
SUBJECT: COVID-19 in the Old Order Mennonite Community
Date: November 6, 2020
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To: Primary Care Providers, Emergency Departments, Hospitals,
Pharmacists
From: Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health and CEO

Background

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph would like to alert all primary care providers to the possibility of many undetected COVID-19 cases in the Old Order Mennonite Community.

Wellington County is home to approximately 3000 Old Order Mennonites. There are also Old Order Mennonites residing in surrounding public health units, with communities of this specific group of Mennonites in Waterloo, Grey Bruce, and in Huron Perth. Old Order Mennonites may or may not use OHIP. They drive horse and buggy and have access to land line telephones. Old Order Mennonite children primarily attend parochial schools.

COVID-19 Alert for the Old Order Mennonite Population

WDGPH has had 4 recent cases of COVID-19 in this specific group. These individuals have refused to provide information on their high-risk contacts to Public Health with unidentified exposures extending into neighboring health unit areas. The most recent case attended a wedding with approximately 100 guests on October 28th while symptomatic. Public Health has not contacted members of this wedding as we have not been able to get this contact information.

WDGPH is concerned about the number of undetected cases of COVID-19 in this community. The North Wellington Assessment Centre in Harriston and the Centre Wellington Assessment Centre in Fergus, as well as Guelph Wellington Paramedic Services are working together to increase opportunities for testing with this population and will accept both symptomatic and **asymptomatic** clients from this community for testing.

If you see Old Order Mennonite clients as part of your practice, please consider COVID-19 in the differential diagnoses and use it as an opportunity to educate the family on the importance of all contacts being tested (symptomatic or asymptomatic) and staying home if they have even mild symptoms.

For more information, refer to contact

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