

Region winds down mass vaccination sites in favour of targeted approach

As vaccination numbers continue to rise, York Region Public Health has begun the process of winding down its mass vaccination clinics in favour of a more targeted approach to delivering shots to fight the spread of COVID-19.

By Monday, August 2, 81 per cent of York Region residents ages 12 and up have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. Those who have received second doses and are now fully vaccinated is not far behind at 71 per cent.

“As the percentage of vaccinated residents continues to increase for first and second doses, the need for large-scale immunization clinics is decreasing,” said Dr. Richard Gould, Associate Medical Officer of Health for the Region of York, on Monday. “Rather than continuing to operate these mass COVID-19 vaccination clinics, York Region Public Health is beginning [the move] to smaller mobile and pop-up clinic models to more effectively reach those individuals who have faced barriers in accessing vaccinations or who have not yet been vaccinated.

“This approach allows Public Health to reallocate resources to support mobile and pop-up clinics in even more convenient locations like shopping malls, schools and other well-frequented locations across York Region. It will also help to target more specific immunization efforts in areas of the Region where vaccination rates may be lower.”

The closure of the mass vaccination clinics, he added, will be done on a “staggered” approach with the goal of having them all shuttered by the end of August.

If you have a second dose appointment already booked for a mass vaccination clinic, Public Health encourages you to re-book an earlier dose or simply walk into a clinic to get your shot.

“Individuals who have second dose appointments currently booked for later this summer or early fall are encouraged to rebook an earlier appointment or walk into one of the open clinics as soon as possible,” said Dr. Gould. “Individuals no longer need to wait 16 weeks before appointments and should take advantage of the opportunity to receive the second dose of vaccine any time after 28 days from the time they received their first vaccine.

“With mass immunization clinics closing, now is the time to receive your first or second vaccine dose. Most York Region COVID-19 vaccine clinics now accept walk ins for both first and second doses for eligible individuals and appointments are still available for those who prefer to book one in advance.”

As of Tuesday, August 3, Aurora was dealing with 6 active cases of COVID-19.

5 of the active cases are attributed to local transmission, close contact or unknown exposure and 1 related to travel.

To date, Aurora has seen a total of 1,859 cases of the virus, 1,805 of which are now marked as resolved.

There have been 48 deaths attributed to COVID-19 locally.

By Brock Weir Editor Local Journalism Initiative Reporter