



Region of Waterloo
PUBLIC HEALTH AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES

COVID-19 Update

Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, Commissioner and Medical Officer of Health
Public Health and Emergency Services
August 27, 2021

Highlights

- Our local trends have remained relatively stable to date, although we can expect our case rates may rise and we'll need to remain vigilant.
- For families with children who are not yet eligible, it is important that every other family member is fully vaccinated, to reduce the risk for those who are not yet eligible.
- We have made progress towards slowing COVID-19 in our community and building the wall of protection with high vaccination rates but we cannot take that progress for granted.

Overall trends

- Our local trends have remained relatively stable to date, although we can expect our case rates may rise and we'll need to remain vigilant.
- As of yesterday's update, our case rate continues to sit at approximately 22 cases per 100,000 per week. Since then, however, we have started to see a higher number of case reports coming in, so our numbers may be starting to trend higher. We are seeing in our case and contact investigations greater social interactions among residents, so this would not be unexpected.
- Our hospitalizations and outbreaks also remain relatively stable at this time.
- Delta can spread rapidly and it continues to circulate in our community and across Ontario.
- We need to continue increasing our vaccination rates and keep practicing our public health precautions.

Getting ready for back to school

- All youth born in 2009 and earlier are eligible to get the vaccine. We encourage all youth, and their families to get fully vaccinated.
- For families with children who are not yet eligible, it is important that every other family member is fully vaccinated, to reduce the risk for those who are not yet eligible.

- There are still many opportunities this weekend and next week, before school starts to get vaccinated.
- As students and their families start to get ready for return to school there are things you can do now, to feel more prepared:
 - Begin adjusting sleep schedules.
 - Get back to routines, practice your morning routine, including screening your child for symptoms.
 - Practice proper hand hygiene with your child.
 - Practice wearing a mask for longer periods of time.
 - Talk to your kids about what to expect.
 - Have a plan, in case your child needs to stay home.
 - Take care of yourself to manage your own stress.
- We continue to closely with our local school boards to support their implementation of provincial guidance.

Closing remarks

- We have made great progress in our community in building our vaccine wall of protection. We should be proud of our progress, as it is preventing a lot more severe illness that would have otherwise occurred, and is allowing our economy and society to be as open as it is now.
- But we need to keep going. Delta is the most formidable variant we have experienced. We've seen that locally here; we're now seeing that in multiple, other areas of the Province and country.
- Earlier this week, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health mentioned that individuals who are unvaccinated are eight times more likely to be cases than people who are vaccinated. And people who are unvaccinated are 29 times more likely to be in hospital and 48 times more likely to be a patient in the intensive care unit because of COVID infection compared with people who are vaccinated.
- For long-term control of COVID-19 given the higher transmissibility of Delta, we need higher immunization rates. That is why we need to keep up with our public health precautions while we continue to build our community immunization rates.
- I would like to remind residents of the importance of maintaining the protective measures of physical distancing, masking, and limiting contacts in indoor settings.
- Together, with vaccines, protective measures work to limit and control the spread of COVID-19.
- We all continue to have a role to play and I appreciate all of your efforts.
- Thank you.