



April 13, 2021

Dear Friends and Neighbours,

Thank you for everything you are doing to help stop the spread of COVID-19 across our community. Unfortunately, we find ourselves at a very critical time during this third state of emergency and provincial Stay-at-Home Order.



Cynthia Davis
President & CEO



Dr. Tony Stone
Chief of Staff

Now, more than ever, we depend on a shared commitment to the provincial directives to get control of this virus.

Our hospitals are experiencing extreme pressure on critical care capacity. We are witnessing the highest case counts of COVID-19 in Ontario, widespread community transmission of the virus, and more critical care admissions than at any point during the pandemic. Closer to home, at Lakeridge Health, critical care and medical admissions in Durham Region are higher than at any point in Wave 1 or 2. Alarmingly, these admissions continue to rise.

But despite the strain of the pandemic, we are finding solutions. Our staff and physicians – who are also parents, partners, siblings, sons and daughters – show up every day to provide high quality and safe care with compassion and kindness. As a system, Ontario hospitals are working together to share resources and transfer patients between facilities, when required. Additionally, we are working with our local health partners to get as many Durham Region residents vaccinated as quickly as possible.

Ensuring our ability to provide Urgent and Emergency Care

The pandemic situation is evolving quickly, and Lakeridge Health is making real-time decisions to ensure the safety of patients, families, and staff.

At this time, emergency surgeries will continue, as well as prioritized non-emergency and time-sensitive surgeries, such as cancer surgeries. But we are curtailing all non-urgent and non-emergency services to protect our ability to provide urgent and emergency care. This ramp down also includes services such as X-rays, bloodwork, rehabilitation, and other outpatient procedures.

In doing so, we are creating more capacity in our hospitals – space and staff to serve the patients we currently have and those we expect to see in the weeks ahead.

Continuing	Curtailing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency and urgent surgeries • Prioritized non-emergency surgeries and time sensitive surgeries, for example cancer surgeries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-urgent, non-emergency services for example, hip replacements • Ambulatory services, such as X-rays, bloodwork, rehabilitation, and other outpatient services

We know the ramp down of non-urgent and non-emergency services will be disruptive for many people. However, we are assessing our capacity needs daily and are hopeful we can resume these services soon.

Book your Vaccine Appointment

The provincial Stay-At-Home Order requires everyone to stay at home except for essential purposes - trips to the grocery store or pharmacy, going to health care appointments, exercising outside, and going to school or work that cannot be done remotely. We urge you to follow these instructions.

We also ask that you receive the vaccine when eligible. Getting vaccinated is crucial to fighting this pandemic. For more information about who is eligible and how to book a vaccine appointment, visit durham.ca/vaccineappointment. More vaccine information can be found at durham.ca/covidvaccines.

Book a COVID-19 Test if Symptomatic

If there is a chance you have been exposed to COVID-19, please get tested without delay. If you or anyone in your household feels unwell, we urge you to immediately book a COVID-19 test at Covidswab.lh.ca.

Delaying a COVID-19 test increases the risk of unknowingly spreading the virus. Once you book your appointment, please isolate until you have your result. Again, you may inadvertently spread the virus before knowing your test results. Testing is easy, quick, and there are many testing locations in Durham to choose from – check locations at www.lh.ca.

Do not let your guard down

Please continue to follow public health guidelines, including consistently washing your hands, wearing a mask when outside your household, and practicing physical distancing. Together, our efforts made a difference during the earlier waves of the pandemic when we were successful in bending the curve.

We are counting on you and we know we can do it again!

Your actions and decisions over the next four weeks during the Stay-at-Home Order are critical and will directly impact the health of our community.

Thank you for listening and more importantly, for taking action. Lakeridge Health is working around the clock to save lives, offer comfort, and keep our community healthy and safe. Please support us by doing your part.

Best regards,

Cynthia Davis
President & CEO

Dr. Tony Stone
Chief of Staff