



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
June 30, 2021

Highlights

- The delta variant is the greatest adversary our community has faced during this pandemic.
- It is the most transmissible and aggressive variant we have experienced.
- Without public health measures and vaccination to control spread, on average, Delta goes from 1 person to 6 to 36 to 216 to 1,296 rapidly. This is how aggressive Delta is. It will take some time for the spread to slow.
- The good news is - **the vaccine roll-out is working** – almost 80% of residents have had a first dose, more than 30% a second dose.
- As we **continue to make it easier for residents to get vaccinated**, we are building a stronger wall of defense against the Delta variant.
- The next couple of weeks are critical. Thank you to our community for stepping up together to get through this.
- We need to stay the course with our plan.
- I have issued instructions under the Reopening Act for Waterloo Region, posted on our website, to stay in Step 1 for approximately a couple of weeks longer.
- This is a strategic decision to provide us the best chance to re-open and stay open.

Where are we seeing Delta?

- The Delta variant is prevalent throughout the region and is not limited to one demographic.
- We are also seeing rising infection rates in the younger age groups, including those under 20.
- Over the last month, close contact transmission has been the most frequent type of transmission, accounting for more than half of all cases locally.
- This means the variant is spreading through close contact with friends, coworkers, family, neighbours, etc.

- Over the last month, all outbreak-related cases accounted for a small percentage, approximately 13 per cent, of all cases.
- Delta continues to mostly impact those who are unvaccinated.

What you can do

- Get your vaccine – and encourage others to do the same.
- If you have any symptoms – get tested at an assessment centre.
- If you have any symptoms – self-isolate at home. This protects your friends, family, and community.
- Remember:
 - Rapid tests cannot be used if you are experiencing symptoms or have been identified as a high risk contact.
 - Rapid tests are designed to be used for frequent, regular, asymptomatic testing as part of workplace safety programs, as a complement, not a replacement, for the regular test.

Closing

- I am grateful for everyone in the community who is working together to rapidly ramp up vaccination efforts. It truly is a team effort.
- Our local hospitals, primary care providers, pharmacies, and a multitude of staff and volunteers are all working together to ramp up to meet the demand locally.
- A special thanks to all our residents who have stepped up to get vaccinated. You are not only building that wall of protection for yourselves and your loved ones but also for Waterloo Region as a whole.
- This community is rallying together in our time of need. The fight against Delta is a difficult one, at the end of a very long road, but we will overcome this.
- Again, the good news is - **the vaccine roll-out is working.**
- As we **continue to make it easier for residents to get vaccinated**, we will get through this, together.
- Thank-you so much for your patience, your kindness and for protecting one another.