This page was exported from - Shelburne Free Press
Export date: Sat Oct 31 20:37:19 2026 / +0000 GMT

WDG Chief MOH ?cautiously optimistic? about state of pandemic

Written By Paula Brown

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Positive case numbers of COVID-19 in the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph (WDG)Public Health region have been moving in a downward trend, and the region's top doctor says she's cautiously optimistic as long as residents continue with public health measures.

?I can see that our community cases have come way down so that tells me that people are listening and they've got it,? said Dr. Nicola Mercer, WDG Public Health CEO and Chief Medical Officer. ?I recognize it's a hard thing to do, but if our community does what's hard then I'm optimistic we can get to our vaccination time and work our way out of COVID.?

While the numbers have continued to decline, Mercer said now is the time to stay vigilant as new variants of the novel virus are emerging in Ontario.

?It is more important than ever that people be vigilant, these variants are extremely infectious and very concerning,? said Mercer who noted that while there are no confirmed cases of the new variants within the region, residents should assume that there is.

?It's been confirmed in lots of other places in the province and remember people work in and move in the province so we have to assume that it's just a matter of time.?

Prior to the emergency declaration and stay-at-home order implemented by the Ontario government, WDG Public Health was seeing increasing daily numbers and active cases numbers reach over 400.

Since the emergency declaration on Jan. 12, Mercer said that Public Health has seen a ?large? drop in cases caused by community spread and they're starting to see an increasing number of outbreak driven cases.

?That tells me that people have gotten the message and they're staying home,? said Mercer. ?So why are we seeing outbreaks in larger workplaces? Because that's where the people are now.?

?If we can start to decrease our outbreak related cases, I think you will see that as a community, as our rate comes down, we will be able to reopen with much lower numbers, and as we begin to vaccinate we'll continue to stay open,? she added.

WDG Public Health, along with public health units across with province, have been experience a shortage of vaccines.

Danny Williamson, spokesperson for WDG Public Health, informed media on Sunday (Jan.31) that all vaccinations had been cancelled in the region due to delays in shipments from both Moderna and Pfizer.

Despite this, Mercer says that all residents in long-term care homes have received their first dose of the vaccine and will begin receiving their second dose this week.

Mercer also said that later in February Public Health should be seeing vaccine supplies coming into the areas.

Speaking to when the region might see a rebound from the second wave Mercer estimated that Wellington-Dufferin-Guleph could be back to a similar state at the beginning of November, in anywhere from two to four weeks ? in line within arrivals of new vaccine supplies.

?I think there is very good reason to be optimistic that when we get to spring, that it's going to be a one way ticket this time, we're going to open and stay open, as long as we can get our community vaccinated.?