



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
October 1, 2021

Highlights

- We continue to see relative stability in our local trends as we have over the last few weeks.
- The risk of contracting COVID-19, being hospitalized, and entering the ICU is much higher for people who are not vaccinated.
- Close contact is the main way that COVID-19 is spread in our community. Since May 1st, close contact transmission accounts for more than 50 per cent of all cases.

Overall trends

- At this time, we continue to see relative stability in our local trends as we have over the last few weeks.
- As of yesterday's update our weekly case rate is approximately 25 cases per 100,000 per week
- We are currently managing 149 active cases and 8 outbreaks.
- We must remain committed to what is working – vaccination and public health measures – to keep Delta under control.
- Delta is formidable and it will spread easily when given the opportunity.

Ontario Science Table update

- Earlier this week, the Ontario Science Table provided an update on Ontario's situation.
- New cases, hospitalizations, and ICU occupancy are not increasing but there is a wide range of projections for the coming months due to people spending more time indoors together, as the weather becomes colder.
- The risk of contracting COVID-19, being hospitalized, and entering the ICU is much higher for people who are unvaccinated.
 - If you are unvaccinated, your risk for infection is 7 times higher, your risk for hospitalization is 25 times higher, and your risk for ICU care is 60 times higher than those who are fully vaccinated.

- Vaccination is the most powerful tool available to reduce the risks associated with COVID-19, particularly the risk of severe illness or worse.
- As the weather becomes colder, the Ontario Science Table modelling shows that, if we are able to limit close contacts, we will better control the spread of COVID-19.
- Close contact is the main way that COVID-19 is spread in our community. Since May 1st, close contact transmission accounts for more than 50 per cent of all cases.
- We can all limit unprotected, close contact and reduce the opportunity for COVID-19 to spread with the public health principles of:
 - Practicing physical distance.
 - Wearing a face covering.
 - If you are gathering in-person – keeping the group small and gathering outdoors instead of indoors when possible.
 - Staying home and getting tested if you have symptoms, even if they are mild.

Closing remarks

- We've made tremendous progress in our community.
- We were one of the first communities in Ontario to experience a surge in cases due to the Delta variant.
- Our community came together to push back against the surge of Delta by getting vaccinated and continuing to practice public health precautions.
- I appreciate that many may be feeling tired of practicing public health precautions. But in the face of the Delta variant, and while we continue to increase the level of vaccination coverage in our community, public health precautions remain an important tool for controlling the spread of Delta, even for those who are fully vaccinated.
- Without these precautions, we risk a very difficult fall and winter. With these precautions, we can maintain control over Delta.
- Let's keep doing what we can to protect ourselves, our loved ones, and our community. I'm truly very grateful to so many in our community who have stepped up to protect one another.
- Thank you.