

## KEY UPDATES FROM THE OCTOBER 28, 2020 TORONTO REGION PLANNING & OPERATIONS TABLE

### WEEKLY COVID SUMMARY FOR ONTARIO AND TORONTO

- Ontario reported more than 1,000 new COVID-19 cases for the first time this past weekend, setting a record for the number of infections in a single day.
- The COVID-19 provincial case rate for last week is 40.9 cases per 100,000
- There are five public health units (Peel, Toronto, Ottawa, Eastern Ontario and York) reporting a higher case rate than the provincial average.
- Percent of patients positive in the City of Toronto at 4.4% (Ontario's rate at 2.7%).
- We continue to see high numbers of COVID cases - approximately 308 cases per day in Toronto over the past 7 days.
- Toronto Region is meeting targets for testing turnaround times - 84% of tests were completed within 48 hrs over the past week.
- 6 Hospitals, 22 Long-Term Care Homes, 7 Retirement Homes, 0 Shelters, 7 Schools and 4 daycares currently in an outbreak in the City of Toronto
- North York West and Scarborough South sub-regions had the highest positivity rates. Scarborough South, East Toronto and North York West reported the highest increase in positivity rate since last week
- Toronto Public Health is working with partners in the North West region of the city to understand better transmission and provide corresponding additional supports, including food insecurity supports and housing
- Collaborating with the TTC to increase bus routes in neighbourhoods with high case counts and low testing. TTC has also partnered to help distribute over a million masks to its riders, including a great focus on North West Toronto
- Preparations have begun on the logistics of vaccine distribution and early indicators are suggesting mid-winter at the earliest for the first COVID- 19 immunization program
- Toronto Public Health continues to survey experiences and lessons learned in other jurisdictions such as B.C. and Belgium
- Toronto Public Health has shifted away from the case and contact tracing for individuals (once case counts reach over 300 the effectiveness is diminished) to investigating super spreader events and inspections that support businesses to reopen safely

## ONTARIO HEALTH TORONTO REGION UPDATES

- There has been significant discussion about targeted community testing to ensure considerations are taken to not only address testing needs but is inclusive of the broader context of the community, including the social determinants of health which may be presenting barriers to testing
- As the weather changes, pop-ups will be unable to use outdoor spaces; Toronto Region and its testing partners are engaging the City of Toronto to see where space can be leveraged for indoor testing
- Acute occupancy is at 90% (a slight increase since last week). 10 hospitals are above 85% occupancy. Within the Toronto region, acute occupancy is at 92%
- As of October 26, there were 733 ALC open cases in acute care with 26% waiting for LTC. There are 449 ALC open cases in post-acute care, with 57% waiting for LTC
- This is a slight decrease in year over year volumes based on the seven-day average. We will continue to monitor for any increase in activity as COVID cases rise and flu season nears
- The Ministry of Health announced additional bedded capacity across the province, including over 300 beds in Toronto region: this allocation is a mix of acute, medical, surgical beds, critical care and beds for alternate health facilities
- The Region has received funding from Ministry of Health (MOH) to support surgical and diagnostic imaging backlogs, investments for home and community care related to virtual care and remote monitoring programs, and increased capacity in the community sector to expand services for socially isolated people, pandemic related expenses, screening, IPAC, etc. Toronto Region will work with eligible HSPs on funding allocation, process and details.
- The Government has also made additional investments in mental health and addiction services including:
  - mobile crisis supports
  - safe beds
  - addiction withdrawal supports
  - day and evening treatments for addictions and substance use treatment.
- The Toronto Region is also collaborating with the Ministry on a call for applicants for the *Back to Home Program* for housing assistance and support services to expand the MOH's supportive housing program for individuals with serious mental health and/or addictions issues.

## FLU PLANNING

- Toronto Region worked with local Ontario Health Teams to develop coordinated flu and vaccination plans during the summer to initiate flu planning

- Flu planning that was initiated in the summer and vaccination campaigns will continue well into December and January
- OHT project leads were provided with maps of all the current pharmacies providing flu shots by sub-region to identify geographic gaps in order to assist with their local planning
- Each OHT is taking a targeted approach based on local need, including drive-through clinics and community pop-up (time-limited) clinics to increase access to vulnerable populations and less mobile clients
- Cross-sectoral partners have collaborated to share physical spaces and staffing to set up flu clinics and OHTs are reaching out to nursing schools to leverage nursing students as staffing resources
- Toronto Region Home and Community Care and Toronto Paramedic Services have partnered to increase awareness and access for homecare clients and families. Toronto Paramedic Services provides in-home vaccination for homebound clients
- Toronto Public Health is hosting flu vaccination clinics at the Scarborough Town Centre, North York Memorial Hall, Metro Toronto Convention Centre and Carmine Stefano Community Centre. All flu vaccination clinics are by [appointment only](#).

## STATUS UPDATES

- **Primary Care:** Primary Care is supportive of the initiatives underway to support flu immunization and reports that one million more flu shots were distributed across Ontario than the year previous. Primary care billing data indicates that primary care continues to see patients leveraging virtual options
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Locally, the PPE table is focusing on risk mitigation and sending out supplies to LTCH who are able to access an up to eight-week supply of PPE (a one-time commitment). Continue to fill requests from all sectors. The team is working to distribute swabs across the testing sites and managing the N95 mask stockpile
- **Community Care:**
  - **Home Care:** Local home care representatives are taking part in a home-based testing pilot with Toronto Central LHIN for clients who cannot get out to testing centres and reporting early success. The sector continues to work through resuming school-based rehab services (non-LHIN funded)
  - **Community and Mental Health and Addiction Services:** The community-based sector continues to work with staff around the appropriate use of N95 masks and other PPE.
  - **Shelter:** There was a large intake of about 30-40 clients at the isolation centres, but good system capacity remains overall.
  - **Schools:** The Toronto Region is working collaboratively with Toronto Public Health and the respective school boards to support testing for schools. Conversations are underway to enable testing in school for key populations and

when greater access is required. Information on common practices for cleaning and permits is being shared. Working with TDSB on the necessary permits and cleaning requirements.

- **Hospital:** Hospitals are reporting occupancy and volumes that are similar to the experience of wave 1, with backlogs in the emergency department, predominately in non-COVID clinical activity. Several hospitals are reporting outbreaks, some of which may involve early false negative test results and staff to staff transmissions. Changes to the Hospital weekly attestations in the Toronto Region are planned for next week as we pivot to include more of a narrative that aims to provide increased situational awareness, enabling informed adjustments in the hospital sector regionally as needed.
- **Infection, Prevention and Control (IPAC):** The Toronto Region Long-Term Care IPAC Coordination Table developed an interim accountability framework to clarify roles and responsibilities for the hub model that applies to hospital partners, Toronto Public Health and the long-term care and retirement homes in need of support.
- **Long-term Care and Retirement Homes:** The sector is reporting health human resource issues related to fatigue and these issues are being compounded by the single facility directives which limit a home's ability to leverage part-time staff for support. Overall access to PPE is good, outside of the challenges mentioned previously with N95 masks.
- **EMS:** The sector is reporting a stable supply of PPE and stable call volumes, but is prepared to see an increase in call volumes once the city comes out of the modified stage 2 designation at the end of the month. Also reporting challenges in terms of staffing that are risking in levels of concern.

## UPDATED GUIDANCE

- On the 27th October the Government announced that it would be added over 760 hospital beds across the province. The Province Investing \$116.5 Million More to Increase Hospital Capacity, Reduce Wait Times, and Respond to COVID-19. Please see more [here](#)