

6 things we learned about COVID-19 in Northumberland-Kawartha this week

By Sarah Hyatt News Editor Thu., Oct. 7, 2021 timer 3 min. read



Here's the latest on COVID-19 activity, vaccination updates, third doses and more from Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge (HKPR) District Health Unit medical officer of health Dr. Natalie Bocking.

BY THE NUMBERS

[Overall, numbers are lower](#) — and down in comparison to recent weeks.

There were about 39 new confirmed cases in the last two weeks or so (up until Oct.

6).

In terms of transmission in the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit area, close to half — or 43.6 per cent — of recent cases had no known source of transmission; another 30.8 per cent were attributed to household contacts, and 17.9 per cent of new cases were close contacts of a confirmed case. These findings are similar to previous weeks.

New cases related to the school-aged population also remain low, with all transmission so far outside of the school environment. (Count to date is 11 confirmed cases so far this year among the school-aged population.)

NEW CASES BY VAX STATUS

Of the 289 confirmed cases since July 1, about 65.1 per cent were among individuals who were not vaccinated — or individuals who had no record of vaccination. About 19.7 per cent of the individuals were considered either partially vaccinated (meaning one dose), or it had not been 14 days since the second dose.

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About 15.2 per cent of the cases were among individuals considered fully vaccinated.

These numbers are consistent with provincewide figures, which show the majority of new cases are among those either not vaccinated or partially vaccinated, noted Bocking.

REACHING 90 PER CENT VAX COVERAGE

Of the population aged 12-plus in HKPR, about 85.5 per cent had one dose of vaccine and 80.7 per cent had two doses as of Oct. 4 data, which is [the latest data available](#).

This means there's still about 24,000 people eligible for first doses. Reaching 12,000 of those individuals with first doses would translate to achieving that 90 per cent coverage mark in the 12 and older group, explained Bocking.

VAX STATUS BY COUNTY

By county, the first-dose coverage rates for the 12-plus population were as follows: Haliburton, 79.59 per cent; Kawartha, 82.19 per cent; Northumberland, 72.96 per cent.

The second-dose coverage rates were: Haliburton, 75.76 per cent; Kawartha, 77.12 per cent; Northumberland, 68.87 per cent.

Public health is continuing with mobile, pop-up and school-based clinic efforts with the hopes of reaching more people. For more details on how to access the vaccine, visit www.hkpr.on.ca.

THIRD DOSES

There's been no confirmation as of yet regarding the expansion of eligibility for third doses — but it's still a possibility.

“I know that the provincial clinical advisory group for COVID-19 (vaccinations) is reviewing all of that data and the information that's coming from different trials and vaccine followup in other jurisdictions,” said Bocking. “They have indicated that we are likely to see further expansion of eligibility, but we don't have any confirmed timelines.”

As previously reported, currently, residents of long-term care, higher-risk retirement homes, elder care lodges and individuals with certain medical conditions are eligible for third doses (also referred to as booster doses).

“I think we might see, in the next couple of weeks, expansion to perhaps other congregate settings where individuals might be at higher risk, and then I think it will be a question of whether we're seeing it for other more vulnerable populations with more severe disease, which includes older populations ...”

Locally, this would only happen after provincial policy direction.

THANKSGIVING WEEKEND

Historically, during the pandemic, there is a “bump in COVID cases” a week or two after long holiday weekends.

Bocking encourages residents while gathering to do so safely and to remember basic public health measures, recognizing that COVID-19 is still circulating and that there is still the potential for spread.

“We still need to keep our guard up related to COVID-19.”