



## PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	<b>LAMBTON PUBLIC HEALTH</b>
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<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>January 20, 2021</b>
<b>INFORMATION ITEM:</b>	<b>COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Planning</b>

### **BACKGROUND**

The COVID-19 Pandemic has created enormous challenges and impacts to all of our lives, the global economy, and the health of our communities. The recent introduction of approved COVID-19 vaccines represent a significant opportunity for us to protect our most vulnerable citizens and recover and rebound from the devastating effects of the pandemic, many of which will be felt for years to come.

A successful mass immunization program – especially in the context of a global pandemic - is a huge undertaking which will require multiple integrated components, including the following:

- Strong functional partnerships and relationships with key stakeholders and partners including a governance structure that allows us to engage directly with key partners and sectors as the plan moves through the relevant stages;
- A responsive system of partners with capacity to mobilize rapidly in order to ensure the most efficient and timely delivery of vaccine to those who need it most;
- Timely and targeted communications for various stakeholders including health system partners, municipalities and First Nations, the media, workplaces, community agencies and the general public;
- Timely reporting on key timelines and milestones.

### **DISCUSSION**

Lambton Public Health (LPH) has the knowledge and experience to deliver the COVID-19 vaccine as efficiently as possible, as we annually deliver the Universal flu vaccine program and many other immunizations. In 2009, LPH worked with our partners to facilitate the

safe vaccination of close to 50,000 Lambton residents during the H1N1 Pandemic. LPH has the partnerships, protocols and measures for safe handling of vaccine and organization of community clinics in multiple locations. All of this positions our community very well to launch an organized campaign to vaccinate residents of Lambton County in priority sequence.

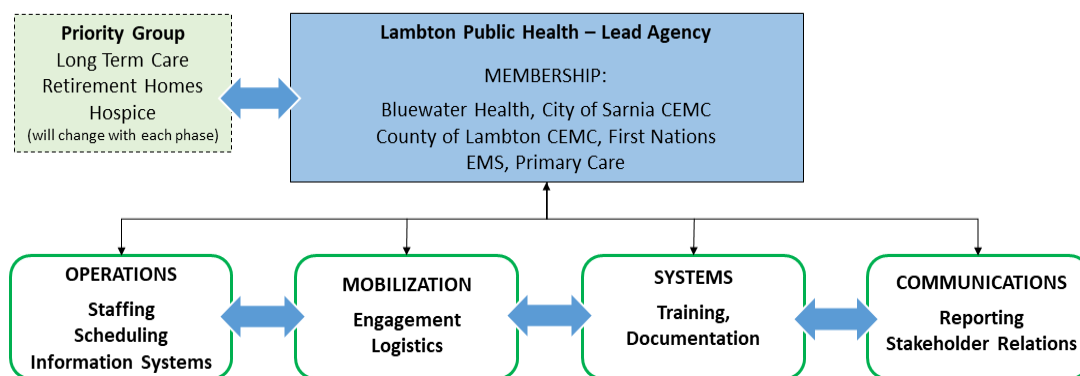
Since mid-December, Lambton Public Health and Bluewater Health have been meeting formally twice weekly with additional regular sub-group meetings for the purpose of actively planning for COVID 19 vaccine implementation in Lambton County. A local COVID 19 Immunization Plan for Lambton County is in place. This report will summarize key aspects of the plan. The plan will be shared broadly with key stakeholders on January 20, 2021. The local plan is based on the [Ontario Vaccination Program](#), expanded to include specifics and data to assist with local implementation.

**COVID-19 Immunization Plan Goals:**

1. To prevent deaths due to COVID-19.
2. To protect health and other systems.
3. To build a level of population immunity that will enable the recovery of economic and social activities that are critical to the long term health and well-being of the community.

The plan will be implemented by a *Lambton COVID-19 Immunization Task Force*. The task force will be led by Lambton Public Health, with representation from key partners critical to the success of the plan. The Task Force structure is described below:

**Lambton COVID-19 Immunization Task Force**



LPH is working very closely with Bluewater Health to plan for secure vaccine storage, and while an exact date is unknown, plans are based on receiving our first shipment of COVID-19 vaccine the week of January 25th or the week of February 1, 2021.

### **Vaccine Eligibility:**

Immunization will be voluntary. The vaccine will be made available to all eligible adults 18 and over. Current population estimates show that 101,000 people in Lambton County are eligible to receive the COVID-19 Vaccine. Of these, approximately 18,400 are 70 years of age or older. As older adults have the greatest risk of complications from COVID-19, it is critical to get the vaccine to this population as early as possible.

Recent national surveys show that between 60-65 % of Canadians would be willing to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, which translates into between 60 – 65,000 individuals in Lambton County. In order to immunize such a large group of people, a staged approach will be implemented in three phases which will help ensure early access for those who need the vaccine the most. (Please note that these phases and timelines are highly subject to vaccine availability, and may change over time.)

**Phase 1 (February - March 2021):** Phase 1 of the plan will be to vaccinate the most vulnerable group, the residents and staff of Long Term Care and Retirement Homes. LPH staff are actively working with Long Term Care and Retirement Homes to ensure that their residents and staff are the first to receive the vaccine.

Long Term Care Homes are currently gathering consents, preparing lists of staff and residents and providing dates and times so that as soon as we know when vaccine will arrive, a schedule will be in place to bring the vaccine to the Long Term Care and Retirement Homes.

**Phase 2 (March – May 2021)** Phase 2 includes Health Care workers, other congregate care settings, First Nations, and older adults. Clinics will be established in strategic locations throughout the county. Phase 2 planning is currently in development.

**Phase 3 (June – August 2021):** Open to the general population. This phase will involve multiple locations, multiple immunizers including primary care providers and pharmacists, etc. Phase 3 planning is currently in development.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

All activities delivered by Public Health staff are cost-share funded 70/30 provincial/municipal, as described in the County Budget, with the understanding that COVID-19 response is the priority. Extraordinary costs related to COVID-19 are being tracked.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

Bluewater Health, Province of Ontario, Ontario Provincial Police, General Rick Hillier – Chair of the Ontario COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

The COVID-19 Immunization plan implementation will leverage one of the Strategic Plan's key areas of effort – Partnerships. Developing stronger relationships with community partners, municipalities, and indigenous groups as a basis to build a shared community of interest.

## **CONCLUSION**

An undertaking of this magnitude will require significant coordination and support from all stakeholders, including the Board of Health (County Council). A dedicated COVID-19 Immunization Task Force will ensure we have the resources, planning tools and engagement of key partners to implement the *COVID-19 Immunization Plan for Lambton County*. The focus will be to immunize Lambton's most vulnerable citizens in Long term care and Retirement homes early as well as the front line health care staff critical to the management and containment of COVID 19. Our next focus on the other groups in order of vulnerability. It is our goal to have vaccinated everyone who wants to receive the vaccine as soon as we can possibly do so. The Task Force will develop a target communications plan and report to County Council and the public on a frequent basis.