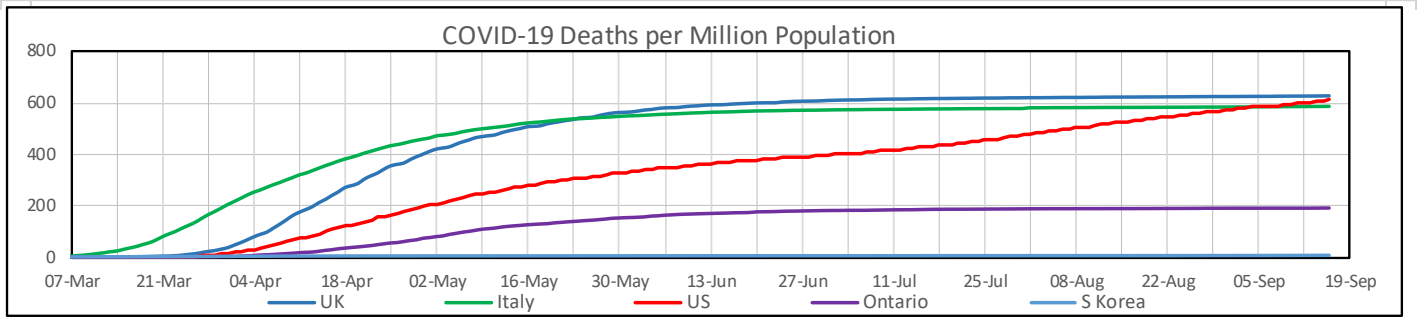
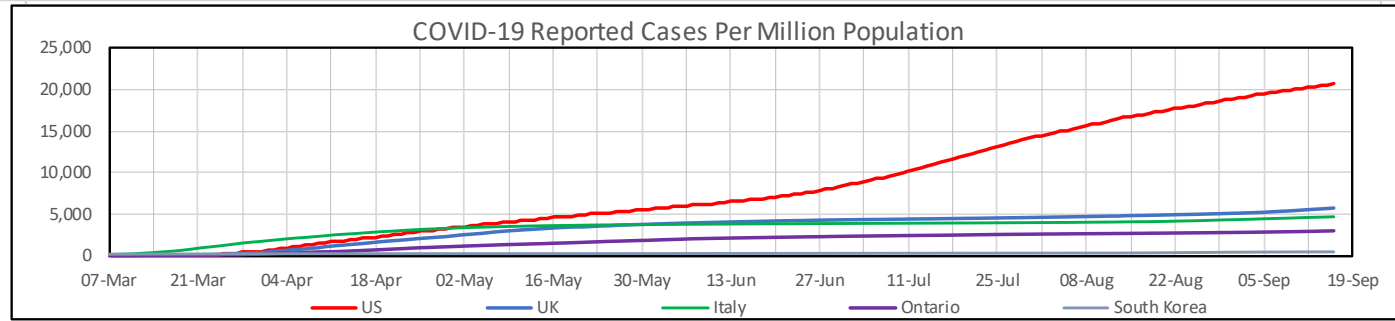


COVID-19 Observations – 17 September 2020 – by Alex Harrington



Hate to say I told you so but a few weeks ago I said things were going up and now we see the government pulling their hair because things are going up. It's inevitable. And I've been harping on testing. And now the Health minister says they're working on increasing testing capacity.

Once again we had time to do things and rather than do it, we sat back and said we're so good because cases are going down. I find it discouraging but not surprising we have not learned from the examples around the world of how this virus will not let up. Forget vaccines, forget cases going down – wear a mask, stay apart – we have another year or more of this. If you don't already, you will soon know people who are sick with this virus. And sooner than you want, you will know someone who died from it.

We are lucky we have only one major population centre in Ontario. They have the majority of the cases. But anywhere there are concentrations of people, especially young people, there are case increases.

The strategy of the government is now clear. Forget about contact tracing and all the other things that some places have implemented to keep case counts and deaths extremely low. Our policy is don't fill the hospitals. Lock down when and where necessary to try to keep the hospitals functioning.

That's not necessarily a bad policy. It's about all that can be done considering we don't have the testing capacity to do anything better. We have more than a year of this ahead of us, and it doesn't seem as if it's been taken seriously. If the next wave surpasses the last one, we will not be in good shape. Even with the little bumps we have now, testing centres are closing because they're at capacity. We run the real risk of new sweeping lockdowns because of limitations in our testing capacity. And don't forget that tests take time. So when we see cases going up, that's from three or four days ago. And the more cases there are, the more people want to get tested, so the testing system slows. We're always looking backwards when we look at testing results.

It's better than the US, where there is no policy – just two sides fighting about whether or not this is real. Their death rate has passed Italy and next week they will pass the UK. Only Spain and Belgium are left to catch to lead the industrialized world. Then they only have Peru and San Marino left to catch to lead the entire world. I assume you all know San Marino is a country – a hilltop city east of Florence and surrounded by Italy.

Even though our cases are rising – the trend is really clear on the charts - the deaths remain low. This can't last if cases get too high, but things can be controlled with masks, distancing and hygiene. So do your part, and we shouldn't have to experience extensive lockdowns.

I get asked questions about the things going on now. People tell me they've heard this or that. Most of it is propaganda, disinformation and lies. I say you have to be careful and research what you hear to verify it. Lately I was told by someone that the research source was The Epoch Times, so it should be good.

No. The Epoch Times was started by a religious group exiled from China. It started opposing the Chinese Communist Party. It has evolved over the years and is now the second largest funder of pro-Trump Facebook advertising, and it supports assorted conspiracy theories leaning to the far right. This is not an impartial research source, although it looks professional and well-researched, and can be deceiving.

It can be very hard to determine if something is true or not. And many sources look and sound authoritative. And when those around you support those sources, it can be difficult to question them. And that's how these things succeed. But some things you just can't believe.

Take care of yourselves and don't endanger others.

COVID-19 Summary Data											
	Tests per Million		Tests per Day		Tests per Reported Case		Cases per Million		Deaths per Million		Deaths Per Case
	Total to Date	Average over Last 7 days	Total	Per Million	Total	Last 7 days	Total to date	Average per day Last 7 days	Total to date	Average per day Last 7 days	Total to date (%)
South Korea	41,723	16,366	319		95	114	439	2.6	7	0.063	1.6%
Italy	99,202	52,859	873		21	37	4,813	23	589	0.2	12.2%
UK	308,869	242,576	3,651		55	77	5,693	48	627	0.2	11.0%
US	269,170	661,715	2,011		13	17	20,751	117	612	2.8	2.9%
Ontario	235,669	31,480	2,161		76	123	3,115	16	194	0.1	6.2%

South Korea, Italy and Canada report people tested. The others report total tests. Total tests can be 10-50% higher than people tested

