

Board of Health

Meeting No.	28	Contact	Julie Lavertu, Committee Administrator
Meeting Date	Monday, May 10, 2021	Phone	416-397-4592
Start Time	9:30 AM	E-mail	boh@toronto.ca
Location	Video Conference	Chair	Councillor Joe Cressy

HL28.1	ACTION	Amended		Ward: All
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Response to COVID-19 - May 2021 Update

The Board of Health, during its meeting on May 10, 2021, adopted Item HL28.1, as amended, and, among other things, directed that the report (April 29, 2021) from the Medical Officer of Health be forwarded to the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee for consideration.

The Board of Health's recommendations to City Council, which will be considered during its meeting on June 8 and 9, 2021, and decision advice are included below for information.

Board Recommendations

The Board of Health recommends that:

1. City Council acknowledge and thank Toronto's Accessibility Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccines for their important contributions toward an equitable immunization campaign and request the Medical Officer of Health, in consultation with the Fire Chief and General Manager - Emergency Management and Toronto's COVID-19 Incident Commander and the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration, to advance, as appropriate, the following recommendations from Toronto's Accessibility Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccines with the City of Toronto and the Government of Ontario:

- a. a simplified, centralized vaccine booking process that includes disability-related priority groups and navigation supports for disabled people;
- b. accessibility and accommodations training for staff at vaccine clinics to appropriately provide accommodations and care from a human rights perspective;
- c. accessible clinic locations that include private, quiet spaces available for those who require this as an accommodation and other accommodations, as requested;

- d. disability-specific clinics, such as mobile, drive through and pop-up community clinics, that are appropriately resourced to ensure that these options are offered in a timely fashion;
- e. prioritized access to in-home vaccination through existing mobile vaccination outreach methods, including Emergency Medical Services and Ontario Health Teams-mediated mobile vaccination efforts; and
- f. clear communication and navigation resources in accessible formats, such as Braille, plain language and American Sign Language, that are specific to people with disabilities and include information about their eligibility and how to access vaccines.

Decision Advice and Other Information

The Board of Health:

1. Called on the Government of Ontario to extend the allocation of 50 percent of all vaccine supplies to Ontario's hot spot communities for an additional two weeks (four weeks in total), as recommended by the Ontario COVID-19 Science Advisory Table.
2. Called on the Government of Ontario to reopen outdoor recreation amenities, which were closed under Provincial Order (Ontario Regulation 82/20 under the Reopening Ontario Act, 2020), in a manner that ensures access to the outdoors alongside rigorous safety measures.
3. Requested the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Long-Term Care and the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility to consider updating guidance for long-term care and retirement homes to maximize quality of life for residents, where there are high rates of vaccination and where there are appropriate safety measures and conditions in place, to permit additional and fully vaccinated visitors, increase group and social activities, including opportunities for congregate dining, and allow off-site visits for fully vaccinated residents.
4. Requested the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Long-Term Care and the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility to analyze a wide range of data associated with long-term care and retirement homes to inform future COVID-19 public health measures for residents.
5. Acknowledged and thanked Toronto's Accessibility Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccines for their important contributions toward an equitable immunization campaign and requested the Medical Officer of Health, in consultation with the Fire Chief and General Manager - Emergency Management and Toronto's COVID-19 Incident Commander and the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration, to advance, as appropriate, the following recommendations from Toronto's Accessibility Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccines with the City of Toronto and the Government of Ontario:
 - a. a simplified, centralized vaccine booking process that includes disability-related priority groups and navigation supports for disabled people;
 - b. accessibility and accommodations training for staff at vaccine clinics to appropriately provide accommodations and care from a human rights perspective;

c. accessible clinic locations that include private, quiet spaces available for those who require this as an accommodation and other accommodations, as requested;

d. disability-specific clinics, such as mobile, drive through and pop-up community clinics, that are appropriately resourced to ensure that these options are offered in a timely fashion;

e. prioritized access to in-home vaccination through existing mobile vaccination outreach methods, including Emergency Medical Services and Ontario Health Teams-mediated mobile vaccination efforts; and

f. clear communication and navigation resources in accessible formats, such as Braille, plain language and American Sign Language, that are specific to people with disabilities and include information about their eligibility and how to access vaccines.

6. Requested the Medical Officer of Health to explore every potential option to collect disaggregated data on COVID-19 cases, risks and vaccination rates for people with disabilities in Toronto, both independently at the municipal level as well as with support from the Government of Ontario, where available.

7. Requested the Medical Officer of Health to report, as part of the recurring COVID-19 pandemic update presentation, to the June 14, 2021 meeting of the Board of Health on the status of on-site workplace vaccinations.

8. Directed that the report (April 29, 2021) from the Medical Officer of Health be forwarded to the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Long-Term Care and the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility for consideration.

9. Directed that the report (April 29, 2021) from the Medical Officer of Health be forwarded to the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee for consideration.

The Medical Officer of Health gave a presentation on Response to COVID-19: May 2021 Update.

The Director, Community Resources, Social Development, Finance and Administration gave a presentation on Community Engagement and Mobilization Plan: Update to Toronto Board of Health.

Wendy Porch, Executive Director, Centre for Independent Living in Toronto and Chair, Toronto's Accessibility Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccines gave a presentation on Accessibility Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccines: Overview and Recommendations.

Dr. Akwatu Khenti, Special Advisor, TO Supports: COVID-19 Equity Action Plan and Chair, Black Scientists' Task Force on Vaccine Equity and Dr. David Burt, Member, Black Scientists' Task Force on Vaccine Equity gave a presentation on Black Scientists' Task Force on Vaccine Equity: A Brief Overview of Town Hall Engagements and Findings.

Origin

(April 29, 2021) Report from the Medical Officer of Health

Summary

The spread and impact of COVID-19 has never been greater in Toronto, with variants of concern increasing both the risk of transmission and the risk of serious illness or death.

COVID-19 vaccination in Toronto and across Ontario is progressing well however, transmission of the virus is continuing to place significant strain on the healthcare system. Hospitalization rates in Toronto are the highest on record during the pandemic and are expected to increase. Without strengthened public health measures, data analysis and projections indicate it will take until late summer before a significant reduction in new case counts is observed in Toronto. It is imperative that all people in Toronto stay home as much as possible, wear a mask when outside the house and practise physical distancing with anyone not from the same household.

This report provides an update on the COVID-19 pandemic locally and the status of the rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations in Toronto. It also provides an update on how the City's COVID-19 response has included targeted measures for people with disabilities, including responding to outstanding recommendations from the November 2020 meeting of the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee.

As directed by the Board of Health in March 2021, this report includes an update on COVID-19 related policies for those who live in long-term care and retirement homes.

As directed by the Board of Health in December 2020, staff have updated the report, "Indirect Impact of COVID-19 and Associated Public Health Measures on the Mental Health and Well-Being of Toronto Residents", with data and research from the remainder of 2020. A summary of the findings is provided below, with a full report in Attachment 1.

Background Information

(April 29, 2021) Report from the Medical Officer of Health on Response to COVID-19 - May 2021 Update

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-166165.pdf>)

(March 4, 2021) Attachment 1 - Indirect Impact of the Fall Resurgence of COVID 19 and Associated Public Health Measures: Focus on the Mental Health and Well Being of Toronto Residents

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-166147.pdf>)

(May 10, 2021) Presentation from the Medical Officer of Health on Response to COVID-19: May 2021 Update

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-166785.pdf>)

(May 10, 2021) Presentation from the Director, Community Resources, Social Development, Finance and Administration on Community Engagement and Mobilization Plan: Update to Toronto Board of Health

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-166786.pdf>)

Presentation from Wendy Porch, Executive Director, Centre for Independent Living in Toronto and Chair, Toronto's Accessibility Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccines on Accessibility Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccines: Overview and Recommendations

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-166806.pdf>)

(May 10, 2021) Presentation from Dr. Akwatu Khenti, Special Advisor, TO Supports: COVID-19 Equity Action Plan and Chair, Black Scientists' Task Force on Vaccine Equity and Dr. David Burt, Member, Black Scientists' Task Force on Vaccine Equity on Black Scientists' Task

Force on Vaccine Equity: A Brief Overview of Town Hall Engagements and Findings
(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-166789.pdf>)

Communications

(May 7, 2021) Submission from Graeme Lamb, Coalition for COVID-Safe Club Reopening, including a petition endorsed and signed by 128 organizations and individuals (HL.New)

(May 7, 2021) Submission from Wendy Porch, Centre for Independent Living in Toronto and Toronto's Accessibility Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccines (HL.New)

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/hl/comm/communicationfile-131419.pdf>)

(May 8, 2021) Submission from Dean Herd (HL.New)

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/hl/comm/communicationfile-131439.pdf>)

(May 9, 2021) E-mail from Christine Massey (HL.New)

(May 10, 2021) Submission from Erica Barber (HL.New)

(May 10, 2021) Submission from Derek Moran (HL.New)