



## **COVID-19 Update**

Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, Acting Medical Officer of Health

May 6, 2020 at 11:30 a.m.

### **Overall Trends**

- Sadly, we continue to see COVID-19 deaths in our community. To date, 94 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 14 long-term care or retirement homes in outbreak.
- 395 people have now recovered from COVID-19 in our community.

### **Dashboard Refresh**

- We continue to refine our dashboard with enhanced features where we can.
- To accommodate new information, the layout of our dashboard has changed, but no data has been removed.
- I would just like to highlight for everyone that there are three main tabs to get to all of the data on the dashboard. [Show via screen share.]
- As of this morning, the epi curves on our dashboard will differentiate between cases that are associated with a facility outbreak from cases that are not.
- What it shows is that Waterloo Region's epi-curve is actually a tale of two epi-curves: One showing that community spread has slowed down but the other showing the significant contribution of cases associated with facility outbreaks in long-term care and retirement homes to our case count.
- The greatly expanded testing in the prioritized groups is filling up lab capacity, and the Province is continuing to build up upon that capacity, within the recently expanded lab system.
- This is why our number of confirmed cases, as well as our number of persons tested, will continue to grow.

## **Mental Health Week**

- As this is Mental Health Week in Canada, we have an opportunity to reflect on the huge changes that have taken place in our lives
- Since the beginning of the pandemic, our daily routines have been dramatically transformed.
- Things we once took for granted, like visiting a loved one, or hugging a grandchild, or meeting friends for coffee, are no longer freely accessible to us.
- Significant change can take a toll on our mental well-being, but there are some steps that we can take to help ease the burden.
- I encourage of us to take breaks from the news and social media. This will help us all avoid being overloaded with information.
- I encourage residents to continue to connect with others. Even with physical distancing measures in place, we can still connect with those close to us in meaningful ways through technology. These connections are more important than ever.
- I also encourage all of us to look after our physical health and to make time to unwind.
- We have some good resources that promote mental health well-being on our Public Health website – [region of waterloo DOT ca SLASH PH](#) – and also on Public Health’s social media channels.
- Please visit these resources if you are interested and please continue to prioritize your mental health.

## **Closing Remarks**

- As I mentioned on Monday, we are at an important point in Waterloo Region in our fight against COVID-19.
- We have made significant gains, and we need to hold onto those.
- This is due to the work that we have done collectively by practicing physical distancing, by limiting the number of trips we are making outside, and by washing our hands regularly.
- But the gains we have made are precarious and at risk if we let up too soon.
- The path forward is going to be very slow, much slower than what we’d all like.
- It may be hard to imagine at this point, but “slow” is actually the fastest way.
- We all need to continue to stay the course.
- Thank you.