

SUMMARY

Monthly LGL Health Care Providers - Public Health Networking Call Tuesday, December 5, 2023

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1.0 Welcome – Dr. Linna Li, Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District (LGL) Health Unit Medical Officer of Health (Chair)

Welcome to all those in attendance. Due to technical difficulties, this call was not recorded, but will be posted on our [Health Care Professionals](#) website section.

2.0 General Health Updates – Dr. Linna Li

2.1 Update on Respiratory Season

- COVID-19
 - We are seeing continuous transmission throughout Ontario including our region. Percent positivity is a better indicator; case counts are not accurate because wide-spread testing is no longer being done. We are tracking outbreaks in LTCH/RHs, and hospital visits.
 - We continue to have a relatively high number of cases.
- Influenza
 - There is more variable transmission across Ontario.
 - Either sporadic or transmissions at low levels which is expected to continue to rise at this time of year.
 - We are currently in the sporadic transmission level across most of the Eastern Ontario region, including our health unit.
- RSV
 - Sporadic transmission across Ontario; difficult to comment except after the fact, due to low testing levels. RSV tends to rise and fall throughout the season.
- Surveillance
 - Highly recommend visiting the [Public Health Ontario \(PHO\)](#) respiratory dashboard that includes surveillance maps as well as our local respiratory dashboard of our own local data at <https://healthunit.org/health-information/covid-19/local-cases-and-statistics/dashboard/>.

2.2 Update on testing for tick-borne diseases

- We have 3 new tick borne reportable diseases in our region: Anaplasmosis, Babesiosis, and Powassan. Very few cases of tick borne diseases with the cold weather, however when temperatures go above 4 degrees Celsius for a few days, it is possible for blacklegged ticks to become active.
- Symptoms are quite different with very different pathogens. The commonality is the blacklegged tick is the vector.
- Of these 3 new ones, Anaplasmosis and Babesiosis are the most common; expect public health to follow-up with Health Care Providers.
- Anaplasmosis:
 - Diagnosis is clinical. Testing is used for reporting purposes (not useful for diagnosis purposes because of the lengthy time to get results back).

- Testing is best done through serology (acute and convalescent) 2 to 4 weeks apart. We would be looking for a rise in the antibodies for Anaplasmosis in order for the result to be considered a case
- Symptoms range from fever and headache to shock, seizures, and renal failure. Rash and arthralgia is uncommon. 3 - 7 % of cases have severe outcome if untreated.
- Babesiosis:
 - Preferred diagnosed method is with a blood-smear that looks for the pathogen itself. We have received some positive reports that have been tested through the serology method – this is not the preferred method. Classic symptoms are fever, headache, fatigue, jaundice, rash is rare. In conjunction with PHO, we plan to provide further education regarding diagnosis and testing in the spring.
- Powassan:
 - Causes encephalitis and meningitis. If Powassan is suspected, please call the Health Unit – we need to notify PHO and the Public Health Agency of Canada.

2.3 Food Recall Warning for Malichita and Rudy Brand Cantaloupes

- OCMOH [food recall warning](#) for Malichita and Rudy brand cantaloupes, linked to *Salmonella*.
- Many cases have been 5 years of age or younger and 65 years of age and older. Due to these vulnerable age groups being affected, some cases also report residing in a long-term care home (LTCHs) and many cases report attending daycare. For more information, please see the Public Health Agency of Canada's [Public Health Notice](#).

3.0 Vaccine Updates – Erin McLean, Immunization Coordinator

3.1 Vaccine Ordering

- Deadline for this round of vaccine orders is this Thursday at 4:30 pm.
- Thank you for using the online order form and high risk order forms posted on our website:
- <https://healthunit.org/for-professionals/health-care-dental/immunization-resources/vaccine-order-form/>
- Thank you for your patience with vaccine orders over the past year. We've been experiencing a variety of challenges including multiple staffing changes, supply and delivery challenges from the Ontario Government Pharmacy as well as space issues in our vaccine fridges.
- We will continue with the every 4 week order schedule in the New Year.
- Due to the large volume and variety of orders, we will be exploring options to change the schedule.
- And for those who pick up their vaccine order at the Kemptville service site, if the new location is not operational by December 14th, we will be in touch with you about how you will receive your vaccine order.

3.2 Influenza

- Still available to order online.
- Limited amount of the trivalent high dose vaccine; lots of the QIV multi-dose vials.

3.3 COVID Vaccine

- Demand across the area is declining, both in pharmacies and primary care.
- We will continue to offer clinics for children, primary series, non mRNA vaccine recipients in the New Year.

3.3 School Vaccine Program

- Last school clinic today in Kemptville.
- Immunization team has been immunizing with the grade 7 vaccines for grades 7, 8, and 9 students.

- If parents are concerned about their child having missed the clinic, we are offering school catch up clinics at the Health Unit. For those in grade 7 and 8, we will be back in the schools 6 months after their first clinic.
- Online appointment booking <https://reservation.frontdesksuite.ca/lgldhu/immunization>.

4.0 Jennifer Adams, Clinical Services Manager – *presentation deferred to next meeting*

- 4.1 GetaKit Program - [Sexual Health Clinics - Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit](#)
- In collaboration with [GetaKit](#), the Health Unit is offering free, at home HIV self-test kits for residents of Leeds, Grenville and Lanark over 16 years of age.
 - The testing process involves a simple blood sample obtained from a fingertip, which is then analyzed for HIV antibodies using the included testing device. Each kit comes complete with detailed instructions and a contact phone number for any questions or concerns that may arise during testing.
 - HIV self-test kits include requisitions for other sexually transmitted infections such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis. These requisitions will be shipped directly to the resident to take to their local lab. Residents can complete the online risk assessment and register with [GetaKit](#).

5.0 Next Meeting ***MOVED* to Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 8:00 AM**