

Message

From South East Health Care Partners

For immediate release
Wednesday, April 13, 2022

Joint Message Addressing Increased Transmission of COVID-19 and How Individuals Can Protect Themselves and Others.

This is a joint message from the South East Region's hospital Chiefs of Staff and Medical Officers of Health

Kingston – The South East region is still experiencing increased COVID-19 activity with some communities noting record high levels of the virus.

In response the Chiefs of Staff at Kingston Health Sciences Centre, Providence Care, Quinte Health Care, Brockville General Hospital, Perth and Smiths Falls General Hospital, and Lennox & Addington County General Hospital; and Medical Officers of Health at Hastings Prince Edward Public Health, Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox and Addington Public Health and Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit are coming together to highly recommend actions residents can take to protect themselves, their families, and their communities to help manage the impact of the virus and reduce severe illness and hospitalization.

- Get all COVID-19 vaccines you are eligible for, including booster doses.
- Stay home if you are sick - even if your symptoms are mild.
- If you have symptoms take a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) if possible, or a PCR test if eligible.
- Practise respiratory etiquette (like coughing into your elbow) and wash your hands frequently.
- Wear a well-fitted, three-layer mask in all public indoor settings.
- If you are hosting or attending a social gathering please allow for physical distancing, outdoor gatherings are best.
- If you test positive or have symptoms, even if they are mild, you should stay home for at least five days [or as otherwise advised by current isolation guidance](#). Individuals can be infectious for up to 10 days, so it is important that for an additional five days you wear a mask when outside your home and avoid those who are most vulnerable and high-risk settings like hospitals and long-term care.

As we head into the holiday weekend, it is recommended that individuals [screen for symptoms](#) before leaving their home, and if you have any symptoms stay home. If you have plans to attend or host a gathering, consider being outside or opening windows for increased ventilation, think about who will be present and consider masking to protect vulnerable people.

These protective measures, while not mandatory, are strongly recommended as part of the multi-layered approach to reduce the impacts of COVID-19 on our communities.

Today, Ontario will expand access to Paxlovid, a free COVID-19 antiviral treatment. Treatment with Paxlovid must begin within five days of symptom onset and a health care provider needs to determine whether antiviral treatment is right for an individual, including for individuals who do not belong to one of the eligible groups, based on individual circumstances. To get assessed, individuals can visit a [clinical assessment centre](#) or contact their primary care provider. Even if you do not have symptoms, please speak to your health care provider to find out if you are eligible for antiviral treatment ahead of time.

If you know or suspect you have COVID-19 and are experiencing worsening symptoms book a clinical assessment appointment at the location closest to you:

- Beechgrove Assessment Centre - [Book online](#) or call 613-548-2376.
- Brockville Clinical Assessment Centre - [Book online](#) or call 613-704-1441.

The pandemic is not over, and the latest wave is challenging, but with your continued efforts to make responsible choices and respect those at higher risk of complications of COVID-19 we can reduce the impacts. Help us protect our local hospitals who are experiencing very high patient volumes, combined with critical staff shortages and high numbers of staff of sick with COVID-19. Thank you for your support in continuing to keep our communities as safe as possible.

Dr. Andrew Hamilton, Chief of Staff, Chair of the Medical Advisory Committee - Brockville General Hospital

Dr. Michael Fitzpatrick, Chief of Staff and Executive Vice-President Medical and Academic Affairs - Kingston Health Sciences Centre

Dr. Colin MacPherson, Chief of Staff, Chief of Department of Psychiatry, Medical Director of Mental Health Program - Quinte Health Care

Dr. Simon O'Brien, Chair Medical Advisory Committee - Providence Care

Dr. Kate Stolee, Chief of Staff - Perth & Smiths Falls District Hospital

Dr. Kim Morrison, Chief of Staff - Lennox & Addington County General Hospital

Dr. Ethan Toumishey, Medical Officer of Health at Hastings Prince Edward Public Health

Dr. Piotr Oglaza, Medical Officer of Health Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox and Addington Public Health

Dr. Paula Stewart, Medical Officer of Health Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit