



# COVID-19 Update

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May 13, 2020 at 11:30 a.m.

## Overall Trends

- Sadly, we continue to see COVID-19 deaths in our community. To date, 105 people have died in our community.
- I wish to express my deepest condolences to all the families, friends, and caregivers who have lost loved ones to COVID-19.
- There are currently 10 long-term care or retirement homes in outbreak.
- 19 outbreaks in long-term care and retirement homes have been declared over
- 528 people have now recovered from COVID-19 in our community.
- ...
- Although we are seeing signs that the rate of infection is relatively controlled at the moment, we are still in a precarious state.
- The virus can very spread easily and very rapidly, and we have seen that this can have very severe consequences.
- This is why I continue to emphasise our need to:
  - Avoid gatherings
  - Maintain physical distancing
  - Wash our hands diligently
  - Stay at home when we start to feel sick. Even when only mildly so.
  - Consider the use of non-medical masks, such as cloth masks or face coverings, especially if we find ourselves in situations where we may not be able to physically distance from others
  - And, for now, continue to limit the number of times we go out

## **e-Health Centre of Excellent Self-Assessment Tool**

- We have an updated link on our website to access Ontario's online self-assessment tool, courtesy of the eHealth Centre of Excellence for Waterloo Region and Ontario Health West.
- When you click the link on the self-assessment tool, rather than linking you to the Province's general self-assessment tool, the link will take you to the Ontario Health West COVID-19 self-assessment tool ([covid19checkup.ca](https://covid19checkup.ca))
- This assessment asks the same questions as the one created by the Ministry of Health, but it now has the capability to virtually connect patients with a primary care provider if they require a medical follow-up.
- One of the unique qualities of this tool is the functionality for a group of on-call primary care providers to offer support to patients who need to be virtually assessed in a timely manner.
- The process is quick, clear and straightforward:
  - Complete the assessment
  - If a medical assessment is recommended you can book a virtual appointment with a doctor
  - If your own doctor is participating, you can book with that doctor
  - After the virtual appointment you may be referred to an assessment centre
- This is great news because this new tool can help residents connect to their own primary care provider (if they choose to participate) or, for those who don't have a primary care provider or are having difficulty accessing one during this pandemic, to be quickly connected to a primary care provider who can do a virtual assessment as well as a referral for testing.
- The tool will also allow for further follow-up with patients who are self-monitoring their symptoms at home.
- I'd like to thank my colleagues at the e-Health Centre of Excellence for coordinating the availability of this valuable online tool and onboarding primary health care providers in Waterloo Region.

## **Closing Remarks**

- There are many aspects of this virus that are unknown to us, but what we do know is that the public health measures I mentioned at the beginning of this briefing are effective, and these measures have slowed the spread of COVID-19 in Waterloo Region.
- Our path forward needs to remain slow and measured, because moving slowly is ultimately the fastest way.
- So as Waterloo Region slowly re-opens and we continue to practice our new normal of physical distancing, let's continue to work together, and let's continue to practice those precautions.
- Thank you.