

September 24, 2020

The Hon. Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Re: Targeted Public Health Measures Needed Now to Avoid Provincial Shutdown

Dear Premier Ford,

The Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) wrote to you on March 11 out of concern that our province was facing a very serious threat to public health and safety that put the viability of hospitals at risk. While we've come a long way since then, thanks to the leadership of your government and the sacrifices made by each Ontarian, we fear once again that our province faces a rapid deterioration of public safety.

On September 24, the OHA Board of Directors unanimously endorsed the request made by a group of hospital leaders and physicians specializing in infectious diseases to immediately implement more restrictive public health measures to further limit the spread of COVID-19.

We understand the importance of keeping the economy open and avoiding a shut-down for as long as we possibly can, particularly given the impact the pandemic is having on mental health. But the truth of the matter is that if some targeted restrictions are not put into place now, the province will inevitably face a full-scale shutdown in the weeks ahead as we experience unsustainable levels of community spread. We can no longer expect to gain control of this unforgivable virus with the current level of socialization underway in Ontario.

Premier, we are not asking for a return to a full lockdown at this point. Ontario has made important gains in the fight against this virus that we must protect. Let's build on the success achieved to date by putting targeted public health measures in place, where needed regionally. Acting now will ensure our hospitals have the capacity needed to operate throughout the long winter ahead while keeping our province's most vulnerable people safe and healthy for the duration of this pandemic. The time to act is now – we cannot afford to wait any longer.

Sincerely,



Sarah Downey
Board Chair



Anthony Dale
President and CEO

CC: All Ontario Hospital CEOs and Board Chairs
Jamie Wallace, Chief of Staff to the Premier
Mark Lawson, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Premier
The Hon. Christine Elliott, Minister of Health
Heather Watt, Chief of Staff to the Minister of Health
Laurel Brazill, Director, Stakeholder Relations to the Minister of Health
Helen Angus, Deputy Minister of Health
Matthew Anderson, President and CEO, Ontario Health
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health