Region of Waterloo
PUBLIC HEALTH AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES

COVID-19 Update
Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, Acting Medical Officer of Health

June 30, 2020 at 11:30 a.m.

Dashboard update

- As of this morning's update we have added a new feature on our dashboard.
- You can now see the distribution of cases, by neighbourhood, across Waterloo Region.
- The map gives the option to filter for outbreak-related or non-outbreak related cases.
    - Previously we have used two categories, outbreak and community, where community cases included close contact with another case, from travel, or an unknown source.
    - We will now be using the term non-outbreak related cases for these cases
    - Neighbourhoods with five cases or less have been not been published on the dashboard to protect personal health information.
- You will notice that two neighbourhoods stand out due to the influence of long-term care/ retirement home outbreaks:
- The map has an option that allows you to see the rates excluding the influence of outbreaks and you will see that the rates are much more even across neighbourhoods when they are excluded.
- We are cognizant that when attention is drawn to an area that has more cases, it can create an erroneous impression or stigma that that's where the virus and infectious people are.
- I want to be clear – **all areas of Waterloo Region are affected by COVID-19**.
    - This map represents where positive cases live, but **exposure to cases could happen anywhere** in the region.
    - In addition, the number of positive cases in each neighbourhood has been **significantly influenced by testing guidance**, especially in earlier stages of the COVID-19 response that limited testing to only certain groups and settings at greater risk, such as long-term care and retirement homes.

o Areas with lower rates of COVID-19 cases should not be considered "safer"; it should be assumed that the risk of acquiring COVID-19 is present throughout Waterloo Region.
o We have to practice the recommended public health measures everywhere in the region.

Overall Trends

- We continue to see cases reported, but overall the status of COVID-19 in our community is stable.
- As of 10:30 a.m. this morning, we have 89 active cases in Waterloo Region.
- The percentage of those tested who test positive however has continued to decrease.
- A total of 34,418 tests have been performed in Waterloo Region with positive results for approximately 3.7 per cent of all tests.
  o Testing volumes have continued to increase.
  o The process used for collecting this data involves connecting with each of the assessment centres for the aggregate test count numbers and we may not receive daily counts, we may receive numbers for multiple days.
  o To better manage the time needed to refresh this indicator, it will be updated on the dashboard on Tuesdays and Fridays going forward.
- A total of 1,094 cases or 84 per cent of positive cases in Waterloo Region are now resolved.
- Outbreaks in long-term care home and retirement homes are also stable. There is currently one outbreak in this type of setting.
  o The outbreak at Forest Heights has been declared over.
  o Although there were recently four additional staff cases picked up as part of very close monitoring and increased testing of staff in long-term care homes, we've carefully assessed these cases and do not believe they are associated with a risk of ongoing spread.
  o All other recent tests on residents and staff have not identified further cases.
  o The outbreak has been well controlled for a few weeks.
  o The outbreak is now over.
- We do not currently have any active outbreaks in other congregate settings or workplace settings.
- Sadly, we have had a recent COVID-19 related death in our community. I wish to express my deepest condolences to the family and loves ones.

- It is sadly not unexpected given the continued circulation of the virus. We know that it has the potential to cause serious illness, and death, which is why I continue to ask residents to follow all public health measures to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

Closing remarks

- We must not let up physical distancing, wearing a mask when physical distancing cannot be guaranteed, hand washing, and self-isolating and getting tested if we develop symptoms.
- The virus is spread by people and it can be prevented.
- With Canada Day tomorrow, it is also essential that people continue to follow the provincial order, and not gather with more than 10 people.
  - Even at such gatherings, physical distancing must be maintained between anyone from different social circles or household bubbles.
  - When distancing cannot be maintained, masks are strongly recommended.
- The health and wellbeing of our community depends on everyone doing their part, being kind and considerate to each other, and helping one another practice these measures and living our 'new normal'.
- Thank you.