

May 29, 2020

**MEMORANDUM TO: Health System Organizations and Providers**

**SUBJECT: Update on COVID-19 Preparations and Actions**

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In follow-up to our last communication, we are pleased to share additional updates from the provincial Health Command Table on key actions that are being taken to address COVID-19. Key actions and preparations will continue to focus on:

- **Deploying rapid supports to long-term care homes** to protect the most vulnerable populations.
  - The government received the Canadian Armed Forces report on the five long-term care homes in which the military has been assisting. The government took immediate actions to deploy long-term care inspection teams to conduct comprehensive, detailed inspections and appointed temporary management to stabilize these homes.
  - We continue to monitor and test in long-term care homes and are exploring visitor policies to reconnect residents with their loved ones while ensuring staff, resident and visitor safety.
- Enhancing public health system capacity and information on the course of the pandemic, including implementing the next phase of the government's COVID-19 **testing strategy**.
  - On May 29<sup>th</sup>, the government announced the next phase of Ontario's testing strategy, [Protecting Ontarians Through Enhanced Testing](#). It includes three branches of testing, focusing on assessment centre testing, targeted campaigns, and outbreak management.
  - We continue work to implement expanded testing to populations living in congregate settings, building on successes to date in testing within long-term care homes.
  - Our expanded testing strategy will go hand-in-hand with expanded **case management and contact tracing**. This includes building flexible capacity to support local public health units, if needed, in addressing any surges in new cases and contacts. The government will shortly be launching a new exposure notification app that will alert Ontarians when they may have been exposed to COVID-19 and recommend appropriate actions, such as monitoring for symptoms, self-isolation and/or appropriate next steps on getting tested.

We thank you for your continued work to support the implementation of our provincial efforts to respond to the pandemic and implement a phased recovery.

Sincerely,

*(original signed by)*

Helen Angus  
Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Health

Dr. David Williams  
Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Ministry of Health

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