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With the election behind us, it's time for the US to summon its best, unified effort to contain COVID. So many have been at that since the start, w/ heroism and sacrifice. But the pandemic is now taking full advantage of confusion, anti-science, misinformation, fatigue. 1/x

Things are moving rapidly in wrong direction. Time to set a new path to controlling this pandemic. 2/x

Its easy to see the current US path is failing. National case numbers higher than ever. Many hospitals under rising pressure. More people w/ COVID in ICUs than since early May. >1,000 deaths a day. US in worst 6th of world in daily incidence. National % positives nearing 8%. 3/x

Down this current path lies continued rapid rise in cases. More people on ventilators. Higher numbers of people dying. More survivors with long term consequences. Hospitals under pressure until they can't provide care for everyone anymore. Shortages of tests, PPE. 4/x

This path will push schools to close where they are now open. Will expose more teachers, essential workers, health care professionals to risk of dying. Higher risks to people of color. Will damage economic recovery and any return to normalcy. Time to set a new path. 5/x

Governors should start by speaking loudly, unequivocally about dangers of COVID, how it's getting worse, not better. Too many have been led to believe there's a hoax or that deaths are inflated. We need governors across political spectrum to put an end to those falsehoods. 6/x

Governors who've not required masks for people in public should do that now –evidence is clear masks lower transmission risk. Govs don't let people drive cars in ways that endanger or kill others, they shouldn't let people be out in in public near others without masks. 7/x

Govs should suspend indoor gatherings of > 10 people given risks of transmission, superspreading. Govs should emphasize physical distancing. No large indoor or outdoor events w/ people very close together over time. And need better guidance + \$\$ for better indoor ventilation. 8/x

Where virus is surging, and that's a lot of the US now, bars should be closed, restaurants limited to outdoor seating and take out. Provide economic assistance programs to help owners of those businesses. That's the deal we owe them as they close in order to help all of us. 9/x

Governors should use data they are getting from their disease investigation teams to suspend other activities at highest risk. E.g. see LA's valuable site tracking sources of outbreaks

<https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/3997> All states need this kind of data and should respond to it. 10/x

Testing of symptomatic people will have to be surged higher quickly to keep up w this surge. Frequent rapid testing (molecular+antigen) should be brought on line for universities, schools, nursing homes, prisons, other big institutions, et al as rapidly as possible.11/x

Planning for vaccine distribution is under way around the country, but there has been no money provided by Congress or the Administration for the huge vaccination effort needed. 12/x

If we have a safe, effective vaccine come out of clinical trials in the coming weeks, but we are not fully ready for a vaccination program, that will be a self inflicted national wound. A delay that could cost many thousands of lives. 13/x

We will need clear, science based national messaging on vaccine in the coming weeks and months. No more interference in the scientific process or artificial timelines for products that haven't been proven safe and effective. 14/x

Time for all leaders to come together on communicating about the vaccine. The public was subjected to chaotic inconsistent messages earlier in the fall, and that hurt vaccine confidence. We need to rebuild that confidence now, with science and truth. 15/x

President-elect Biden called for unity last night. He said the US is not blue states or red states, but we are United States. COVID shows us that to be so deeply true. All states are vulnerable to this virus, and all states need to use the same principles to control it. 16/x

Fortunately, the new Administration has publicly committed to a huge new effort to contain COVID. But that Admin does not start for >2 mos. Meantime, the pandemic is moving badly in the wrong direction, and we will need collective action across the country to slow it. 17/x

The country can get control of this pandemic. Other countries have done it. We need to rely on science, civility, pub health, common sense. Leaders need to help people make wise, informed decisions, and to encourage all of our people to act w/ unity of purpose. /end