COVID-19 Update

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Public Health and Emergency Services
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Highlights

- Case rates, hospitalizations and outbreaks in Waterloo Region continue to remain stable at this time.
- In our local case data, we continue to see full vaccination provides strong protection against COVID-19 and severe outcomes.
- If you haven’t gotten your first dose – it’s not too late.
- If you haven’t gotten your second dose, don’t delay. Get your second dose as soon as you are eligible.

Overall trends

- Case rates, hospitalizations and outbreaks in Waterloo Region continue to remain stable at this time.
- As of yesterday, our current case rate sits at approximately 22 cases per 100,000 per week.
- Rates across Ontario are now rising, but remain relatively low at this time while we remain in Step 3 of the Provincial Reopening Plan.
- Public health measures are still very important, combined with vaccines, to slow the spread of the Delta variant.
- It’s important for everyone, including those who are fully vaccinated, to avoid closed spaces and crowded places, physically distance and wear masks in indoor settings or in crowded outdoor settings, and stay at home and get tested if you develop symptoms.

Vaccination status trends

- In our local case data, we continue to see full vaccination provides strong protection against COVID-19 and severe outcomes.
- Locally, for all COVID-19 cases since May 1
  - 72% of cases were not vaccinated
  - 24.7% were partially vaccinated or not yet fully protected by their vaccination.
3.3% were fully vaccinated or “breakthrough cases”.

- The majority of hospitalizations, 71.6% were in individuals who were not vaccinated.
  - 23.9% were in partially vaccinated or those not yet fully protected by their vaccination.
  - 4.6% of hospitalizations were in fully vaccinated persons.
- Of reported deaths in our community since May 1, 76.5% were not vaccinated or not yet protected by their vaccination.
  - Eight deaths were among fully vaccinated individuals.
  - All individuals were in their 80s or older and, sadly, we know that this age group has been more vulnerable to severe outcomes.

**Provincial changes**

- Data available to date does show that for the general population, a complete two-dose series of COVID-19 vaccine provides strong protection against infection and severe outcomes, including against the Delta variant.
  - Those most vulnerable to severe outcomes are now eligible to receive a third dose.
  - This includes residents of LTC homes, high risk retirement homes, and the following qualifying medical conditions:
    - Transplant recipients
    - Patients with hematological cancers on active treatment
    - Recipients of an anti-CD20 agent
  - These groups were identified as the most vulnerable and for whom data suggests may have a suboptimal or waning immune response and have an increased risk of COVID-19 infection.
- Eligibility was also expanded to all individuals born in 2009, including those who have not yet turned 12.
- Every single person who gets vaccinated helps to build up our wall of protection against COVID-19 and the Delta variant.
  - This wall protects those who are not yet eligible for the vaccine and those who are more vulnerable to severe outcomes.
- If you haven’t gotten your first dose – it’s not too late.
- If you haven’t gotten your second dose, don’t delay. Get your second dose as soon as you are eligible.

**Closing remarks**

- Thank you to everyone who has gotten their vaccine or helped another make an appointment or walk-in to get their vaccine.
- We have made great progress this summer in driving our vaccination rates up, but we’re not done yet.
- If you know someone who is waiting – talk to them about why you chose to get vaccinated and talk to them about your experience.
- It’s easier than ever to get your vaccine and we have capacity at our clinics, pop-up sites, and at many pharmacies and primary care offices across the Region.
• Waterloo Region is a caring and compassionate community.
• By working together, we can keep driving our vaccination rates higher, keep protecting each other with our public health precautions, and limit the spread of COVID-19 in our community.
• Thank you.