

Health unit reporting COVID-19 cases less frequently in Northumberland and Kawartha Lakes

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NORTHUMBERLAND — Reducing the frequency of COVID-19 reporting to the public frees up time and resources to focus on general COVID-19 trends and patterns in the community to better prepare for a possible second pandemic wave, health unit staff say.

Throughout the duration of the pandemic, *Northumberland News* and *MyKawartha.com* have been updating the status of cases and have been contacted by a number of readers inquiring why more information on cases is not being released.

But with at least one neighbouring health unit continuing to provide daily updates on the number of COVID-19 cases, the [Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge \(HKPR\) District Health Unit](#) recently opted to provide less frequent updates to the public, while continuing to provide daily updates to the province.

Bill Eekhof, the communications officer for the HKPR District Health Unit, said as of July 20, the health unit changed its reporting of COVID-19 cases in [Haliburton County](#), [Northumberland County](#) and the [City of Kawartha Lakes](#).

Information is now be updated on its website on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays (excluding holidays), instead of daily as it had been since the pandemic started.

“The change in reporting reflects what other Ontario health units are doing and is also indicative of the relatively stable COVID-19 situation currently being seen in the area,” he said. “While HKPR staff will continue to provide daily COVID-19 case counts to the province ... changing the frequency of COVID-19 reporting frees up time and resources for the health unit to focus more closely on general COVID-19 trends and patterns in the community to better prepare for a possible second pandemic wave.”

He said this can help to better inform HKPR’s actions to further prevent the spread of the virus in the community and assist the health unit in preparing for the next phase of the pandemic.

[Peterborough Public Health](#), which serves residents throughout the City and [County of Peterborough](#), as well as [Curve Lake](#) and [Hiawatha First Nations](#), continues to report cases on a daily basis, despite reporting zero new confirmed cases for more than 30 days in a row before two positive cases were reported on Thursday (July 30).

Eekhof said the health unit is still committed to accountability, adding that, “If the situation and numbers warrant, the health unit can increase the frequency of its COVID-19 reporting schedule for the area — including Kawartha Lakes.”

Asked about members of the public seeking more information about new positive