

MEDIA STATEMENT**Ontario Needs Provincial Approach to Healthcare Worker Vaccination**

Toronto, ON, October 1, 2021 – “The Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) applauds the Government of Ontario for its decision to require mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for all healthcare workers in the long-term care sector. Now, a consistent provincial approach to healthcare worker vaccination is urgently needed to maintain adequate staffing levels across Ontario’s highly interconnected and interdependent healthcare system.

The OHA’s position on healthcare worker vaccination has been changing and evolving since the implementation of Directive 6 in early September, which set a baseline standard for the hospital sector. There is much evidence that hospitals have used measures to encourage, persuade and educate employees and staff who are vaccine-hesitant to get the vaccine voluntarily. With COVID-19 vaccination becoming mandatory in long-term care, we feel the time has come to adopt a mandatory approach for all healthcare workers, including those in hospitals, too.

Throughout the pandemic, the OHA has repeatedly learned that a system-wide response is most effective to combatting COVID-19. When Directive 6 was implemented in long-term care two months before hospitals, it was plainly evident that a similar approach would be needed for our sector. At this important juncture, with the Science Table predicting a wide range for case projections this fall and winter, we must move in lockstep. We cannot afford to wait several weeks or months and risk a potential migration of workers from one area of the healthcare system due to inconsistent approaches. By working together, we can get in front of this fourth wave and help it peter out once and for all.”

- Anthony Dale, President and CEO, Ontario Hospital Association

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