

and services can continue operating with COVID-19 restrictions in place. However, there are some easing of controls under Yellow, including for restaurants: the lifting of the 50-person capacity limit, the ability to stay open longer (to midnight) for in-person dining, and a limit of six people (up from four) being able to sit at the same table.

Another change is that personal care services requiring the removal of face coverings can now resume. Full details about the new COVID-19 control measures under the Yellow category are available at www.hkpr.on.ca.

“We’ve had a significant decrease in COVID-19 cases over the last two-week period, so that’s great news to be rewarded with a move to ‘Yellow’ because things are looking better,” says Dr. Ian Gemmill, Acting local Medical Officer of Health with the HKPRDHU.

“That said, I want to urge people not to let their guard down and continue taking COVID-19 precautions because the situation could quickly change.”

According to Dr. Gemmill, 98 per cent of the

population is still not protected from COVID-19 since they have not yet had the disease nor been immunized against it. “We still have a lot of susceptible people out there, so it’s essential to continue taking precautions so that there is not another resurgence of infection,” he says.

Like other parts of Ontario, variants of concern have been detected in the area. These coronavirus variants tend to be more easily spread, Dr. Gemmill says, and have accounted for approximately one-quarter of all new cases detected in the HKPRDHU region in the last two weeks.

“We may be open for business, but we can’t assume it’s business as usual,” Dr. Gemmill says. “Until more people are vaccinated and we can get COVID-19 under full control, we must continue doing all we can to stop the spread.”

He advises everyone to stay home as much as possible, to limit social gatherings, to avoid unnecessary travel, and if going out for essentials like groceries or a haircut, to wear masks and to maintain 2 metres physical distancing from others.

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DR. IAN GEMMILL

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Dr. Ian Gemmill, acting medical officer of health.

It is anticipated that all highest priority staff and physicians will

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