

York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee

Stakeholder Consultations on Mass Immunizations for York Region

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Purpose

- The Health Equity Program currently supports York Region's Health Emergency Operations Centre and works closely with the Community and Health Services Department by applying a health equity lens to the COVID-19 response to reduce the rates, spread and transmission of COVID-19 among vulnerable populations in York Region.
- The purpose of our presentation is to gather feedback from the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee to further inform the planning and implementation of COVID-19 immunization clinics in York Region

Current State

- Persons with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.
- York Region's vaccine distribution plan will integrate an equity lens, with a focus on disability inclusion, accessibility and equity.
- To achieve this successfully, and to avoid perpetuating inequities for people with disabilities, we aim to ensure that where and how vaccines are distributed are accessible to all people. This includes attending to accessibility needs, along with considerations to reduce the psychological harms associated with vaccination.

Consultation

- To support the different areas of immunization planning, we are interested in your feedback on 4 key areas:
 - Barriers or facilitators to accessing a mass immunization site
 - Trusted sources for vaccine information
 - Barriers or facilitators for vaccine uptake
 - Preferred channels for communication

The environment where the COVID vaccine is administered plays a significant role in minimizing potential barriers

- What challenges or barriers do you think someone might face when attempting to get the vaccine?
 - How can we address these challenges or barriers?
- Environmental factors can be challenging. What are some considerations our immunization team should be aware of at our vaccination clinics?
 - An example can be background noise for individuals that have difficulty hearing

How can the York Region continue to **build trust** with the community?

- As a person with a disability, or those who work with people living with disabilities, who is most trusted for health or vaccine information?

Vaccine hesitancy is the delay or refusal of vaccines, despite availability of vaccine services

- As a person living with a disability, what are some of your concerns in receiving the vaccine?
- Do you know of any other reasons why persons with disabilities may be hesitant to receive a vaccine?

Communication will be very important as part of our immunization planning

- How can we best communicate information about vaccinations to your community?
- What kind of information are you looking for or be most useful?

Next steps

- Summarize and share your feedback with the Health Emergency Operations Centre, Vaccine Operations Team
- Share information in a timely manner to members as vaccination plans for persons with disabilities becomes available.

Thank You

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