



# **SPEAKING NOTES**

## **COVID-19 Community Update – Chair Karen Redman June 25, 2021**

### **Welcome**

Good morning everyone, and welcome to this week's community update.

### **Saskatchewan Residential School**

I want to begin today by taking a moment to reflect on the news of 751 unmarked graves found in Saskatchewan on the site of a former residential school. I cannot fathom the hurt and the sadness felt by the Cowesses First Nation, or by Indigenous communities across Canada, including in Waterloo Region.

Our hearts go out to Indigenous communities in Waterloo Region and across the country.

For many of us, the most important thing we can do right now is listen. I would encourage residents to listen to the many Indigenous voices in our Region and across the country for their perspective.

If you need someone to talk to, please reach out to the National Indian Residential School Crisis Line, which is available 24 hours a day at 1-866-925-4419.

### **COVID-19**

Regrettably, over the last two weeks, the Delta variant has presented an enormous challenge for our Region. It is not only in congregate settings and workplace outbreaks, but across our community. It is putting increased strain on our hospitals and healthcare system.



# SPEAKING NOTES

As announced yesterday, the Region of Waterloo will delay moving to Step 2 of the provincial reopening framework until mid-July. This decision was made in order for us to reopen and stay open.

I understand the considerable angst and frustration this will cause many in our community, particularly small business owners.

We need more time to get vaccines in arms. Due to their prioritization in previous months, the previous hotspots in the GTA have had an extra supply of vaccines. We are doing well with vaccinations. We need the vaccines to take effect against Delta – reducing hospitalizations and case rates.

We have asked the province for six mobile teams to help add vaccination capacity. So far, one has arrived and began at 99 Regina yesterday. Another is on its way. We need 4 more.

The province has also pledged additional staffing and vaccine supports, so we look forward to seeing details and hope they arrive soon. The situation is serious.

We have been in constant dialogue with the province over the past weeks advocating for more support. We have asked for more vaccines for weeks. We are the canary in the coalmine. A failed reopening here risks Delta spread elsewhere. We want to reopen and stay open.

We will hear more on this shortly from Dr. Wang and Deputy Hilton, as well as our guests Lee Fairclough, President of St. Mary's General Hospital, and Vickie Murray, Director of Regional Vaccine Services and Integrated Director of Pharmacy Services, Grand River Hospital and St. Mary's General Hospital.



# **SPEAKING NOTES**

## **Enforcement Update**

Before turning it over to Dr. Wang, I will provide a short enforcement update.

There was 1 charge for the reporting period of June 17-June 23, and 5 charges from the previous reporting period.

Waterloo Region Police Services issues 2 summons under the Reopening Ontario Act for a gathering in Waterloo Town Square on May 30, with fines to be determined in court.

There were also 4 tickets issued for gatherings at private residences, each payable at 880 dollars. 1 was issued by City of Kitchener by-law and 3 were issued by City of Cambridge by-law.

I will now turn things over to Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, the Region's Medical Officer of Health, who has an update on the COVID-19 situation in our community.

## **Update from Dr. Wang.**

Thank you, Dr. Wang. We understand the message – we need time and we need vaccines so that we can reopen and stay open.

Deputy Hilton and Vickie Murray will now provide us with an update on the vaccine rollout.

## **Update from Deputy Hilton and Vickie Murray.**

Thank you, Deputy Hilton and Vickie.

I will now invite Lee Fairclough to provide an update on the situation in our local hospitals.

## **Update from Lee Fairclough.**



# **SPEAKING NOTES**

Thank you Lee.

We will now take media questions.

## **Media Q&A**

### **Extro**

Thank you everyone for joining us today. We hope to see you again next Friday. Have a safe and healthy weekend.