

**Coronavirus: COVID-19**  
**Current Update – February 24, 2023**

**Public Health Ontario’s Weekly COVID-19 Summary**

Public Health Ontario (PHO) warns us to interpret these trends with caution because they are not entirely accurate. COVID-19 cases, contacts, and outbreaks are only being managed in high-risk populations and settings. There is also a delay in reporting, especially with severe outcomes and deaths. Reported case counts are a severe underestimate of the actual extent of COVID-19 infections in Ontario.

Last week, indicators for COVID-19 were similar overall compared to the previous week. The number of reported COVID-19 cases in Ontario was 4,337 compared to 4,638 the week before. Last week, there were 223 reported COVID-19-related hospitalizations, which is lower than the week before, and 19 reported COVID-19-related deaths, which is also lower than the week before.

The total number of confirmed, ongoing COVID-19 outbreaks in high-risk settings is 69, compared to 100 outbreaks the week before. The number of outbreaks decreased in Long-Term Care homes (from 35 to 26), retirement homes (from 27 to 9), hospitals (from 25 to 23), and congregate living settings, such as group homes/supportive housing, shelters and correctional facilities (from 13 to 11).

Source:

1. [https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/nCoV/epi/respiratory-virus-overview-ontario.pdf?rev=448a6bf1f6d3496db3e95406d2ca2653&sc\\_lang=en](https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/nCoV/epi/respiratory-virus-overview-ontario.pdf?rev=448a6bf1f6d3496db3e95406d2ca2653&sc_lang=en)

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**Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership Mental Health and Disability Services Survey 2023**

Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership (TEQ LIP) is launching a survey for service providers in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Based in Toronto, TEQ LIP is an IRCC funded partnership program that engages with diverse stakeholders in collaborative actions to facilitate newcomer settlement in Scarborough.

The survey is titled ‘TEQ LIP Mental Health and Disability Services Survey 2023’ and is being conducted to learn about the current mental health and disability services provided to refugees and newcomers. This survey is specifically looking to understand how the COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted these services and their delivery. Information collected in this survey will help inform the development of capacity building sessions for service providers in the mental health and disability sectors.

**Who this is survey is for:**

North Yorkers for Disabled Persons, Inc.

Updated February 24, 2023

This survey is intended for service provider organizations in the GTA who are:

- i) providing mental health services, and/or disability services to refugees and newcomers
- ii) and/or serving newcomer clients with disabilities and/or mental health needs

**How you can participate:**

The survey will be open from February 23rd 2023 - March 16th 2023. It will take 20 minutes to complete.

Survey Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8SRJLOY>

Please share the survey with your networks.

**Accessibility:**

This survey can be completed over the phone. Please contact Azreen Sikder at [asikder@ccscan.ca](mailto:asikder@ccscan.ca) to coordinate.

For questions, please contact Azreen Sikder at [asikder@ccscan.ca](mailto:asikder@ccscan.ca)

Thank you for your time and support.

**City of Toronto: “It is important for everyone 6-months of age and older to stay up-to-date with their COVID-19 vaccinations.”**

According to the data collected by the City of Toronto, the spread of COVID-19 is currently stable in Toronto. The variant XBB.1.5 is now the dominant variant in Ontario. The proportion of XBB.1.5 increased from 22.5% (January 22 to 28) to 31.1% (January 29 to February 4) and was projected to increase to 69.9% by February 22, 2023. Early data from the CDC shows that the vaccines can provide protection against this variant from severe infection ([source](#)).

Anyone who is 5 years and older who has not gotten a bivalent vaccine booster after September 1, 2022, should still get their booster for stronger protection against this new variant.

In addition, we can reduce the spread of COVID-19 by continuing to:

- Follow public health measures (click [here](#) for more information)
- Use layers of protection (click [here](#) for definition)
- Stay home if you are sick or have symptoms (click [here](#) for list of symptoms)
- Get tested and treated if you are eligible (click [here](#) and [here](#) for more information).

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**The Burn: reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic through art**

Toronto residents are invited to heal and cleanse through the restorative power of rising heat, ash, smoke and water. The Burn, an interactive art installation inspired by the universally sacred elements of fire and water, provides a sanctuary for comfort and care with rituals of intention setting, releasing and letting go.

On now until March 11, residents are invited to engage with The Burn's travelling vessels by setting healing intentions on wooden spheres. Following the tour, take part in a commemorative ceremony on Nathan Phillips Square on Saturday, March 11, where the wooden spheres will be ignited for a 24-hour burn. Ashes from The Burn will be harvested, mixed into soil and spread across city gardens to honour the spirit of our collective healing. More information is available at [Toronto.ca/TheBurn](https://toronto.ca/TheBurn).

This installation is part of Stronger TOgether, a program for Toronto residents to recognize and reflect on the COVID-19 pandemic. More information is available at [Toronto.ca/StrongerTOgether](https://toronto.ca/StrongerTOgether).

Source:

<https://www.toronto.ca/news/city-of-toronto-reflects-on-pandemic-response-three-years-after-torontos-first-confirmed-case-of-covid-19/>

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***These are just a few of the COVID-19 vaccine clinics happening in Toronto in February!  
Click [here](#) to see more!***

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### **Request Drive-Through Vaccinations for Children with Disabilities in East Toronto**

- South East Toronto Family Health Team (SETFHT) is offering drive-through vaccinations for children aged six months and older with disabilities.
- Parents, caregivers and families who need this service should e-mail [info@setfht.on.ca](mailto:info@setfht.on.ca) with their request.

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### **Toronto's City-Run Clinics**

[Appointments](#) are strongly recommended at this time for each person being vaccinated. COVID vaccine appointments can be booked online or by calling 1-833-943-3900 (TTY 1-866-797-0007). City-run clinics are also currently accepting walk-ins.

Everyone aged 6 months and over can safely get the COVID-19, and flu vaccine at the same time. These locations are accessible. Please bring all required mobility devices with you. You don't need a health card, but you need to bring some form of identification with you. ([source](#))

- **Metro Hall:** 214 Wellington St. W., Monday to Thursday, noon to 6 p.m. and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Crossroads Plaza:** 2625 Weston Rd., Monday to Thursday, noon to 6 p.m. and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **East York Town Centre/Thorncliffe Park Community Hub:** 45 Overlea Blvd., Tuesday to Friday, noon to 6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **1 Eglinton Square:** Tuesday to Friday, noon to 6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Cloverdale Mall:** 250 The East Mall, Tuesday to Friday, noon to 6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- **Mitchell Field Community Centre:** 89 Church Ave., Tuesday to Friday, noon to 6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### **Accessibility/Accommodation at City-Run Clinics**

All City-run clinics are able to offer accommodation. Each clinic has parking near the entrance, ramps, elevators, and wheelchairs. Staff are also on site at each clinic to support as necessary. Clients who need a care provider or service animal with them will be accommodated. There are also privacy rooms available upon request.

If you require an accommodation, alert a staff member upon arrival or at any time while at the clinic.

### **Vaccine Clinic Accommodation Request**

You may also request an accommodation ahead of your appointment by filling out the Vaccine Accommodation Survey (click [here](#)). You will be asked the date and time of your vaccination appointment, and a public health nurse will contact you within two business days to confirm the details of your request.

Examples of accommodations they can provide include:

- The use of a private area in the clinic to receive the vaccine
- Using a guide to help navigate the clinic
- Access to a cot to lie down after you have received the vaccine
- Access to ASL interpretation (at least 48 hours' notice required)

If you need assistance filling out the survey or requesting accommodation please call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600 (TTY: 416-392-0658).

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## **The 519 Wellness Hub**

Access COVID-19 vaccines, flu vaccines, and other health services at the 519's low-barrier, drop-in wellness hub. Ontario Health (OHIP) or Interim Federal Health (IFH) card not necessary, but good to bring.

Accessibility: The clinic takes place on the third floor. The 519 is an accessible facility with a ramp, elevator, and all-gender washrooms.

When: Every Wednesday until March 29, From 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Where: 519 Church Street.

Health services:

- COVID-19 vaccines: first and second dose and bivalent booster available (for those eligible)
- Flu (influenza) shot
- Referrals for catch-up vaccines: HPV, Hep B, meningitis, and shingles (for those eligible)
- Blood sugar and blood pressure checks
- Health ambassadors will work with you to explore options for accessing health and social support services
- Free HIV self-testing
- Stay tuned for potential mental health screening coming up!

Questions? Email [community@The519.org](mailto:community@The519.org).

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## **February COVID-19 Wellness Hubs, COVID-19 Vaccination, and More from the Downtown East Toronto Ontario Health Team**

Do you not have a health card? No status? Uninsured? They may be able to help!

For more information about all of these services, visit:

<https://regentparkchc.org/covid-19-vaccine-clinic/>

Cold, Flu, and COVID-19 Testing and Treatment Clinic

This clinic is for people with cold-like symptoms, such as fever, cough, sore throat, and runny nose. You can talk to a clinician about information on COVID-19 medications, including your options and eligibility, at Cold, Flu, and COVID-19 Testing and Medication Clinics.

This clinic is being held at the Fred Victor building at 40 Oak Street, Toronto **every Wednesday** from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Walk ins/drop ins only. Limited availability. First come first served. Identification is not required to get your vaccine. But if you have an OHIP card or other identification, please bring it with you as it will help with the registration process.

### Flu, COVID-19, and Catch-Up Vaccines

This clinic is for people with cold-like symptoms, such as fever, cough, sore throat, and runny nose. Their staff will work with you to explore options that may be available for you to access various Health, Social, and Support services.

This clinic is being held at 465 Dundas Street East **every Thursday** from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. It accepts walk-ins and appointments.

To book appointments or inquire about services, leave a voicemail at (416) 364-2261 ext. 2306.

### Flu and COVID-19 Vaccines

This clinic is for people with cold-like symptoms, such as fever, cough, sore throat, and runny nose. This clinic is being held at the Fred Victor building at 40 Oak Street, Toronto **every Saturday** from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Click [here](#) to book an appointment for the Saturday clinic.

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### **SickKids COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics**

SickKids Hospital is hosting weekly COVID-19 vaccine clinics for any infant/child aged six months to under five years who requires accommodations due to medical complexity, developmental disorder, mobility challenges, communication, behavioural and other specialized needs (including significant fear of needles).

This clinic will happen each Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. More dates and times are expected to become available soon.

It's by appointment only. To make an appointment, you need to be referred through your doctor. For any questions regarding patient referrals, contact [mobile.vaccination@sickkids.ca](mailto:mobile.vaccination@sickkids.ca).

Do you have questions or concerns about the COVID-19 vaccine for children? Book an appointment with the SickKids COVID-19 Vaccine Consult Service. Visit [sickkids.ca/vaccineconsult](https://sickkids.ca/vaccineconsult) to book an appointment!

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### **Health Connect Ontario - 811**

Connect with a Registered Nurse day or night for free, secure and confidential health advice.

Check your symptoms, get health advice with referrals to local & specialized services as needed and access to a medical library. Access safe, high-quality care and avoid unnecessary visits to the emergency room. This service is an easy way to get connected to care you or your loved ones need, but it does not replace your other touch point with your health care provider. In a medical emergency call 911 immediately.

OHIP not needed. Anonymous calls accepted.

Refugee Health Hotline calls are now redirected automatically to 811

Online (including live chat): [Ontario.ca/healthconnectontario](https://ontario.ca/healthconnectontario)

Call: 811 or toll free TTY line 1-866-797-0007

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### **Ontario's COVID-19 Vaccine booking portal:**

Those eligible for a vaccine can book here: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/book-vaccine/>.

Or by phone at: 1-833-943-3900.

For general information about vaccines, call: 1-888-999-6488.

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### **In Toronto? Here are two transportation options to go to your vaccine appointment:**

1. The Ontario Community Support Association's Accessible Drive-to-Vaccines program provides door-to-door rides to vaccination sites for people with disabilities, including seniors with mobility issues. You must have a vaccination appointment booked. You need to request a ride at least 48 hours before the appointment. To book, call 211 or click [here](#) to request an appointment online.

2. Wheel-Trans is committed to providing vaccine rides to the elderly and people with disabilities in Toronto. Wheel-Trans is offering individual rides to City-run mass vaccination sites, pharmacies, doctor's offices, and clinics that are giving out vaccines. Customers may be joined by one Support Person on their Wheel-Trans ride.

You may be eligible for Wheel-Trans service if your disability prevents you from using the TTC's conventional transit for all or part of your trip.

If you are not yet a Wheel-Trans customer, and you think you may qualify for Wheel-Trans service, you are invited to apply by calling Wheel-Trans Customer Service at 416-393-4111, Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Existing Wheel-Trans customers can book their rides to and from their vaccine appointments by calling Wheel-Trans Reservations at 416-393-4222, seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. or through the Wheel-Trans Self-Booking Website. Access the website by clicking here: <https://mywheel-trans.ttc.ca/SelfBooking2020/Login?ReturnUrl=%2fSelfBooking2020>.

### **Upcoming Events:**

## **North Yorkers**

### **The Communication Enrichment Class (ongoing)**

The class runs virtually on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1 p.m. Class is on pause for the holiday season and will resume on January 10, 2022. You can find the online blog at <https://nydpcec.wordpress.com/> where class activities will be posted before each class. If you or someone you know has a communication disability and may be interested in participating in the class, please contact Jessica, our Manager of Client Services via email at [jessica.nydp@gmail.com](mailto:jessica.nydp@gmail.com).

## **March of Dimes**

### **One to One Peer Support Program**

The One to One Peer Support program is still running. No one understands quite like somebody who has lived the same experience. Our Peer Support program pairs caregivers with peers who are also experienced in caregiving and can offer practical advice and support by phone or a video chat. Contact Angie Clark by email at [aclark@marchofdimes.ca](mailto:aclark@marchofdimes.ca) or call 1-905-301-8114 for more information or to get connected.

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If you or someone you know uses Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), and requires resources related to COVID-19, please contact Jessica ([jessica.nydp@gmail.com](mailto:jessica.nydp@gmail.com)) and she can assist you in accessing and/or creating various communication tools.

If you think you may be experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, take the self-assessment at [www.ontario.ca/coronavirus](http://www.ontario.ca/coronavirus). Follow all directions from your medical provider or your local health unit at the following phone numbers:



Health Connect Ontario: 811  
Telehealth Ontario: 1-866-797-0000  
Toronto Public Health: 416-338-7600  
Peel Public Health: 905-799-7700  
Durham Region Health Department: 905-668-7711  
York Region Public Health: 1-877-464-9675

Please refer to previous updates as lots of important information has been provided that may still be relevant. If you have any questions or require more information on how you can protect yourself and those around you from the COVID-19 virus, please contact our Senior Manager of Client Services/Lead AAC Facilitator Jessica at 416-222-4448 or [jessica.nydp@gmail.com](mailto:jessica.nydp@gmail.com).

Clients wondering what's next, most people have been vaccinated.  
RATs coming back? Kids are tired of that, wearing masks in classrooms.