

COVID-19 Information Bulletin #14

Date issued: May 1, 2020

Purpose of bulletin: To keep local stakeholders informed of the quickly-evolving novel coronavirus (COVID-19) situation and its implications for Wellington County, Dufferin County and the City of Guelph (WDG).

Due to the evolving nature of the situation, further updates may be forthcoming.
For more information visit www.wdgpUBLICHEALTH.ca

Surveillance

- **Highlights**
 - The last three weeks have seen a steady decrease in the weekly occurrence of new community cases by onset date. However, more detected cases occurred among residents of long-term care homes and retirement homes last week, by date of onset of symptoms, than during the previous week.
 - The number of visits to the emergency departments of area hospitals by patients complaining of respiratory and influenza-like symptoms has returned to baseline.
- Information about cases in WDG can be found on [our website](#) and information about institutional outbreaks can be found in our [Retirement and Long-Term Care Outbreak Bulletin](#).

WDG Public Health COVID-19 resources

- All original WDG Public Health's COVID-19 resources (excluding images) on our website are available for use and adapting for non-profit purposes, permission is not required. We ask that you include the statement "Adapted from Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health" on any materials you use or adapt.

New or Amended Guidance Documents

- **New:** [WDGPH's Guidance for Community Gardens](#) [May 1, 2020]
- **New:** WDGPH's [COVID-19 Guidelines: Grocery and Retail Stores](#) [April 30, 2020]
- **New:** Government of Ontario's [Food Manufacturing and Processing Health and Safety During COVID-19](#) [April 30, 2020]
- **New:** Government of Ontario's [Restaurant and Food Services Health and Safety During COVID-19](#) [April 30, 2020]
- **New:** Government of Ontario's [Agriculture Health and Safety During COVID-19](#) [April 30, 2020]

- **New:** Government of Ontario's [Manufacturing Health and Safety During COVID-19](#) [April 30, 2020]

Announcements and Changes to Services

- On May 1, the [Government of Ontario](#) announced that they are allowing certain businesses and workplaces to reopen as long as they comply with strict public health measures. Those permitted to start up include seasonal businesses and some essential construction projects.
- On April 30, the [Government of Ontario released](#) safety [guidelines and posters](#) to protect workers, customers and the general public from COVID-19 as it prepares for a gradual reopening of the provincial economy. Additional resources will be added as new sectors of the economy begin to reopen.
- On April 30, the [Government of Ontario in partnership with four provincial health and safety associations](#) released 61 sector-specific guidelines.
- On April 30, [Health Canada introduced](#) two new digital initiatives to its suite of virtual tools for COVID-19.
 - [Get Updates on COVID-19](#) is a web-based email service that provides subscribers with critical information related to the pandemic. Subscribers will get emails directing them to important and authoritative content on the [Government of Canada's COVID-19 website](#).
 - The [ArriveCan](#) app allows travellers returning to Canada to input their 14-day isolation or quarantine information quickly and securely upon arrival. The app works by digitizing the information collected under the current paper form that travellers must complete.
- On April 29, the [Government of Ontario expanded](#) the list of essential workers eligible to receive free emergency child care during the COVID-19 outbreak. The additional frontline workers who can access this include:
 - Workers in grocery stores and pharmacies
 - Truck drivers (driver's licence Class A and Class D)
 - Workers in the food supply chain, including food processing
 - Workers in retirement homes
 - Auxiliary workers in health care settings, including cooks and cleaning staff in hospitals and long-term care homes
 - Interpreters and intervenors who support people who are deaf, deafened, hard of hearing and deafblind
 - Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) emergency personnel
 - Provincial officers and onsite staff in Ontario courts
 - Canadian Armed Forces and Department of National Defence staff working in Ontario
 - Additional workers supporting public safety and correctional services
- On April 29, [the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion introduced](#) legislation to establish the Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB), which would provide income support to post-secondary students who lost work opportunities due to COVID-19. Through the CESB, currently being considered by

Parliament, students who are not receiving the Canada Emergency Response Benefit would receive \$1,250 per month for up to four months. Students with disabilities and students with dependents would receive an additional \$750. The CESB would be available to:

- Students who are enrolled in a post-secondary education program leading to a degree, diploma, or certificate;
- Students who ended their studies or graduated no earlier than December 2019;
- High-school graduates who have applied for and will be enrolled in post-secondary programs in the coming months; and
- Canadian students studying abroad meeting one of the above criteria.

Latest Research

Please note: this section outlines an unbiased summary of emerging scientific research and literature for COVID-19 and is not intended to reflect public health guidance or messaging.

Transmission

[Miller JC et al.](#) (MedRxiv preprint, April 23) report the results of a study on the impacts of testing and personal protective equipment (PPE) use on the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in healthcare settings. The authors found that the effective use of PPE by both staff and patients can help to prevent the spread of the virus in these settings, while testing alone is less effective. The study showed that even “imperfectly effective” use of PPE can “provide substantial protection and decrease the force of infection”.

[Baggett TP et al.](#) (JAMA, April 27) conducted symptom screening and PCR testing for SARS-CoV-2 at a large homeless shelter housing 408 people in Boston, MA. The authors found that among 147 individuals with PCR test results positive for SARS-CoV-2, cough (7.5%), shortness of breath (1.4%), and fever (0.7%) were all uncommon, and 87.8% were asymptomatic.

[Arons MM et al.](#) (NEJM, April 24) report the results of testing and follow-up of residents at a Washington facility with an outbreak of COVID-19 using RT-PCR, viral culture and symptom screening. “More than half of residents with positive test results were asymptomatic at the time of testing and most likely contributed to transmission. Infection-control strategies focused solely on symptomatic residents were not sufficient to prevent transmission after SARS-CoV-2 introduction into this facility.”

Testing

A systematic review by [Arevalo-Rodriguez I et al.](#) (MedRxiv preprint, April 21), while finding that the collected evidence had several limitations, including risk of bias, high heterogeneity, and concerns about applicability, led to a conclusion that up to 29% of patients could have an initial RT-PCR false-negative result, reinforcing the need for repeated testing in patients with suspicion of SARS-Cov-2 infection.

Additional Resources

- New: PHAC’s Physical Distancing [video](#)
- New: PHAC’s Parenting During COVID-19 [information sheet](#)

- New: PHAC's [information sheet](#) For Travellers Without Symptoms
- New PHAC's [information sheet](#) For Travellers With Symptoms
- New: PHAC's [information sheet](#) For Persons Exempt from Mandatory Quarantine

Contact Information for Additional Support

Updated: WDGPH COVID-19 Call Centre

- **For health-related questions**, including symptoms, close contacts, travel or if you are a health care provider:
 - Call 519-822-2715 ext. 7006
 - Available Monday – Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. and weekends from 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
- **For non-health related questions**, including business or workplace concerns, social distancing questions or non-emergency reporting questions:
 - Call 519-822-2715 ext. 4020
 - Available Monday – Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Reliable information sources:

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health website: www.wdgppublichealth.ca

Ontario Ministry of Health webpage: www.ontario.ca/coronavirus

Public Health Agency of Canada webpage: www.canada.ca/coronavirus