

TEST ELIGIBILITY TO INCLUDE HEALTH-CARE WORKERS' FAMILIES

ONTARIO'S CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH SAYS THAT WILL SUPPORT 'TIMELY' IDENTIFICATION OF CASES IN WORKERS

HERB GARBUTT
hgarbutt@metroland.com

Ontario is expanding its eligibility for PCR testing to include the families of health-care workers.

"We are now expanding to now include household members of patient-facing health care workers in order to support timely identification of cases in health-care workers and ongoing delivery of health-care services," said Dr. Kieran Moore, Ontario's chief medical officer of health.

Moore said the indicators, such as a decline in the positivity test rate, the number of COVID-19 patients in hospital, and less presence of the virus in

waste water point, toward an actual decline in COVID-19 cases.

Outbreaks in long-term-care homes are also declining.

Asked if the lack of testing was hampering the government from getting a clearer picture of the situation in the province, Moore said PCR tests are still a limited resource that need to be prioritized for those with the highest risks of exposure, or severe outcomes.

He also said the information being received from the hospitals has been helpful in the province's goal which is to protect the health care system.

The distribution of rapid antigen tests throughout



YouTube screen capture

Dr. Kieran Moore announced Ontario will expand its criteria for PCR testing.

the education system has been helpful in monitoring schools, he said and added that only seven of the province's 4,844 have had to close, with most of those being due to staffing short-

ages.

Moore said that although the easing of public health measures "could lead to rough times in February," he was still hopeful of reaching "a low endemic

rate in April."

In past weeks, Moore has talked about "learning to live with the virus." Asked what that looked like, he said distancing and hand hygiene will remain

important and that masking will likely be the last of the public health measures to go.

"To get back to a more normal lifestyle, we have to be very cautious," he said. "We're not out of the woods yet. We've learned significantly from the last two years. We still have to be very cautious, but we're in a much better position to live with the virus."

Moore also said the government may have to reassess the vaccine passport given that "the vaccine isn't providing significant benefit at two doses against the risk of transmission."

He did point out that two doses have been shown to greatly reduce severe outcomes like hospitalization. He again encouraged Ontario residents to get a booster dose as that has shown to reduce transmission by about 60 per cent.

TORONTO STAR

LIMITED-TIME OFFER!

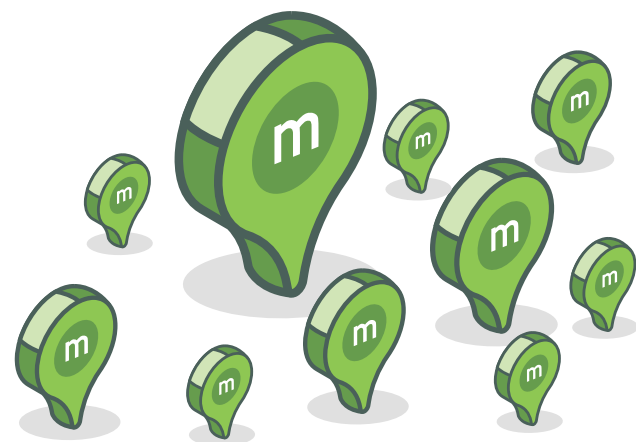
46% OFF
WEEKEND HOME DELIVERY
NOW **\$3.99*** a week for 12 months



SUBSCRIBE ONLINE: tsoffers.ca/deal/CTSWGIFT
OR CALL: **416-367-4500** and quote code **CTSWGIFT**

*Plus HST. See full terms and conditions at tsoffers.ca/deal/CTSWGIFT. This introductory offer is not available to current Toronto Star subscribers. Offer includes the Saturday and Sunday edition of the Toronto Star Newspaper and Starweek magazine. The New York Times International Weekly and Book Review section is not included. Save 46% off the newsstand rate. Home delivery will continue after the 12-month introductory period at the regular home-delivery rate then in effect. Contact customer service at 1-800-268-9213 or 416-367-4500 to get the regular rate for your area. Payment must be made by credit card only. View our subscriber agreement at thestar.com/agreement and our privacy policy at thestar.com/privacy. **The \$25 Metro gift card will be delivered to you once your first payment is processed successfully. Please allow 2-4 weeks for delivery of your gift card. Refunds are not available for the value of the gift card. Subscriptions cancelled prior to the end of the subscription term will be charged back for the value of the gift card. Offer expires February 28, 2022.

IS YOUR BUSINESS GROWING?



Growing your ecommerce business might seem overwhelming at first. And the last thing you want to worry about is getting your product into the hands of new customers. **Metroland Parcel Services** can help with timely, reliable shipping at competitive rates.

Visit our website to learn more about how MPS can ease your growing pains.

SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION



VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT



metrolandparcelservices.ca