

Board of Health Meeting September 23, 2021

Summary

COVID-19 UPDATE

Cases

- Leeds, Grenville and Lanark (LGL) has 20 active cases – down from last week, linked to household spread, social gatherings, and travel.
- There are two hospitalizations and one person on a ventilator, a reminder that COVID-19 can be very serious.
- The Delta variant spreads easily with close contact in households, particularly when people aren't vaccinated, and in social gatherings where people don't know if others are vaccinated and there is close contact without a mask.
- A critical part of decreasing transmission of the COVID-19 virus is to stay home when sick, and go for assessment and testing with fever/chills, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste and smell, and fatigue/muscle aches/joint pain (adults) or vomiting and diarrhea for children. Assessment Centres are in Almonte, Smiths Falls, Brockville and Kemptville.
- There have been a few cases in schools since school started. The class is isolated for 10 days from last date of exposure and all high risk contacts, including those on the bus with the case, are recommended to be tested.

Vaccines

- A number of clinics are available in various communities – both appointments and walk-ins: check the Health Unit website for up to date times and dates: <https://healthunit.org/health-information/covid-19/protection/vaccine-clinics/>
- Many pharmacies are also providing vaccine – 60% of the LGL vaccines last week. Check a [participating pharmacy](#).
- People need two doses of vaccine to get the best protection from symptoms. There is 33% protection with one dose, and 88% protection with two doses. Two doses provides 95% protection from hospitalization and serious infection. AstraZeneca plus an mRNA vaccine provides similar protection as two doses of an mRNA vaccine.

- The Health Unit is preparing to vaccinate 5 to 11 year olds when approval is received from Health Canada.

Vaccine Certificate

- Proof of vaccination is required as of Sept. 22 for the public 12 years and older to enter some indoor facilities. It's a "show and enter" process with a digital or hard copy of the second dose receipt along with ID.
- All Ontarians can [download their vaccine receipt](#) as proof of their vaccine status until an enhanced vaccine certificate with a QR code is available. They can also call the Provincial Vaccine Booking Line at 1-833-943-3900 for assistance.
- Inspectors are working with operators around the vaccine requirement. A sign has been developed for businesses/organizations that are required to ask for proof of vaccination. Signs will be posted on the website and social media and Public Health Inspectors will have some hard copies to distribute as they are in the community.

Communications

- Our communications program is a key part of our LGL COVID-19 response.
- We have had over 3.4 million unique visitors to our website in 2021 so far (already 1.4 million more than 2020), and are constantly making updates to our website to keep it up-to-date.

Wastewater COVID-19 Surveillance

- LGL now has two municipal sites (Brockville and Kemptville) who report wastewater samples to be tested for COVID-19 related nucleic acids as part of the Provincial Wastewater Surveillance Initiative.
- This data provides additional information about the level of COVID-19 activity in these communities. It includes both symptomatic and asymptomatic cases and is intended as an early warning for potential COVID-19 activity.