

October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**MEMORANDUM TO: Health System Organizations and Providers**

**SUBJECT: Update on COVID-19 Planning and Actions**

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This week, the Health Coordination Table focused on the following key actions to enable Ontario's health care system to effectively respond to COVID-19:

- **Modelling projects declining COVID-19 case rates through continued public health measures.**
  - The Science Advisory Table presented COVID-19 modelling that projects case rates declining and stabilizing with continued public health measures and increasing provincial vaccination coverage.
  - Even with some increases in contacts between individuals, cases and intensive care unit occupancy are projected to remain relatively stable if public health measures continue.
- **Reviewing emerging data on vaccine effectiveness and therapeutics for ambulatory patients with COVID-19.**
  - The Science Advisory Table's research findings are that vaccines remain highly effective in the general population, but that effectiveness is waning in long-term care residents.
  - There is insufficient evidence to support the use of azithromycin, bamlanivimab, colchicine, hydroxychloroquine, lopinavir-ritonavir, vitamin D and ivermectin therapies among patients with COVID-19. Therapies with strong, high quality evidence to support use include anti-spike monoclonal antibodies.
- **Monitoring emerging data on the variant of interest Mu (B.1.621) in Ontario and other jurisdictions.**
  - Public Health Ontario presented the most recent evidence and data on the variant of interest, Mu (B.1.621). The data provided insights into global prevalence, transmissibility, immune escape, vaccine effectiveness and disease severity.
- **Maintaining in-person learning through implementation of the fall back to school plan for COVID-19 in schools across Ontario.**
  - The Ministry of Education gave an update on the implementation of the fall back to school plan to maintain in-person learning. The update included data on the proportion of students that have returned to in-person learning, vaccination uptake among students and staff, and trends in outbreaks across the province and in other jurisdictions.

Sincerely,

*(original signed by)*

Dr. Catherine Zahn  
Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Health

Dr. Kieran Moore  
Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Ministry of Health

Matthew Anderson  
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