

**Update on COVID-19**  
**Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health**  
**May 12, 2021 at 2 p.m.**  
**Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.**

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- Thank you Mayor Tory, and good afternoon.
- On Monday, I had the opportunity to offer greetings and well-wishes to my nursing colleagues to mark Nursing Week. Like Mayor Tory, today, I send greetings to colleagues in police services as it is also Police Week this week. To my colleagues in the police services, my sincere and heartfelt thanks for your service.
- Today I am reporting 814 new cases of COVID-19.
- 1,081 people are in the hospital.
- 265 people are in the ICU.
- I am saddened report 20 deaths today.
- As you've just heard from the Mayor, there is increasing momentum in the vaccination campaign – and this is welcome news for all of us.
- Just a few hours ago, the Province said that almost 4 million doses of vaccine will be delivered over the month of May and that details are being finalized to expand vaccine access to children and teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17. We at Toronto Public Health are looking forward to receiving these details, and ultimately to working with the relevant partners to get this done.
- On the ground in Toronto we will see the expansion of neighbourhoods which will have pop-up and mobile vaccine clinics.
- This approach has been enormously successful in facilitating vaccine delivery.
- Neighbourhood enthusiasm for the pop-up and mobile clinics reflects this.

- In our excitement and in our understandable tendency to count needles in arms, we may forget that our shared goal, our real goal, is this: the health outcomes of vaccination. People protected from severe and life-threatening illness and reduced spread of COVID-19 amongst those yet to be vaccinated.
- As with so many aspects of the pandemic, the pop-up and mobile clinics have emerged unexpectedly as a real success story and I want to thank the people who've helped to make this happen: our hospital partners, the Ontario Health Teams, and in particular the community leaders and organizations that have been so effective at reaching out to the communities and especially at communicating with them to encourage vaccine uptake and to address hesitancy.
- We all hoped for vaccines for most of the pandemic, especially when all we had was hope.
- We all felt a sense of confidence in the idea of COVID-19 vaccines because the concept of vaccination is familiar and regular to most of us.
- It was care, testing, study and analysis that made the vaccines possible and produced them for our protection from COVID-19.
- And it is care, testing, study and analysis that will continue to determine the path forward.
- I will close today asking you to remember the most important thing: science and study prove the risks from COVID-19 infection are significant – as severe as hospitalization and death and, for those who recover from the worst of it, lingering and sometimes debilitating symptoms.
- Science and study also prove that COVID-19 vaccines provide safe and effective protection from that threat.
- Stay confident, stay informed, and be ready to take your turn as more and more vaccine becomes available.

- We are not long now from seeing how the protection the vaccines provide begins to meaningfully turn the tide in our favour.

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