



## MEDIA RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, February 22, 2021, Peterborough

# Worried About COVID-19 Variants of Concern? Here's What You Can Do

## *Peterborough Public Health Appeals to Local Residents to Keep Variants of Concern at Bay*

Peterborough Public Health is asking all residents to remain vigilant in following public health measures so our region can remain free of variants of concern (VoC) for as long as possible.

“Our health unit remains one of the few areas without a COVID-19 variant case since they were first detected in Ontario last December,” said Dr. Rosana Salvaterra, Medical Officer of Health. “I am asking residents to continue doubling down on public health measures so we can stave off VoCs for as long as possible while we vaccinate our high-risk populations.”

Dr. Salvaterra explained that VoCs have a higher rate of transmissibility than the dominant strain of COVID-19. In order to prevent its spread, it requires the layering of all public health measures together to be effective. “This means we need everyone to wear their masks, maintain two metres physical distance from others, wash your hands frequently, and socialize with household members only,” she said. She also strongly urged residents to stay local and limit travel outside of our region to other zones where VoCs are present.

Peterborough Public Health is closely watching for VoCs in the region, and every positive COVID-19 test in Ontario is now screened for them. Together with its local partners, efforts are underway to ramp up vaccination of high-risk populations later this week as soon as vaccine supplies have been received.

Dr. Salvaterra noted there are new regulations requiring individuals to comply with the [Reopening Ontario Act](#), not just businesses or organizations.

“Regulation 364 reminds us that any time we are in any business or facility that is open to the public, we must maintain two metres distance from every other person, unless that person is our caregiver or a member of our household,” she stated. “So effectively, this means that sharing a meal or a beverage can only take place with members of our households. We cannot meet a friend for lunch. We cannot arrange to have dinner out with another couple, or with anyone outside our immediate household group.”

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Peterborough Public Health will report any local cases of VoCs if detected on the [Local COVID Tracker](#).  
For more information, please visit the COVID-19 webpage on [www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca](http://www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca).

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