

Vaccine Clinics

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

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Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board of Health receive this report for information.

Key Points

- Clinics were set up to vaccinate 75-90% of the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph (WDG) population as rapidly as possible.
- Clinics needed to have the ability to scale up or down in response to an initially unstable vaccine supply, then an abundance of vaccine and then to varied demands for vaccine.
- Different types of clinics were created to respond to the various needs identified in our community, specifically mass clinics, mobile clinics, speciality clinics and partner clinics.

Background

The COVID-19 immunization program began in Ontario with a three-phased distribution plan. Phase 1 began on December 14, 2020, with a limited number of vaccine doses for Ontario’s most vulnerable populations including residents, staff and essential care givers in long-term care and retirement homes, health care workers, and the indigenous population. Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) received the 1st shipment of vaccine on January 6, 2021.

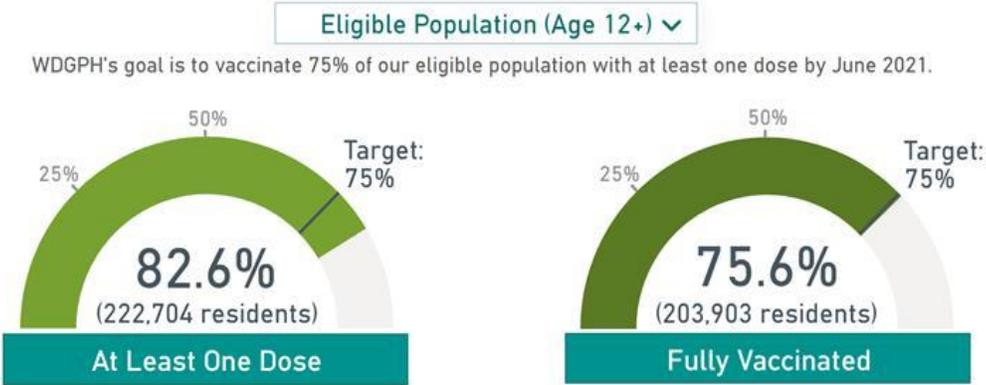
Over time, phases 2 and 3 were implemented and as the program expanded to include additional priority populations and the public, the need for mass vaccination sites became necessary. This report provides an overview of WDGPH COVID-19 vaccination clinics.

Discussion

The rapidly changing public health landscape in early 2021 required a creative approach to the development of vaccination clinics in WDG. The inaugural clinic site for WDGPH at the Guelph Office was effective for the small number of health care workers and seniors that were initially eligible for the vaccine. With the expansion of populations eligible to receive the vaccine and increased availability of vaccine, the plan to operationalize much larger clinics was implemented. The considerations outlined below allowed for WDGPH and their partners to vaccinate 82.6% of our population with one dose and 72.6% of our population with two doses by August 12, 2021. This was consistent with Ontario provincial rates.

Vaccination Progress

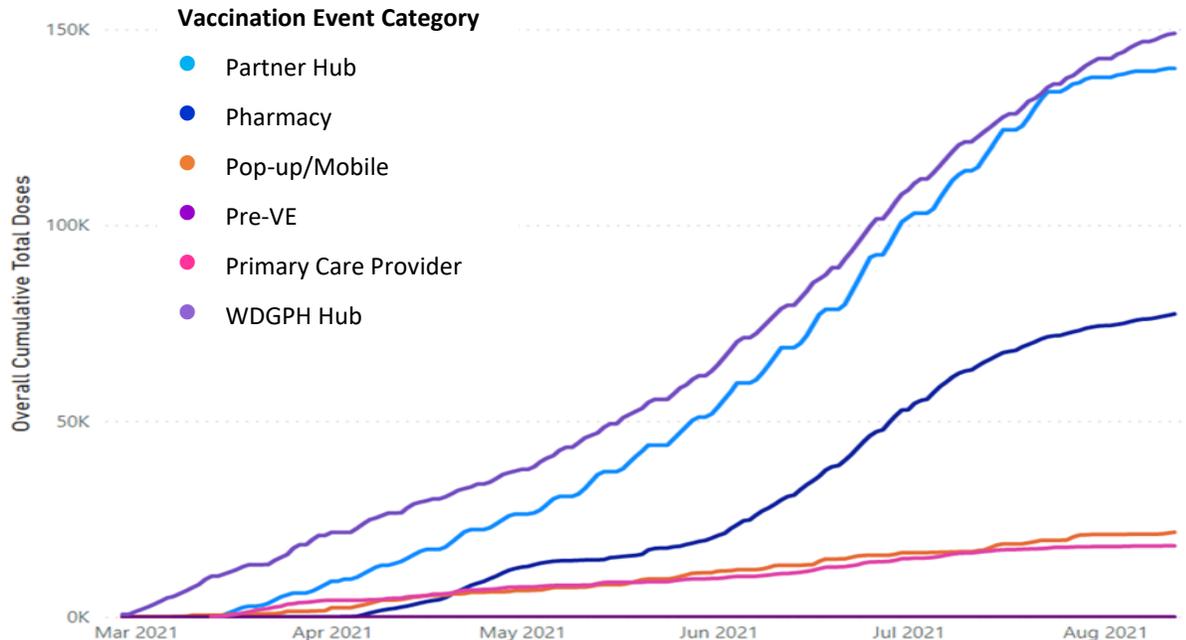
The gauges below display the vaccination progress for those with at least one dose of vaccine, and those who are fully vaccinated. Use the selector below to show percentages by different population groups.



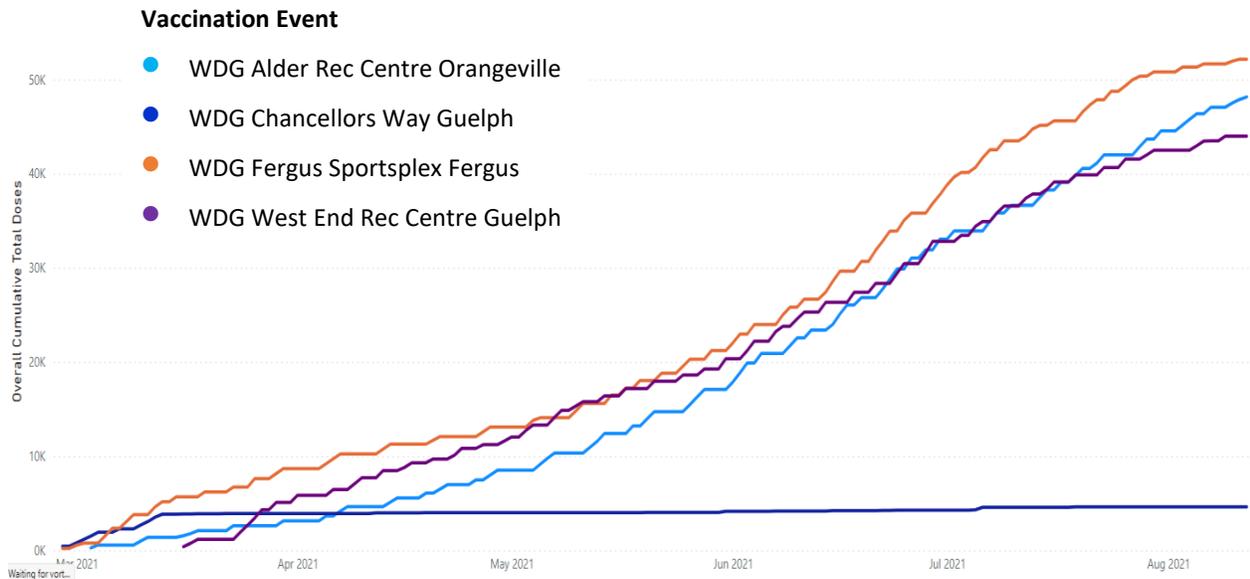
Graph illustrates percentage of WDG population vaccinated with 1 and 2 doses of a COVID-19 vaccine as of August 12, 2021.

Criteria for Location of Vaccination Clinics in WDGPH

- Clinics needed to be in targeted areas that allowed the various populations in WDG to access them easily. Mass clinics were located at the following sites:
 - **Guelph:** West End Community Centre
 - **Fergus:** Centre Wellington Community Sportsplex
 - **Orangeville:** Alder Street Community Centre
- Our community partners also created mass clinics. The **University of Guelph** in partnership with the **Guelph Family Health Team**, and **Linamar Corporation**, both created mass vaccination sites in Guelph.
- People with special needs required accommodations including being unable to tolerate the atmosphere of a mass clinic, so speciality clinics were set up in all three WDGPH offices to service this population.
- Rural populations needed access to the vaccine. Mobile clinics were created to service rural populations to provide access to vaccine without travelling to larger centres. Clinics were routinely run in Drayton, Palmerston, Harriston, Mount Forest, Grand Valley, Erin and Shelburne.
- Hard to reach populations and vaccine hesitant populations continue to need access to the vaccine. Pop-up clinics are designed and planned to reach these unique populations.



Graph above illustrates the number of vaccines which were administered by WDGPH and their community partners since the onset of the vaccine campaign.



Graph outlines the cumulative number of COVID vaccine given at various WDGPH hub sites.

Other operational considerations that needed to be addressed in the creation of both mass, mobile and specialty clinics were as follows

- Mass clinics needed to be large enough to provide vaccine to a minimum of 800-1,200 clients in an eight-hour day.
- To provide seamless client flow throughout the clinics, all aspects of the clinic needed to be addressed including, security, screening, check in, vaccination, recovery and check out.
- Vaccine cold chain integrity needed to be maintained, including transport to clinics, during clinics and between clinics.
- Physical environmental concerns, specifically heat and cold, needed to be addressed at various clinics in an ongoing manner.
- Staff morale and fatigue needed to be considered throughout the vaccine campaign since the initial campaign was eight months long and staff often worked long days.
- The WDGPH clinics were staffed by many different health care providers including, data staff, nurses (both WDGPH and community), community physicians and local EMS.

Mass Clinics

Mass clinics were highly successful in moving large numbers of people through in a day. The University of Guelph clinic site had the largest number, reaching over 1,700 people in a single day. Likewise, over the region at the peak of the vaccination campaign, over 7,000 people were being vaccinated in a single day. Mass clinics proved to be highly successful in vaccinating large numbers of people quickly.

As the number of people vaccinated in our communities increased, the number of people attending our mass clinics decreased. As a result, the mass clinics had a staggered shut down over the month of August and the last mass clinics were held on August 20, 2021.

Specialty Clinics

Specialty clinics were designed to assist individuals and families who struggled to access the vaccine at mass clinics due to a variety of reasons including physical challenges, environmental challenges, anxiety and medical considerations. These clinics do not yield the same vaccination counts as the mass clinics but offered a unique and valuable options for individuals who would otherwise not be able to be vaccinated. These clinics continue as an option for the community as the mass clinics have closed and there are still people seeking vaccine.

Mobile Clinics

Mobile clinics provided another unique opportunity for populations surrounding Drayton, Palmerston, Harriston, Mount Forest, Grand Valley, Erin and Shelburne. These communities are more rural in nature and have the largest distance to travel to the mass clinic locations. Locating mobile clinics in these areas assisted with eliminating transportation issues, increasing uptake of the vaccine locally and provided these communities with local access to WDGPH staff to ask questions and understand the importance of vaccinations.

Mobile clinics began in March and will continue to operate into the fall of 2021. At the peak of the vaccination campaign these clinics would vaccinate up to 500 people in a day depending on location.

Pop-Up Clinics

Pop-up clinics began in June as vaccine became more readily available and the eligible population opened broadly. They are designed to be smaller in size and focus on locations and populations that had lower vaccination rates. Pop-up clinics define

success differently in that they draw smaller numbers of vaccinations per clinic, however, they now yield the largest number of first doses of all clinic models running since the closure of mass clinics.

Pop-up will be the focus of WDGPH efforts in the weeks and months to come to assist in moving the needle of those vaccinated locally beyond the 90% target.

Conclusion

The severity of the COVID-19 pandemic required that WDGPH rapidly create vaccination clinics that could vaccinate vast numbers of clients and that could reach those clients where they live and work. Different types of clinics were created to respond to the various needs of the WDG community, specifically mass clinics, mobile clinics, speciality clinics, pop-up clinics and partner clinics.

The rapidly changing nature of the pandemic required that the vaccination team needed to be extremely flexible and respond to ministerial requests for change, often daily. Local community partners (Appendix A) generously provided superb and timely care to the community and demonstrated the ability to change on short notice to community needs and provincial direction.

Because of WDGPH's ability to rapidly respond to the changing nature of the pandemic, the immunization goal of fully vaccinating over 75% of WDG eligible population was reached on August 12, 2021.

Although this goal has been met, there are still over 43,000 eligible residents in WDG who need the vaccine and approximately 40,000 children 11 years of age and younger who will need to be vaccinated once a vaccine is approved by Health Canada. This large group of unvaccinated residents remain vulnerable to the COVID-19 virus and will continue to be a source of new infections as we enter the fall. How many cases of COVID-19 occur locally will depend on how many of the remaining 43,000 eligible residents are vaccinated over the coming weeks.

Locally, WDGPH has a responsibility to assist the community in accessing the vaccine along other partners like physicians and pharmacies. Clinics will continue to operate into the fall of 2021 under WDGPH direction in all three major geographic locations (Guelph, Fergus and Orangeville), including mobile clinics, specialty and pop-up clinics.

Ontario Public Health Standard

Immunization

Goal:

To reduce or eliminate the burden of vaccine preventable diseases through immunization

Requirements:

- The board of health shall promote and provide provincially funded immunization programs and services to eligible persons in the health unit, including underserved and priority populations;
- The board of health shall have a contingency plan to deploy board of health staff capable of providing vaccine preventable diseases outbreak management and control, such as mass immunization, in the event of a community outbreak.

2020 WDGPH Strategic Direction(s)

Service Delivery: We will provide our programs and services in a flexible, modern and accessible manner, and will ensure they reflect the immediate needs of our Clients and our role in the broader sector.

System Transformation: We will equip the Agency for change in all aspects of our work so that we are ready for transformational system change when the time comes.

Knowledge Transfer: We will ensure that our decision-making and policy development efforts are informed by meaningful health data at all times.

Health Equity

Health equity is the condition where everyone can attain their full health potential and are not disadvantaged due to their social position or other socially determined circumstances.

COVID-19 vaccines throughout WDG were available to all populations but specific populations were more challenging to meet. To ensure that vaccines were provided in an equitable manner the following interventions were put in place.

- Many clients from rural communities found it challenging to access our mass clinics for a variety of reasons. WDGPH created mobile clinics that routinely delivered vaccines to these rural communities.
- In the City of Guelph and surrounding communities, some neighbourhoods were found to have lower vaccination rates that related directly to the social determinants of health. Clinics were planned and delivered that addressed the barriers experienced in these neighbourhoods and assisted in rising the vaccination rates in these areas. Vaccine hesitancy affects clients from all age, ethnic and economic groups. WDGPH ensured that all immunizers were educated on supporting clients with vaccine hesitancy.

References

None.

Appendices

Appendix A: 400,000 Thank Yous (and counting) Advertisement

400,000 Thank Yous (and counting)



The vaccination efforts in Wellington County, Dufferin County and the City of Guelph have been an extraordinary success. We have reached over 400,000 vaccines in arms thanks to the considerable efforts of many organizations throughout our communities working together as one. To all of our outstanding partners, to all of the individuals who worked and volunteered their time and to all of our residents, thank you.

Special thanks to:

City of Guelph
University of Guelph

Wellington County
Linamar Corporation

Dufferin County

Guelph Family Health Team
Dufferin County Paramedic Service
Guelph-Wellington Paramedic Service
Grand Valley Midwives
Mount Forest Family Health Team
Minto-Mapleton Family Health Team
Dufferin Area Family Health Team
East Wellington Family Health Team
Upper Grand Family Health Team
ARCH Guelph
Guelph Community Health Centre
Guelph General Hospital
Wellington Health Care Alliance
St. Joseph's Health Care Centre

Homewood Health Centre
Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition
Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington
Headwaters Health Care Centre
Wellington County municipalities

- Centre Wellington
- Erin
- Guelph/Eramosa
- Mapleton
- Minto
- Puslinch
- Wellington North

Dufferin County municipalities

- Amaranth
- East Garafraxa
- Grand Valley
- Melancthon
- Mono
- Mulmur
- Orangeville
- Shelburne

#ForYouForMeForWDG

