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August 6th, 2021

RE: Optimizing COVID-19 vaccine coverage in post-secondary institutions and congregate student living settings

Dear Post-Secondary Institution and Student Living Setting Administrator,

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Toronto Public Health (TPH) has worked extensively with community partners, including post-secondary institutions and congregate living settings, to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. These mutual efforts have allowed the prioritization of the health and safety of all those who live, play and learn in the City of Toronto.

With decreasing COVID-19 case rates and increasing vaccination coverage across all age groups, the Ministry of College and Universities and many post-secondary institutions are planning to return to in-person campus activities for the fall 2021 term and beyond. Although this return is welcomed with excitement and anticipation, we must continue to use public health measures and policies that reduce risk of COVID-19 given the presence of variants of concern, and their role in community transmission. Preventive measures and policies will help us progress toward our goal of ending the pandemic.

TPH strongly supports post-secondary institutions and congregate student- living settings' initiatives to increase COVID-19 vaccine confidence and uptake. This includes equitable barrier-free access to vaccination and provision of clear evidence-based information. Vaccination is a key public health measure to reduce community spread of COVID-19.

TPH recommends policy measures to optimize vaccination coverage rates of students and staff in post-secondary institution campuses and in congregate student-living settings. We are available for consultation on vaccination policy development and implementation to increase vaccination rates.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership, support and collaboration in managing the COVID-19 pandemic. Please do not hesitate to contact our TPH Liaison at TPHSchoolLiaison@toronto.ca or our hotline at 416-338-7600.

Sincerely,



Na-Koshie Lamptey, MD, MPH, CCFP, FRCP
Deputy Medical Officer of Health