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Press Release

Commonwealth develops tracker to help countries monitor coronavirus

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The Commonwealth has developed a coronavirus tracker that shows daily cases in member countries.

The tracker collects data from the World Health Organization (WHO) and shows the total confirmed coronavirus cases and deaths in the affected member countries. The tool is designed to help countries prepare and respond to the pandemic.

The disease, caused by coronavirus is known as COVID-19, has infected more than 218,000 people and killed 8,800 in over 100 countries.

Assistant Secretary-General Nabeel Goheer said: "Coronavirus has rapidly spread across the world affecting people, livelihoods and nations. "The Commonwealth, as an organisation that believes in innovation, has prepared this tracker that offers real-time and accurate insight for governments to make informed decisions on this worsening crisis."

As of 23 March, the online tracker shows 12,707 Commonwealth citizens have been infected and 340 have died in some member countries. A Commonwealth analysis suggests access to hospital beds and ventilators are limited in many countries, which could present a major challenge if coronavirus is not contained early enough.

Professor Kathleen McCourt, President of the Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Federation, said: "Commonwealth nurses and midwives are at the forefront of the global Covid-19 response. "They are reporting inadequate access to personal protective equipment; being asked to work in unfamiliar environments; and inconsistent or absent access to testing for healthcare workers. "We are encouraging national organisations to contribute data to the Commonwealth coronavirus tracker. This data will better prepare and equip healthcare workers to tackle this global emergency."

Professor McCourt urged Commonwealth countries to work with health professionals to ensure healthcare workers are protected and able to care for their patients safely and appropriately.

The tracker is part of the Innovation Hub, which Secretary-General Patricia Scotland established in 2018. The online hub promotes the cutting-edge ideas and innovations of the Commonwealth's 2.4 billion people, 54 member countries and 90 accredited organisations.

A Commonwealth's health protection policy toolkit is available on the Innovation Hub. The toolkit looks at the effects of pandemics on global security and offers solutions to strengthen health protection systems.

Notes to Editor

The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 54 independent and equal sovereign countries. It is home to 2.4 billion citizens, of which over 60 per cent are under the age of 30.