A thread by Tom Inglesby  
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Based on studies showing a significant portion of people with COVID infection can spread it asymptomatically or presymptomatically, **@CDCgov** recommends the public wear cloth face masks where social distancing difficult to maintain (e.g. groceries, pharmacies). 2/x

The purpose of wearing a cloth mask in public will be to lower the chance of people spreading the virus (e.g. when speaking, coughing, sneezing), and to contribute to the other measures being taken across the country to slow the spread of the virus. 3/x

The CDC was very clear in saying that the public should not use N95 masks or surgical masks – they must all be preserved for health care workers and other medical first responders. Public masks should be cloth masks. 4/x

Directions for how to make a cloth mask are provided by the Surgeon General and other schematics on that same CDC website. 5/x

The new CDC guidance also makes clear that public mask use should be in addition to all other social distancing measures that have been put in place. People should not think that public mask use provides protection against the virus. 6/x

A report [https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/04/03/826219824/president-trump-says-cdc-now-recommends-americans-wear-cloth-masks-in-public](https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/04/03/826219824/president-trump-says-cdc-now-recommends-americans-wear-cloth-masks-in-public) said **@CDCgov** wanted recommendations made for all Americans, as opposed to final wording which focused on places w widespread community transmission. If true, it’s another example of the costs of **@CDCgov** not communicating directly w the public. 7/x

I think these recommendations should apply to whole country at this point. Given most places aren’t doing Dx testing of outpts w mild symptoms because of insufficient testing capacity, it’s not possible to say a given place isn’t having substantial community transmission. 8/x

Some parts of country still resist large scale distancing & recommendations to stay at home. Waiting for a place to become a “hotspot” to put in place social distancing, stay at home, or public masking recommendations is too late. 9/x
If your city has become a hotspot it means that cases and deaths are rising rapidly, health care workers are struggling to keep up with all the disease, and without enough masks to protect themselves, perhaps too few ventilators for all who need them. 10/x

Social distancing interventions will take 3-4 weeks to start to have high impact. They should not be delayed until a city or state is entering crisis mode. 11/x

In addition to the public, US national leaders should also wear a cloth mask. We have seen leaders in other countries (e.g. Boris Johnson) catch COVID. That could happen in US. Not only could our leaders catch it, but they in turn may asymptptomatically spread it to others. 12/x

This is opportunity for national leaders to lead by example. If public sees a government leader wearing a mask, that will convince many they should also wear a mask. If public sees leaders not following CDC recommendations, they may decide to follow that example. 13/x

In addition to mask use, the format of the White House coronavirus Task Force meetings should change to lower risks of transmission. 14/x

To have that many senior political, scientific and health leaders standing closely together for hrs, holding the same podium, standing shoulder to shoulder, is inconsistent with guidance on keeping at least 6 feet distance, washing hands after high touch surfaces, etc. 15/x

There are 757 cases diagnosed w COVID in Wash DC. Of course many more cases that haven't been diagnosed because too mild to get tested and because some cases asymptomatic. Task Force members have regular interaction w eachother and other people living in D.C. (VA, MD) 16/x

The TF mtgs should be reconfigured so that speakers can be further apart, can wear masks, can be further from press (who should also wear masks). Its important for health of leaders+press participating, and to show daily what country should be doing to slow spread of COVID. 17/x