



June 5, 2020

For Immediate Release

Attn: Assignment Editor

## **Death Toll Among Patients, Residents and Staff in Health Care Settings up 18.4% in 2 weeks: OHC Tracking Numbers Still Growing But More Slowly**

Toronto – Since the week of March 12, the Ontario Health Coalition has been tracking all people who have been infected with COVID-19 in outbreaks in health care settings including hospitals, long-term care, retirement homes, public health units, clinics and congregate care settings, as well as among other health professionals such as paramedics. This has become a gargantuan task but an important one because it enables us to see more fully than is possible from the government data where the spread in health care is happening and whether infection control measures are working to control it. The evidence shows that by every measure the outbreaks in health care settings are not under control and that more effective measures are needed to protect residents, patients and staff. While the number of facilities in outbreak has stabilized, the numbers of residents/patients and staff infected in outbreaks and, tragically, dying, are still growing at a significant rate. On a positive note, the rate of growth though it is still dramatic, has decreased from its highest rate (April 21 – May 5) since the beginning of the pandemic when the first outbreaks were discovered, testing began, and there was a sudden increase. The report COVID-19 UPDATE: Tracking of COVID-19 Outbreaks in Health Care Settings is here: <https://www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca/index.php/report-tracking-of-covid-19-outbreaks-in-health-care-settings-june-2-update/>

Here are the key findings from the most recent tracking contained in this report of cases in health care settings across Ontario up to the afternoon of June 2:

- The percentage of the total number of Ontarians infected with COVID-19 that are health care workers has decreased for the first time since we began tracking in mid-March but the raw number of health care workers infected with COVID-19 continues to rise. By June 2, out of a total of 29,047 people confirmed to have been infected 4,797 or 16.5 percent were health care workers, according to Public Health Ontario. From May 19 to June 2 the total number of health care workers infected increased by 686 workers, an increase of 16.7 percent in two weeks. This rate of increase is down from the high of 67.7 percent in the month leading up to May 5 but is still very significant.
- The total number outbreaks in health care and congregate care settings that the Ontario Health Coalition found as of June 2 is 615 (including 386 resolved) in 535 facilities including hospitals, long-term care homes, retirement homes Public Health Units, clinics and other congregate care settings. As of May 19, we found 553 outbreaks (including 204 resolved) in 484 facilities. The number of outbreaks that are active across health care settings that we have found is now 229 compared to 349 two weeks prior (May 19), thus, the first significant decrease (though we may not have been able to find all outbreaks as there is less public reporting now than there was in April through to early May).
- The total number of patients/residents that have been infected by COVID-19 in health and congregate care settings has also increased. By June 2 we have tracked a total of 6,711 patients/residents who have contracted COVID-19 in health and congregate care settings. This is an increase of 593 patients/residents in two weeks (since May 19) or 9.7 percent. This is still unfortunately a significant increase, but down from the 23.6 percent increase we calculated between May 5 and May 19.

- Tragically, the death toll among patients, residents and staff in health and congregate care settings has also increased dramatically. The Ontario Health Coalition is deeply sorry to report that as of June 2, we found a total of 1,919 patients and residents deceased in outbreaks in health and congregate care settings, up from 1,621 deceased as at May 19. That increase amounts to a heartbreaking 298 residents and patients over two weeks or an increase of 18.4 percent.
- Chart 3 tracks the large outbreaks (more than 10 people infected with COVID-19) in health and congregate care settings. As at June 2, using this definition of large outbreaks we had found a cumulative total of 162 facilities with 201 outbreaks. Included in these numbers are 38 facilities in which the numbers of staff and patients/residents infected and the number of deaths had not changed since two weeks ago (May 19) and it also includes 51 outbreaks that are clearly declared resolved with no new outbreak.