

## WDG Public Health recommends move to 'Red' zone following increase in cases

In meetings with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. David Williams, Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Medical Officer of Health and CEO Dr. Nicola Mercer has recommended that the region move to the 'Red' level of the provincial COVID-19 response framework. There has been a significant and troubling increase in cases over the past week along with increased hospitalizations prompting this recommendation.

'I want to tell every resident of our region in the strongest possible terms, that COVID-19 is spreading very quickly in our community. The rate at which cases continue to grow - especially in the last few days - requires immediate action,' said Dr. Mercer.

In addition to measures already in place in the region, moving to the 'Red' level would include limitations on gathering sizes, and new restrictions on businesses and other spaces as detailed in the COVID-19 framework.

'Moving to Red will place significant pressure on every resident and business in our region,' said Dr. Mercer. 'My preference is always to use less-intrusive and targeted approaches, but the current situation requires we consider all the tools available to us to halt the spread of the virus. Please continue to support our local businesses that will be impacted by this decision by shopping local for pick up or delivery.'

'Each of us has the power to choose actions that help prevent the spread of the virus, that keep us safe, that keep our friends and family safe,' said Dr. Mercer. 'I'm asking every one of us to make those choices starting right now. Going to a dinner party or gathering right now may mean that your family is dealing with COVID-19 over the holidays.'

If the Cabinet follows Dr. Mercer's recommendation, the change to the 'Red' level would be announced on Friday (December 11) and take effect on Monday (December 14). The earliest the region would be eligible to move back to 'Orange' would be 28 days from December 14.

'Today, the federal government approved the first COVID-19 vaccine for use in Canada. We can see hope on the horizon,' said Dr. Mercer. 'Please, please do everything you can to make sure that we all make it over the finish line together.'