

Office of the Deputy Minister

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June 12, 2020

**MEMORANDUM TO: Health System Organizations and Providers****SUBJECT: Update on COVID-19 Preparations and Actions**

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We are encouraged by the improvements in COVID-19 case counts and case growth rates observed this past week, which included today's lowest daily increase since March 28. We will continue to actively monitor trends to quickly detect and contain any surges or outbreaks.

In follow-up to our last communication, we are pleased to share additional updates from the provincial Health Command Table on key actions that are being taken to address COVID-19:

- **Continued delivery of a range of supports** including health human resources, infection prevention and control, and management supports, where necessary, to stabilize long-term care homes in critical need and address outbreaks.
  - On June 11<sup>th</sup>, the government [announced](#) the **gradual resumption of family visits in long-term care homes, retirement homes, and other residential care settings** in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health. Strict health and safety protocols will be required to ensure the safety of residents, as well as staff and visiting families as public health measures in these settings are eased.
- **Enhancing access to COVID-19 testing in First Nations communities on reserve**, working with First Nations communities, Ontario Health, the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs and other partners across the province.
  - This builds on the current activities to ensure geographic and culturally safe access to testing for First Nations and Indigenous communities across the province, which has resulted in testing rates that exceed the Ontario average.
  - The enhanced approach will focus on supporting First Nations in leading community decision-making around testing, informed by evidence.

We thank you for your continued work to respond to the pandemic and implement a phased recovery.

Sincerely,

*(original signed by)*

Helen Angus  
Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Health

Dr. David Williams  
Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Ministry of Health

Matthew Anderson  
President and CEO  
Ontario Health