

News Release

April 21, 2021

City of Toronto and partners launch Team Toronto Sprint Strategy to triple vaccine access in 13 hot spot neighbourhoods

Today, Mayor John Tory, Medical Officer of Health Dr. Eileen de Villa and Fire Chief and General Manager of the Office of Emergency Management Matthew Pegg provided an update on the Team Toronto effort to get vaccines to those that need them most, including a new mobile vaccination sprint strategy with Toronto health sector partners to triple the amount of vaccine in hot spot neighbourhoods.

Toronto expects to start regularly receiving larger shipments of vaccine from the Province of Ontario. The City and Toronto Public Health are working with Health Sector partners including hospitals and community health centres to ensure that this increased vaccine supply will be offered to eligible individuals, especially in hot spots, where they live as quickly as possible through mobile and pop-up community vaccination clinics.

TPH and Health Sector partners have identified 13 priority areas identified by postal code to direct increased vaccine to through mobile and pop-up clinics:

- Northwest: M9W, M9V, M9L, M9M, M9N, M6M, M3K, M3J, M3N, M3M
- Central: M4H
- East: M1J, M1G

To kickoff the sprint strategy, this past weekend Toronto Public Health allocated 3,700 doses for mobile and pop-up clinics. For subsequent sprint strategy clinics, the plan is to allocate 12,000 doses a week – more than tripling the number of people that can be vaccinated in community clinics. Fourteen City-funded Vaccination Engagement Teams are also recruiting 280 resident ambassadors from across Toronto to support these coordinated efforts to increase vaccine uptake: www.toronto.ca/news/city-of-toronto-awards-5-5-million-in-covid-19-vaccine-engagement-teams-grants-to-local-agencies-for-vaccine-outreach-in-vulnerable-communities/.

The nine City-operated COVID-19 immunization clinics will continue to operate from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days per week. A new block of approximately 231,000 individual appointments in City-operated immunization clinics between May 10 and June 6 will be available soon through the Province's online booking system: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/book-vaccine/>.

As part of the Sprint Strategy, City-operated clinic staffing and resources are being adjusted and enhanced to maximize vaccinations in hot spot areas. Clinic resources will be enhanced at the following locations:

- Scarborough Town Centre - 25 per cent increase
- Malvern Community Recreation Centre - 25 per cent increase
- Carmine Stefano Community Centre - 20 per cent increase

- The Hangar Sport and Event Centre – 25 per cent increase

Once the additional immunizers are in place, the nine City-run clinics will be administering 8,586 doses per day – an increase of 540 daily doses, resulting in the total potential vaccination of more than 60,000 people per week.

Vaccination at community mobile or pop-up clinics is available to anyone age 18 or older in the targeted hot spot community. Hospital and community partners intentionally promote community clinics only to the specific neighbourhoods that the clinic is meant to serve. Clinics are brought to the attention of eligible local residents directly through primary care physicians like family doctors, employers, building managers, faith leaders and other local leaders, who are directly connected with the people the community clinics will serve. Pop-up and mobile clinics are managed by community partners in a variety of ways to best suit the needs and preferences of the community they are serving.

Currently, all people age 60 or older and people age 50 and older living in hot spot neighbourhoods are eligible for vaccination at a City-operated clinic. There are a number of other groups (professions, medical conditions, and living situations) currently eligible for vaccination. A full list of eligible groups with information on how to register for appointments is available on the City's COVID-19: How to Get Vaccinated webpage: <https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/covid-19-protect-yourself-others/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-how-to-get-vaccinated/?accordion=vaccine-eligibility>. Eligibility will also change as vaccine supply increases. Anyone waiting for their turn is encouraged to check [toronto.ca](https://www.toronto.ca) regularly.

Toronto is in the Shutdown Zone of the Province's COVID-19 response framework and subject to a provincial Stay-at-Home order. Everyone in the city should be staying home except for essential reasons such as going out for groceries or exercise. Please review the City's COVID-19: Guide for Residents for information on what is and is not permitted under provincial regulations and City bylaws: <https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/covid-19-reopening-recovery-rebuild/covid-19-guide-for-toronto-residents/>.

Quotes:

"City officials and Toronto Public Health have worked with our hospital and healthcare partners to build this Team Toronto Sprint Strategy which will focus on ramping up vaccinations in the 13 hottest hot spot postal codes. This will bring vaccine doses for eligible people 18 and older to where people live in the neighbourhoods that are in the greatest need. Within the parameters of available supply, we will also be increasing vaccination capacity across the network of nine City-operated clinics and substantially increasing capacity at four clinics in hot spot areas. We're ready to increase capacity further when we have even more vaccine supply. What is clear right now is we have a Team Toronto effort that can administer thousands of doses a day, that can adjust as needed to get the limited doses we have in the areas they are most needed, and that is ready to do more as soon as we get more vaccine."

- Mayor John Tory

"Our Team Toronto sprint strategy is a partnership between the City of Toronto, our hospitals and health care centres, and community organizations. We're united in one goal: get vaccines to our most vulnerable, as quickly as possible. By working together to ramp up vaccinations in the 13 highest priority areas through mobile and pop-up clinics, we are working to protect Torontonians at greatest risk of COVID-19, including frontline and essential workers. Right now, it's all hands on deck to get vaccines out to our hardest-hit communities, and into Torontonians' arms."

- Councillor Joe Cressy (Ward 10 Spadina-Fort York), Chair of the Toronto Board of Health

"Partnership is central to the mobile sprint strategy. Community leadership is an essential driver of mobile accomplishments. Community-driven clinics and community-driven awareness are vital to getting needles in arms and to addressing vaccine hesitancy and distrust. I'm thankful for the leadership of Toronto Public Health, our health care sector partners and the City as we work together to make this strategy a reality."

- Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health

"The teams from our Toronto Hospitals, primary care providers and teams across the health system continue to inspire me as we work together on the mobile sprint strategy. These clinics, held in communities through the leadership and wisdom of community leaders are inspiring and give me hope that Toronto can dampen the effect of this virus to the point that we can think about a future where we live with this virus and regain much of what we've lost to the pandemic. The more vaccine that comes, the harder the teams will work to bring this about."

- Shiran Isaacksz, Co-Lead of the Toronto Mobile Vaccine Strategy Table and Vice President of UHN Altum Health & Business Development

"Hospital and community health workers from across Toronto have quickly mobilized to bring vaccines to the neighbourhoods that need them the most. Working with the people and organizations who have trusted relationships with local neighbourhoods has been a key success factor in the mobile clinics so far. We thank everyone who has been involved in this #TeamToronto effort and, in particular, the local communities who have enthusiastically embraced COVID-19 vaccines."

- Phillip Anthony, Co-Lead of the Toronto Mobile Vaccine Strategy Table and Manager for the East Toronto Vaccination Strategy at Michael Garron Hospital

"The City's Immunization Task Force is committed to vaccinating as many people as possible, as quickly as possible. Implementing this strategy achieves two primary goals; significantly enhancing the allocation of vaccine to our health sector partners and increasing the capacity of City-operated clinics in high priority neighbourhoods. I continue to urge eligible residents to book their vaccination appointment today and help us beat COVID-19."

- Chief Matthew Pegg, General Manager of the Office of Emergency Management

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