



Region of Waterloo
PUBLIC HEALTH AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES

COVID-19 Update

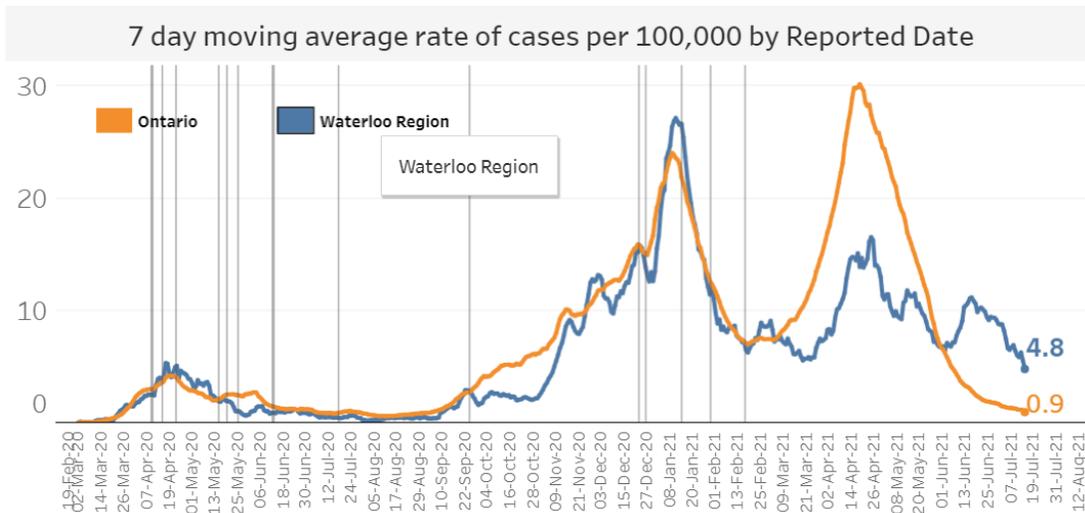
Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, Commissioner and Medical Officer of Health
Public Health and Emergency Services
July 16, 2021

Highlights

- We continue to see improvements in our public health and health care indicators.
- Thanks to our community – our vaccine ramp-up was a huge success.
 - When our vaccine dashboard refreshes later today, you will see that 80% of all residents 12 and older have received a first dose. Waterloo Region has one of the highest first dose coverage rates in Ontario.
- As we enter Step 3, we now have to **work together to safely re-open, and stay open.**
 - We all have a role in this.
 - Please remember:
 - If you go to work when you are not feeling well, you are putting others at risk.
 - If you send a child to camp with symptoms, they can spread COVID-19 to other kids and staff --- and that group of children will have to be dismissed, which hurts everyone.
 - If you increase your contacts without taking precautions, you can spread COVID-19 across our community.
 - Each of our daily actions can help us return to -- and enjoy -- everything our incredible community has to offer.

Overall trends

- We continue to see improvements in our public health and health care indicators.
- Our incidence rate is now at our lowest since early November, 2020



- We also successfully ramped up our vaccination roll-out and have pushed our first dose coverage to being one of the highest in Ontario at this time.
- Case rates, number of active cases and number of active outbreaks continue to slowly decline.
- Hospitalizations have also started to decrease and remain stable at this time.
- With the very high transmissibility and aggressiveness of the Delta variant, the spread is not expected to slow down quickly, and we could have flare-up's
- **Increasing vaccination rates and continuing to follow public health measures is paramount to our continued success in reopening.**

Public health measures remain critical

- Public health measures continue to play a critical role in limiting and controlling the spread of COVID-19.
- We can reopen and limit the spread of the Delta variant if:
 - We continue to get vaccinated as soon as we're eligible.
 - We continue to practice public health measures diligently:
 - Avoid enclosed spaces (especially with poor ventilation) and crowded places.
 - When indoors, ensure the space is well ventilated, and continue to wear masks and physically distance.
 - Where possible, favour the outdoors for permitted activities.
- Be cautious as you add more activities for you and your family
 - Consider who you would need to identify if you are exposed to or contract COVID-19.
 - Consider those in your life who are at risk – such as those who are most at-risk for serious illness as a result of COVID-19 or those who cannot be vaccinated yet.
- All residents are reminded of the importance of not attending work or group activities such as camp when they or their children are symptomatic.
- With the opening of camps, we are seeing more cases and outbreaks in camps
 - If you or someone in your household is experiencing any new symptoms of COVID-19, stay home.

- If you are experiencing symptoms, self-isolate from household members and schedule an appointment for testing at a local assessment centre.
- If you cannot safely isolate at home, our Isolation Site is available at no cost.

Closing remarks

- Step 3 will increase the risks of spread. All Waterloo Region residents should get their second dose as soon as they can.
 - **If you have an appointment booked for later in the summer or fall, please move up your appointment to an earlier date.**
 - You may book as early as 28 days if your first dose was Moderna or Pfizer and anyone who received AstraZeneca as their first dose is already eligible to receive their second dose.
- Full immunization – two doses and two weeks – is our best protection against COVID-19 and the Delta variant. **Don't delay your second dose.**
- As we enter Step 3, we now have to **work together to safely re-open, and stay open.**
 - We all have a role in this.
 - Please remember:
 - If you go to work when you are not feeling well, you are putting others at risk.
 - If you send a child to camp with symptoms, they can spread COVID-19 to other kids and staff --- and the whole group will have to be dismissed, which hurts everyone.
 - If you increase your contacts without taking precautions, you can spread COVID-19 across our community.
 - Each of our daily actions can help us return to -- and enjoy -- everything our incredible community has to offer.
- Thank-you Waterloo Region residents for stepping up to push back Delta. And allowing us to move forward towards reopening.
- **It's important that we do not let up now.**
- We've had great success but **we still have a ways to go.**
- Let's keep moving forward!