

## Aurora hits record high of COVID-19 cases

Aurora hit 30 active cases of COVID-19 for the very first time over the weekend.

This grim statistic, although numbers have since declined, came as the Province reported a one-day record of more than 1,300 new cases of the virus on Sunday morning.

At press time this week, the community was grappling with 27 active cases of COVID-19, bringing the total number of cases recorded in Aurora to 290. 248 cases are now marked as resolved and there are currently no active outbreak situations.

Of the 27 active cases, 24 are related to local transmission or close contact, with 1 case each attributed to institutional outbreak, workplace clusters and travel.

Yet, despite rising numbers across Ontario, Dr. Karim Kurji, York Region's Chief Medical Officer of Health, saw some positives on the horizon.

“Last week, the Province released its framework keeping Ontario safe and open,” said Dr. Kurji in his weekly briefing on Monday. “This particular framework contains colour-coded levels that can change according to our metrics. In addition, the Province has provided indicators so that this complete transparency with respect to businesses and the public knowing exactly where we stand. This particular framework is a balance between livelihoods and the health impacts of COVID-19.

“Our case numbers and outbreaks continue to be high. However, we are noticing a plateauing in the numbers of cases. If we were to remove the institutional cases from the total number of cases, we actually find signs of decline in most municipalities in York Region. However, there is no room for complacency for either businesses or individual residents. This is going to continue for some time, so we need to be very vigilant.”

Dr. Kurji also hailed the announcement from Pfizer that their COVID-19 vaccine trial has shown promising results.

“We have some hope around the corner as one of the vaccine manufacturers has just announced some remarkable developments,” said Dr. Kurji. “In the meantime, I think it is important for us to go back to the basics. The basics, again, are keep your physical distance of two metres from others. If you cannot keep that distance, indoors in particular, make sure that you wear a mask, particularly where it is required by law as well, wash your hands frequently, have your usual cough and sneeze etiquettes, do not go out and do not mingle if you have any symptoms of COVID-19 and avoid social gatherings with people outside your household.

“In addition to all that, please download the COVID-19 app, make sure you get your flu shot, and go for testing if you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or you have been a close contact of a case. We can make a difference, as you have already demonstrated.”

**By Brock Weir** Editor Local Journalism Initiative Reporter