



BRIEFING NOTE

COVID-19 media briefing notes - Karen Redman April 24, 2020

This continues to be a very difficult time for all of us. We have lost more members of our community to the virus/. My sincerest sympathies go out to their family and friends dealing with these losses.

While we are beginning to see the positive effects of our physical distancing efforts - COVID-19 cases and deaths continue to increase in our long-term care homes and other congregate settings.

I want to send encouragement/ and acknowledge the hard work and sacrifice of the frontline workers at these facilities and am grateful for the collaboration and support within our local health care system.

Together, we will get these outbreaks under control.

Ramadan

As the holy month of Ramadan begins in Waterloo Region, I realise that celebrating will seem very different this year. I'm sure the inability to pray together and celebrate as a community will be keenly felt.

However, it is still important to continue to practice physical distancing/ and I encourage those who celebrate to connect with family and friends **virtually**.

Towards returning to normal

No one wants our community to return to normal more than I do.

I think we are all anxious to get back to our familiar lives, but we have to do it safely and let our strong team of medical advisors guide us.



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Although all of your physical distancing efforts are showing some success, now is not the time to let up our efforts.

Before we can take the next steps/, we need to have better control over the virus in our community.

While community leaders are beginning to plan for a time when we can begin to return to normal/, the delicate balance of relaxing physical distancing measures and continuing to slow the spread of the virus in the community and especially in our long-term care settings will have to be weighed carefully.

It is our collective responsibility to protect our citizens/ and our essential workers/ who keep us safe.

I would like to remind everyone /that under the provincial emergency order/ gatherings of more than five people are banned.

Mental Health

I know this has been an exceptionally anxious/ and stressful time for everyone and /we all cope with stress differently.

Personally,/ I try to find time each day to connect with family – especially my grandchildren/, to try to get outside for a walk/ or think of one thing that I'm thankful for.

If you are feeling overwhelmed, please reach out through the community resources available to you by phone or online.

- There are resources on the Public Health Section of the Region's website.



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- The Canadian Mental Health Association for Waterloo Wellington has also launched a new website at [here4help.ca](https://www.here4help.ca) that has useful tools and techniques to manage the stresses of dealing with COVID-19.
- If you know of anyone who is in crisis or who needs service/, please direct them to 1-844-HERE247.

Please remember that we are all in this **together** and **many of us are likely feeling the same way about this situation - you are not alone**

Thank you for:

- limiting the times you leave your house,
- the creative ways you have found to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries and milestones,
- for changing the way you celebrate religious holidays,
- for supporting our frontline workers and
- for keeping everyone safe.

Hang in there – together, **we've got this!**



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