

Ontario will be releasing its COVID-19 fall preparedness plan over several days this week, as the province reported 425 new cases today — the highest daily increase since June 5 when 455 cases were reported, and the third increase over 400 in the last four days.

Health minister Christine Elliott confirmed the “imminent” release of the plan during Question Period at Queen’s Park on Monday (September 21) and afterwards at a media conference with Premier Doug Ford and associate chief medical officer of health Dr. Barbara Yaffe, where Ford called on the federal government to provide the provinces and territories with an additional \$28 billion in federal transfer payments for health care.

Elliott said the plan will address COVID-19 testing volumes and lab capacity to process tests, while accommodating flu season and preparing for a possible surge in cases in hospitals and long-term care facilities.

“We have planned for the worst and are ready for it, and everything else in-between,” Elliott said. “We are looking forward to sharing this plan with the people of Ontario.”

Most of the new cases reported today are in Toronto (175), Peel (84), and Ottawa (60), with smaller increases reported in York (20), Durham (14), Waterloo (13), Halton (12), Simcoe Muskoka (9), Hamilton (8), Middlesex-London (7), and Windsor-Essex (7). The remaining 23 public health units in Ontario are reporting five or fewer cases, with 14 reporting no new cases.

Of today’s new cases, 67% are among people under the age of 40. The percentage of resolved cases has dropped to 87%, from a high of 90.8% in early August. There have been 2 new deaths, with no significant changes to the number of hospitalizations, patients admitted to ICU, or patients on ventilators. The backlog of tests under investigation has decreased by 5,182 to 32,489.

There are 18 new cases identified in Ontario schools (8 students, 4 staff, and 6 unidentified individuals) and 4 new cases (3 child and 1 staff) in licensed child care settings.

In the greater Kawarthas region, there are no new cases to report in Kawartha Lakes, Northumberland, Haliburton, and Hastings and Prince Edward counties. This story will be updated to reflect Peterborough cases when the health unit issues its report later this afternoon (a new case reported by Peterborough Public Health on September 19 was made in error, the health unit has confirmed to kawarthaNOW).

There are currently 6 active cases in Peterborough and 6 active cases in Northumberland; there are no active cases elsewhere in the greater Kawarthas region. None of the cases identified in Ontario schools and child care settings are in the greater Kawarthas region.

Since the pandemic began in the greater Kawarthas region, there have been 111 confirmed