

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement from Board of Health Chair Joe Cressy on Phase 2 vaccine rollout in targeted Toronto neighbourhoods

"Today we are providing an update on our Team Toronto Phase 2 vaccination plan, with one clear focus: vaccinate the most vulnerable in our city, as quickly as possible.

The COVID-19 variants, which are more transmissible and more dangerous, have changed the game. We need to get shots into the arms of those who are at greatest risk.

Our public health data has consistently demonstrated that the two factors that indicate vulnerability for serious illness and death from COVID-19 are your age, and where you live. Some neighbourhoods in our city, particularly in the northwest and northeast, have COVID rates that are more than 10 times higher than others. These same neighbourhoods are also home to a higher number of frontline and essential workers

To protect those at greatest risk, following consultation with the Province, we have adjusted our immunization strategy to focus on a targeted hot-spot neighbourhood and workplace approach. It's a plan to bring vaccines to the neighbourhoods that are hardest hit, and where frontline essential workers live. Our data-driven plan is a coordinated effort across our whole healthcare system, with Toronto hospitals and health care partners. It's a Team Toronto approach.

This is a three-part plan. First, based on today's Provincial announcement, we're updating our vaccine rollout to target hot-spot neighbourhoods in our city. In these 111 neighbourhoods, which have the highest incidence of COVID-19, we'll be working with the Province of Ontario and our healthcare partners to support a combination of mobile and pop-up clinics for residents age 18 and over to get vaccinated.

Second, working with our hospital partners, we're launching a pilot program to bring vaccines directly to select essential workplaces, so frontline workers can be vaccinated on-site.

Third, alongside our healthcare partners we're expanding our mobile and pop-up clinic capacity, while at the same time scaling up operations at our City-run mass immunization clinics by opening an additional three clinic locations (for a total of nine across the city).

This approach is about reaching people in their communities and their workplaces. It's about getting every dose to those in greatest need as quickly and strategically as possible. By continuing to adapt and evolve our vaccine rollout plans based on local needs and public health data, we can ensure that we are protecting people and helping to save lives."

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