



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 15, 2021

Highlights

- Our COVID-19 trends have been stable or slowly decreasing in the last few weeks.
- These are encouraging signs that are due to residents stepping up to be vaccinated and continuing to adhere to public health practices to protect one another.
- Delta will remain a risk, due to its high transmissibility, especially to groups of people who remain unvaccinated.
 - We still have close to 160,000 (158,635) residents of Waterloo Region who have not yet been fully immunized or are not yet eligible for the vaccine.
 - Therefore, it remains critical that we maintain certain public health precautions while we continue to work towards the highest rates of immunization possible in our community.

Overall trends

- Our case rates have been on a stable or slowly decreasing trend in the last few weeks.
- We are seeing similar trends in regards to hospitalizations and outbreaks.
- Although this is encouraging news, we need to keep our foot on the gas pedal – we need to continue our efforts to increase our community immunity over the coming weeks and months.
 - Approximately 77,000 eligible residents are not yet fully immunized.
 - Approximately 82,000 children under 12 years of age are not yet eligible for the vaccine.
- If you are not vaccinated yet, it is not too late to get the vaccine. It will help protect you, those you love, and those who cannot yet receive a vaccine.

Dashboard updates – returning to Monday to Fridays

- As of this weekend (Oct 16-17), we will no longer be updating the COVID-19 daily case counts and Summary Dashboard on weekends. With our COVID-19 situation relatively stable, this will give our staff more time to rest.
- We will continue to update case numbers and our dashboard Monday to Friday at 1:30 pm with data that are current as of 11:59 p.m. the previous day.

Third-dose expansion

- Last week, the Province announced third doses would be available for all seniors living in congregate settings.
- We will be offering third doses to these individuals across Waterloo Region in the coming weeks.
- We have already offered third doses to residents living in all long-term care homes.

Indoor activities

- As cooler weather drives more of our activities indoors, please remember to gather with the fewest people possible.
 - Do not exceed the indoor gathering limit of 25 people.
 - Do not attend an event if you have any symptoms, even mild ones.
 - Ensure your indoor setting is well ventilated.
 - If people are unvaccinated, partially vaccinated, or their vaccination status is unknown, you should wear a face covering and physically distance.

Proof of vaccination

- As a reminder, changes to the provincial proof of vaccination requirements for **weddings and funerals** went into effect on Wednesday, October 13:
 - Proof of vaccination or an eligible exemption is required to attend a social gathering associated with a wedding service, rite or ceremony.
 - Proof of vaccination or an eligible exemption is also required to attend a social gathering associated with a funeral service, rite or ceremony.
 - Proof of a negative COVID-19 test within the previous 48 hours is no longer permitted as an alternative to proof of vaccination.

Closing remarks

- The best way to protect those not yet eligible to be vaccinated is to:
 - Immunize all those around them; and
 - Keep community spread low.
- We need to keep working together so we can achieve the highest possible immunization rates in our community and better protect those who are not yet eligible for a vaccine.
- Thank you for protecting yourself and your loved ones, and through your actions, allowing our community to experience more freedoms.