

**Update on COVID-19**  
**Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health**  
**April 22, 2020 at 3:45 p.m.**  
**Members' Lounge, Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.**

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- As of 12:30 p.m. there are 4,069 cases of COVID-19 in Toronto. This includes 3,685 confirmed cases and 384 probable ones. There are 290 people in hospital, 106 of whom are in intensive care units. I'm sad to report that we continue to see COVID-19 deaths in our community. There have been 210 people have died of the virus in our city. Our thoughts are with everyone who has lost loved ones, as well as those recovering from this virus.
- I know that this has been a very difficult time for all of us, myself included. I also know that we must keep moving forward one day at a time. We will get through this exceptionally difficult and challenging time by continuing to follow our public health and physical distancing measures.
- As you have heard me say many times before, our current COVID-19 response measures are based in part on the experiences of other jurisdictions. We have seen the positive impact of these physical distancing measures in cities and countries around the world, and we know they are preventing further virus spread in our community.
- In order to get to the point where we can go back to enjoying our city with our friends, our families and our loved ones, we need to stay the course. It our collective responsibility to protect our city and our essential workers who keep us safe.
- Please be assured that when the time is right we will begin easing some of our public health and physical distancing measures. In the meantime, we must continue to practise careful physical distancing, thorough hand washing and stay home, away from others, if sick.
- While the outbreak in our broader community is peaking and it appears that this curve is flattening, COVID-19 cases and deaths continue to occur in our long-term care homes and other congregate settings. This is very concerning.

- To turn the tide in these settings, not only will we need to implement outbreak control measures, we also need to keep our public health measures in place throughout our community.
- At this time, we are not yet in a position to be easing up on public health measures on a large scale. We need to see better control over the virus in our community before we can take these steps. When the time comes, we will need to strike a delicate balance between easing up on measures for our broader community, while keeping the residents of our long-term care homes and other vulnerable residents in our city safe.
- We will also need to make sure that people and organizations can effectively maintain physical distancing and other public health measures in our community. This will require significant work across the city and your commitment to making this work.
- I realize you want to know when this will happen so we can get back to work and back to enjoying our city. Unfortunately at this time I don't know when this will be. I will let you know directly when we are in this position and when we can begin to ease our public health and physical distancing measures.
- In the meantime, I want to thank our Mayor and our City's leadership for their carefully measured and thoughtful approach to examining to how we can safely re-open our city.
- I want to acknowledge that I have also been asked about COVID-19 data that shows us the impact of COVID-19 infection by race, or ethnicity. Without these types of data we are not able to fully understand if this pandemic is disproportionately affecting certain people in our community, and ways to address these potential inequities.
- My team is actively exploring ways to collect and analyze this information in our new data system. While we continue to manage a large volume of COVID-19 case and contact investigations, we are also committed to improving our own data collection tools to allow for the ability to gather this important data in order to identify and address potential health inequities.

- Reducing health inequities and improving the health status of all residents in our city is core to our work in public health. I will keep you informed on our work on stratifying COVID-19 data as we move forward.
- Lastly, I want to acknowledge that today is Earth Day. I know that all of us would like to be outside enjoying our city, parks and public spaces. But instead we find ourselves cooped up at home, and away from our regular support networks.
- This is stressful and we all process stress differently. For me I try to find time each day to connect with my family and to get outside for a walk, or listen to music. If you are feeling overwhelmed, remember, there are many services available for you to connect with by phone and online. Information on these services can be found on our website. Please remember you are not alone. At this time, I ask that you please continue to do your part to stay home, stay safe and take care of each other.

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