



Lakeridge
Health

May 2021

Dear Friends and Neighbours,



Cynthia Davis
President and CEO



Dr. Tony Stone
Chief of Staff

Thank you for your continued support of Lakeridge Health and for your efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Working together with our community and health care partners, we are flattening the curve. **Our collective efforts are paying off.**

This collaboration is a great example of how we, as a community, are living our vision, *One System. Best Health.* We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all health care providers who continue to work with us to protect and promote a healthy community.

As you are aware, variants of concerns led to this third and most aggressive wave of the pandemic. However, while the number of confirmed cases has gradually decreased since mid-April, the number of people hospitalized for COVID-19, and those who have been admitted to the ICU, remains **very high** in Ontario and Durham Region.

This third wave has forced Lakeridge Health to make some difficult decisions. As you may know, to increase the number of ICU and critical care beds required, we had to temporarily pause non-emergent surgeries and ambulatory services. By doing so, we have freed up space and staff to treat the urgent needs of COVID-19 patients. We hope to resume these services as soon as we can safely do so.

Lakeridge Health is also part of a regional network of hospitals across southeastern Ontario. Over the past several weeks, our hospital has received patients and/or transferred patients to other facilities to ensure the safest and highest quality care for every patient during this challenging time.

Taking Care of Each Other

These past few months have been stressful and exhausting for everyone across the Lakeridge Health system. We are very proud of how our team members have responded to unparalleled pressures with professionalism and courage. We have taken great care to ensure that additional health and wellness supports are available to our team, as well as increased communication and recognition programs to preserve and strengthen our valuable corporate culture.

We are so grateful to have received numerous messages of encouragement and support from many of you in our community – social media posts, emails, letters to the editor, painted rocks, drawings from children, and more. Our team has appreciated each one of your positive sentiments. Thank you!

Vaccine Distribution

We are encouraged that so many of you are choosing to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Canadians are very fortunate that vaccines are now so widely available. The COVID-19 vaccine, combined with ongoing health and safety practices, offers us the best path forward to manage and ultimately defeat this terrible virus.

Over **300,000** vaccine doses have been given across Durham Region at mass vaccination clinics, hot spot clinics, mobile clinics, workplace vaccination clinics, and pharmacies. Be assured that as more vaccine supply becomes available, more appointments will open up. Please visit the [Durham Region website](#) for regular updates on priority populations and appointment availability across the region.

Patient and Family-First Solutions

This pandemic has helped advance our thinking on how to leverage a broader range of resources, both in hospital and in the community and to find the right care in the right place for some of our most vulnerable patients. Like many Ontario hospitals over the past few years, Lakeridge Health has seen a significant increase in patients remaining in hospital though they no longer require acute hospital-level care. We know that a prolonged stay in a hospital setting, particularly for the frail elderly, can result in the deconditioning and deterioration of health.

Our clinical teams are taking a collaborative approach to each patient's needs and wishes. They are working closely with community partners, long-term care homes, and families and caregivers, to find better solutions that can help patients transition back to their homes or to another care environment more ideally suited to their needs.

Stay Safe This Holiday Weekend

We understand that the current provincial Stay-At-Home order has resulted in frustration for many of you. But to further protect current health care resources and our ability to provide safe and compassionate care, it is important to **stay vigilant** and continue to **follow public health guidelines** - universal masking, hand hygiene, physical distancing, and early testing.

Unfortunately, we have seen a pattern over the last year: a surge of new COVID-19 cases shortly after a major holiday. So, as we head into the Victoria Day holiday weekend, we are asking for your help and cooperation once again.

Together, we can break this cycle. Stay well and safe.

In closing, thank you again for your continued patience, dedication, and commitment to fostering a healthy Durham Region.

Cynthia Davis
President and CEO

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