

# City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

## **Eric (00:00:01):**

Hello, everyone, and welcome to the City of Burlington's telephone town hall meeting. We are live this evening with your mayor, Marianne Meed Ward. In addition, we are joined by thousands of residents from across the city listening in. To ask a question live this evening, simply press 3 on your phone's keypad. Once again, press 3 to ask a question at any time over the course of the town hall. My name is Eric and I'll be the moderator of the town hall this evening. During this live telephone town hall, we encourage you to get involved and to ask questions. Mayor Meed Ward chose this format as this is an interactive town hall with you, which means she and the City of Burlington want to hear from you. Mayor Meed Ward has made it a priority to engage and connect with you and fellow residents to update you on the current status of COVID-19 and to share some important health information that can help you and your family.

## **Eric (00:00:46):**

Our intention is to get as many questions from the audience as possible. You can ask a live question at any time by pressing 3 on your phone's keypad. Someone will take your name and place you in the question queue. Now again, for everyone just joining us, hello and welcome to the City of Burlington's telephone town hall meeting. We are live this evening with your mayor, Marianne Meed Ward, and we are joined by thousands of residents from across the city listening in. We do want to remind everyone joining us that you have a chance to ask a live question by pressing 3 on your phone's keypad. Now at this time, I would like to introduce Mayor Meed Ward so she can open up the town hall. Mayor Meed Ward, welcome and I know this is a very important town hall for you to share and speak with the residents of Burlington about the current situation with COVID-19. I also know you have a number of guests who are joining you to help you address the questions and concerns that residents might have, and at the moment, we have quite a few people joining us. So, Mayor Meed Ward, please go ahead.

## **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:01:39):**

Well, excellent. Thank you. Hello to everyone out there listening in, and welcome to our second public telephone town hall regarding questions that you have about COVID-19 and the situation we're facing. And hope that you will be able to get as much useful information this evening as folks did on the first call. We had over 4,000 people joining us at some point in that first call, and we decided to do it again by popular request. It's a great way we've found to reach more people than we would even with a traditional live town hall, especially people who may not have the use of a computer. This is being broadcast by Cogeco as well, so if you're near your television or would prefer to hear it that way, you can.

## **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:02:27):**

For those of you who are calling in a second time, welcome back. For those of you joining and are new to this platform, again a huge welcome and thank you for joining us. You can ask a question as you've heard. We typically have far more people that ask questions than we can get to, even in a two-hour window. We did extend it an extra hour for this town hall, but keep trying. We do know that there are a lot of questions out there and we do want to provide you with the best answers so that you can make the best decisions for you and your family. Our number one priority is the health and wellbeing of everyone in Burlington, and including our healthcare teams and frontline workers and a special thanks to all of those people who deliver essential services to us.

## **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:03:15):**

We do have quite a stellar panel again assembled, and I know that they will be able to answer a lot of our questions, so I want to welcome our panel as we introduce them now. We have the honorable Karina Gould, the member of parliament for Burlington and Pam Damoff, the member of parliament for Oakville, North Burlington.

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

We have a representative from Parm Gill's office, the representative for Milton which does include a part of North Burlington, so we're glad he's on the line and can take any questions back to that office. We also have Jane McKenna, our member of parliament, provincial parliament from Burlington. We did invite both [Eivry Antafolopolous 00:03:59], she sent regrets.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:04:02):**

She is still at the legislature, and did invite Adam Van Coverton from Milton and he sent his regrets as well. We're also joined by the President and CEO of Joseph Brant Hospital, Eric Vandewall. We are joined by Dr. Dale Kalina, the Medical Director of Infectious Diseases at Joseph Brant. We have our Fire Chief, Dave Lazenby, he's going to speak about our emergency management planning. Superintendent Anthony Odoardi from the Halton Regional Police Services. We also have Carla Nell, the President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce and Anita Cassidy, the Executive Director of Burlington Economic Development to answer any questions that might be business related.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:04:46):**

On the city side, we have Tim Commisso, our City Manager and all of your members of City Council are on the call as well. That's Kelvin Galbraith, Ward One, Lisa Kearns, Ward Two, Rory Nisan, Ward Three, Shawna Stolte, Ward Four, Paul Sharman, Ward Five, and Angelo Bentivegna, Ward Six. So, with that, I am going to turn it back to our moderator to get us started and get right into the questions.

### **Eric (00:05:16):**

Well, thank you Mayor Meed Ward for opening up the town hall and introducing the members of the panel. I do want to also quickly remind everyone joining us that you have a chance to ask a live question at any time over the course of the town hall by simply pressing three on your phone's keypad. So once again, press 3 to ask a live question on the town hall this evening. We're going to go to our first live caller, it's John, who is joining us live. John, welcome.

### **John (00:05:42):**

Hello. My name is John or Matt for short. I'm curious to why they're building this hospital extension. Are you anticipating a pandemic in Burlington? I'm just curious, thank you.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:05:59):**

Thank you, John, for that question. I will ask Eric Vandewall, the President and CEO of the hospital to speak to that. Go ahead, Eric.

### **Eric Vandewall (00:06:08):**

Thank you, John, for your question. We have a surge plan for Joseph Brant Hospital which anticipates an increase in the number of COVID-19 patients that we're going to need to see and treat over the course of the weeks ahead. So we were able to decap the hospital to approximately 50% occupancy as of today, and that allows us to surge within the hospital. However, we felt based on the projections of about three weeks ago that there was a chance that we could see ourselves having a shortage of beds not only for Burlington, but also supporting our regional hospitals as well. So we made a decision to build the pandemic response unit to ensure that we had appropriate capacity to care for people with COVID-19, and that includes Burlington as well as people from across the region. So I hope that answers your question. The pandemic response unit is completed, and it's ready to receive patients.

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:07:02):**

Thanks for that, Eric. And I'll just add that this was a true community effort. We had Burlington Hydro donating the electrical services and equipment to get it all hooked up. Bethlehem Trenching donated services and our city staff in our building department worked very closely with the hospital to get the permits up and running. So we are ready in the community, and our hospital is ready for whatever happens. To you moderator, for another question.

### **Eric (00:07:31):**

We do have another live question. Again, a quick reminder to everyone joining us to press 3 on your phone's keypad so you can ask a live question. We're going now to John, who's joining us. John, welcome. You're joining us live. Please go ahead.

### **John (00:07:42):**

Hello?

Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:07:47):

Hello, John, do you have a-

### **Eric (00:07:47):**

Hi, John, welcome to the town hall.

### **John (00:07:49):**

Hey, hi, thanks for taking my call. I just wondered, is there a number that we can call in the event that we see more than two people congregating somewhere in the city? Sort of a two-part question. I also wanted to know, are the smaller retailers being monitored? I noticed some of the retailers are really being good about maintaining social distancing. Others like some of the drug stores over Easter were having all their chocolates in one area, and there was a lot of people sort of rushing over to where these chocolates were. I just thought, is there someone going around to talk to some of the retailers to discourage that sort of thing?

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:08:30):**

Thank you for that. I'm going to ask the Superintendent Anthony Odoardi from our Halton Regional Police Service to talk about the hotline and what can be enforced. Go ahead, Anthony.

### **Anthony Odoardi (00:08:42):**

Okay, thank you so much and I appreciate the question. So, as you know, we've received roughly since the Emergency Measures of Civil Protection Act was instated, along with the social distancing bylaw, hundreds of calls in the better part of... or inside the better part of 10 days. And so, most of those calls are being directed to our bylaw officers here in Burlington, who have done a fantastic job receiving the information and getting out to as many of these complaints and issues as we can. And the police are also supporting with education and warnings with relation to what I had just mentioned, and also in the area of isolation related to those who have traveled, to quarantine that.

### **Anthony Odoardi (00:09:32):**

So specifically to your question and to be succinct is that bylaw officers will attend those areas and have some dialogue both with the institution, the business and/or the customers picking up and we've had all sorts of great communication and success with that to date. So, I hope that answers your question, in short.

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

### Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:09:54):

And can you provide the actual hotline phone number, Anthony, that people should call if they have a concern or if they want to report something for enforcement?

### Anthony Odoardi (00:10:07):

I sure can, in about 30 seconds there.

### Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:10:12):

Okay. While you're doing that, the other option for folks, and this phone number is posted in a number of places, certainly on my website, [MarianneMeedWard.ca](http://MarianneMeedWard.ca), also the City of Burlington has a specialized webpage just for COVID information. That's [Burlington.ca/coronavirus](http://Burlington.ca/coronavirus), Halton region has similar things. So [Haltonregion.ca](http://Haltonregion.ca). I'm sorry, [Halton.ca/coronavirus](http://Halton.ca/coronavirus). The Ministry of Labor would be another place, if you are concerned about the actual labor practices of any specific businesses, to call there. So, did you get that number, Anthony?

### Anthony Odoardi (00:10:54):

I'm just still looking it up, thanks for [crosstalk 00:10:56]-

### Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:10:57):

We'll go to another question and then we'll come back to you. Back to you, moderator?

### Eric (00:11:03):

We do have another live question coming up in a second. We're actually going to do a quick survey question for everyone joining us on the line. You can indicate your response by using your touch tone phone. We want to know, in order to get the most up to date COVID-19 information to Burlington residents, the city has been posting information on its website. Do you have access to either a laptop, tablet, desktop computer, or mobile device to access the internet? Press one for yes, and press two for no. So again, in order to get the most up to date COVID-19 information to Burlington residents, the city has been posting information on its website. Do you have access to either a laptop, tablet, desktop computer, or mobile device to access the internet? Press one for yes and press two for no. We have our next live caller coming up and it is James. James, welcome to the town hall. Please, go ahead.

### James (00:11:51):

Yes, how you doing? One is for seniors. What's the senior effect so far for property tax, homes and so forth, and number two that the Mayor had on her emails she sent me about all parks, admissible parks... or not admissible parks, you said all parks, A-L-L parks, parking lots are closed to vehicles. But right across the street from me, there's a park, a wide-open parking lot in the park. And there's people parking in there at night and so forth and god only knows what else is going on. I heard cars rumbling and so forth in there. They closed some parks and they all gather, they find a place that they gather in another park. Why is that parking lot not closed to vehicles?

### Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:12:47):

Great, thank you for that. I can certainly take a stab at both of those and our City Manager may want to jump in as well. On April 6th, City Council did pass unanimously a property tax deferral program so that nobody needs to pay their taxes until June 30th, and you will not incur penalty or interest. If you are on automatic payments, we ask you to call the city and at least three days before that's scheduled to come out of your bank, and we can make arrangements to not do that.

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:13:27):**

Even though City Hall is closed, we do have people working remotely and we now have our phones set up so you will reach somebody during regular business hours if you call in. And with respect to the parks and parking lots, we've closed the major parking lots for what we'll call the destination or the regional parks, the larger ones that tend to attract people from outside this specific neighborhood. That is where we've seen some of the crowding occur. The one that you're referring to James, is right across the street from me too. That is actually a parking lot associated with a community facility. So, that's a little different situation. I don't know if Tim, you had anything else that you wanted to add about either of those items?

### **Tim Commisso (00:14:17):**

No, Marianne, thank you very much and thanks for the question, James. I think you sound like somebody that keeps a close eye on the city, so just, I wanted to say, what we're looking at with parking lots and in particular there in some of the popular parks is areas where people congregate. So since we started, I think we started with the waterfront parks from Burloak all the way down to Beachway. We're really trying to just encourage people to use them but not assemble. So walking through them, that kind of thing. So the one thing we are really looking through, is to try to keep our neighborhood parks accessible so that people, particularly as the weather gets warm, can get out, get some fresh air. So, we're keeping a close eye on them. Council members have certainly had input and are getting emails and calls, so we're trying to find the right sort of balance, but it's something that we're monitoring very closely.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:15:21):**

Excellent, next question, moderator?

### **Eric (00:15:25):**

We have another live question coming up from Sharon. Sharon, welcome to the town hall. Please go ahead.

### **Sharon (00:15:30):**

Thank you for taking my call. My question is probably addressed to the physician on the panel or perhaps a hospital representative, and it is I am curious, if there's another emergency crisis which is not related to COVID-19, or one has to go into a hospital to have some tests, Joseph Brant, how safe are we in terms of visiting the hospital?

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:16:01):**

Thank you for that. I think I'll ask Dr. Dale Kalina, the Medical Director of Infectious Diseases at Joseph Brant just to start, and then if Eric Vandewall, the President and CEO wishes to add anything. Go ahead, Dr. Kalina.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (00:16:16):**

Thanks Mayor, and thank you, Sharon, for your question as well. I think that's a great question, and that's the type of problem that we have been working to solve for everybody in Burlington over the course of the past several months and of course right now as well. So, at Joseph Brant Hospital right now, because of the expected surge of patients with COVID, elective surgeries and elective patient visits that are in person have been canceled. But for instance, if you had an appointment that was an elective outpatient visit, many of those are actually being done virtually right now. So that's one way to mitigate the risk to coming into the hospital. The other way that we're helping decrease the risk to individuals that are coming into the hospital is that everybody that comes in, every patient, every staff member that is at Joseph Brant Hospital right now is wearing a face mask in an effort to decrease the risk of spread of the virus. But also, when you come into Joseph Brant

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

Hospital, whether you're a staff member or a patient or if under certain circumstances, you are a visitor, you're also being screened for signs and symptoms of the virus.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (00:17:34):**

So we've been doing several things for now over a month to ensure that those who are coming through our doors are safe, those who are coming into our doors are at a lower risk of having and of course, of transmitting the infection. And then we're also as I mentioned using a number of different ways so that we can decrease the number of people who are even coming into the doors at Joseph Brant, because the reality is that other medical emergencies still continue through this, and that's exactly what we're here for.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:18:09):**

Thanks, anything you wanted to add, Eric?

### **Eric Vandewall (00:18:13):**

Thanks, Mayor. Just briefly, Sharon, I would also build on Dr. Kalina's comments in saying that if you are requiring an emergency visit to the hospital via ambulance and you needed emergency surgery or if you were in hospital and you were requiring resuscitation, now our established policies, protocols and measures currently in place practiced by our physicians and staff that ensure that everybody is safe, in terms of the proper personal equipment being worn, and that patients are kept safe at all times and in all circumstances.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:18:49):**

That's great, thank you. And I'm just going to jump back to Superintendent Odoardi, who's got the phone number, the hotline to call in if you are concerned. Go ahead.

### **Anthony Odoardi (00:19:00):**

Thank you. The number is 905-825-4722. And thank you for your patients.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:19:11):**

Great, thank you for that. And back over to you, moderator.

### **Eric (00:19:15):**

We have another live question coming up from Bill, who is joining us live now. Bill, welcome.

### **Bill (00:19:20):**

Yes. I was just wondering how we as a community are doing in comparison to some of the other communities. In other words, how many fatalities have we had and how many cases have we had? And our percentages better than some of the other communities? Are we a little safer?

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:19:36):**

Thank you for that. I can tell you that the numbers are tracked daily on the Halton Region website, but I'm going to ask Dr. Kalina if you want to provide some further comment on that.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (00:19:48):**

I'd be happy to. Thanks, Bill, for your question. I'll start off by saying that we really don't judge how well we are doing by comparing how we do with other jurisdictions. But of course, everybody that we are seeing at the hospital, we are treating to the standard of care, and to make sure that they receive the care that they need

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

to get. At Joseph Brant Hospital right now, we do have six patients who were admitted with COVID, with four patients if I'm not mistaken in the ICU at this time. We have had two fatalities, or two patients that have passed away, unfortunately from COVID at Joseph Brant Hospital over the course of the past two weeks, since we've started receiving patients that were positive. And I hesitate to compare us to how other jurisdictions are doing. I think that we're doing very well in treating the patients in accordance with their wishes and I think that that's reflected in how well our patients are doing right now.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:21:01):**

Thanks, and I just looked it up quickly while we were talking. This information is available on [Halton.ca](https://www.halton.ca) webpage. They group cases by age, confirmed, probable and the total. So the total for all of Halton region is 335. In Burlington, when you add total confirmed and probable cases, it's 68. Oakville is 125, Milton is 76. Halton Hills is 103. So, those are... and then there are several retirement homes where there are outbreaks that are listed as well. So, you can get all of that information as well as by age, the highest age group at the moment is 40-59 year olds, with 131 confirmed or probable cases, according to the Halton Region website. So, lots of information on that is updated daily. All right, over to you, moderator, for our next question.

### **Eric (00:22:01):**

We do have another live question coming up. A quick reminder to everyone joining us to press 3 on your phone's keypad if you would like to ask a live question on the town hall this evening. We're going now to Ruth. Ruth, welcome. You're joining us live.

### **Ruth (00:22:14):**

Yes. Thank you for taking my question. My question for I guess, it's for Joseph Brant Hospital is with that additional I think it's 90 or 91 beds in that tent, I presume that's for non-ventilated patients, but do we have the staff? We hear that hospitals don't have a lot of staff, so do we have additional staff to man that 90 beds?

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:22:40):**

Thank you, and we will turn that over to Eric Vandewall, the President and the CEO of the Hospital to speak to that.

### **Eric Vandewall (00:22:45):**

Thank you very much for your question. The pandemic response unit is... You're quite right. It is designed to primarily treat COVID-19 moderate to mild cases, however it has been equipped with a negative pressure air system as well as HEPA filtration, and low-volume oxygen. So that allows us to potentially care for higher acuity patients if need be, but the primary area where people with severe COVID conditions will be in our intensive care and critical care units, and that is where ventilation capabilities are included. In terms of staffing, we are staffing up and we do have a staffing model that is unique to the pandemic response unit, because it is one large, open space. We're able to have a different staffing ratio, and we're very confident that we're able to staff the PRU when it needs to become operational.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:23:44):**

Thank you. And we will go to our next question. Over to you, moderator.

### **Eric (00:23:49):**

Up now we have Chris, who's joining us live on the line. Chris, welcome to the town hall. Please, go ahead.

**Chris (00:23:55):**

Okay, my question is actually three-part. Earlier this year, there was a lot of people with a cough that they could not get rid of, I had one myself for four to five weeks, and nobody knows what caused it. Like was it the flu, or what it was. But I survived, and I imagine they did to, and I just wondered whether it did have... it was related to COVID, and if it was and we did have it, are we immune to it now? Or how do we find out whether we did have it or didn't have it?

**Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:24:32):**

All right, that is a... Thank you very much. That is a great question for Dr. Kalina, the Medical Director of Infectious Diseases at Joe Brant. Go ahead, Doctor.

**Dr. Dale Kalina (00:24:42):**

That indeed is right up my alley. So, Chris, I'm happy that you're feeling better, and I'm very sorry to hear that you were sick. I mean, it's always difficult through any sort of flu season, and this has been of course far worse. In general, by the sounds of it, you had got sick around four weeks ago, and really at that time, we weren't actually seeing any community spread of the virus, so unless you had traveled abroad to an area that was having community spread of the virus, I think the likelihood is relatively low. Now, that said, we currently in Canada and realistically around the world, don't yet have the tests that allow us to show if you've been exposed to or previously had the disease. What the tests that we have right now show us is whether you have the disease right now and whether you are able to spread the disease right now, which is really what the focus has been.

**Dr. Dale Kalina (00:25:44):**

Now, I do expect in the coming kind of weeks to months, we will have access to and tests that will be able to tell us whether we've been previously exposed to the virus or previously had it and I expect that that sort of information's going to be much more important, especially going forward, especially with things like development of vaccines and treatment. I think the last part of your question was about whether you are immune to the virus if you've had it before, and I'll be honest, that's an answer that I don't have quite yet. None of us do. We do think that having had this virus beforehand will prevent you having it beforehand, but that's the type of information that comes through a little bit more research, which is exactly what's going on worldwide right now.

**Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:26:35):**

Thank you, and back to you moderator, for our next question.

**Eric (00:26:39):**

Up next, we are going to go to Judith, who's joining us live. Judith, welcome.

**Judith (00:26:44):**

Hi, thank you for taking my call. First of all, I'd like to do a shout out and a thank you to all the frontline workers, the grocery store employees, the drugstore employees, and of course the healthcare workers. I worked in long term care during SARS, so I know how difficult this is to work through, and this is 10,000 times worse if not more. Anyway, my question is involving the rules in condominiums. Can the residents in different units visit one another? And secondly, if you have arrived home from overseas two weeks ago, during that time you are not allowed to leave your unit. Could you have taken your garbage to the garbage room or keep it in your unit or on the balcony until you were out of quarantine?

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:27:31):**

Great questions, and probably we'll need a couple of different answers. First of all, thank you for your service, and we do our Frontline Porch every Friday night at 7:00, so we will thank all of the frontline workers, and yes, our grocery store and other essential service workers are right at the top of that list, too. I'm going to turn it to Superintendent Odoardi to talk about the quarantine rules, and arriving from overseas. And then maybe Karina, our member of parliament, our member of parliament can also speak to some of that as well. Go ahead, Anthony.

### **Anthony Odoardi (00:28:09):**

Okay, thank you and that's a great question. And the federal government, supported with the provincial government have been very clear on travel, and as a result the Quarantine Act and powers to enforce and engage in the Quarantine Act have been provided to local municipal police services, as well as the OPP and the RCMP. And so, for those, for anyone who has traveled, they will be screened at the port of entry and they will be directed now to quarantine for 14 days. A list of travelers will be provided through the Canada Border Services to RCMP or OPP, who will filter that information down to the police service of jurisdiction, and in this case, it'll be the Halton Regional Police. Together with the OPP and the Halton Regional Police, we will conduct checks on those who have traveled and are supposed to quarantine within that 14 days, and we will report those results back. The powers of enforcement really come into play when we find those breaching the quarantine, and then at that point we will have a discussion with the ministry and with the enforcement partners on how to proceed.

### **Anthony Odoardi (00:29:24):**

And I can say so far, we have done a couple quarantine checks, and people have abided, so we in Burlington here, and we have been lucky for that. So, thanks for your question.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:29:37):**

And just before I see if Karina would like to jump in on that one, can you answer the question around whether you can, if you're in a condo, and you're under quarantine, can you leave your unit to drop off garbage? And then the other, which I think a more general question, can anybody in a condo visit their neighbor across the way? I can speak to that too, but maybe I'll let you first, Anthony.

### **PART 1 OF 4 ENDS (00:30:04)**

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:30:00):**

I'll let you first, Anthony.

### **Anthony (00:30:04):**

Sure, that's great. And we get the condominium questions all the time. The Quarantine Act is pretty clear, is that you will self-isolate to yourself. You won't leave your home or your balcony or your porch. There are times when you may be able to, not so much in a condominium, but in a freehold or in a self-contained home where you'll be able to access the outdoors, of course, and we encourage those people to do that. But quarantine means to be within the residence as defined and the residence includes those areas just immediately adjacent to the living space. So I'm hoping that's clear and didn't sound too much like a legal answer, but if you are passing by anyone on the way to anywhere, you are not quarantined.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:30:56):**

Thank you. And I'll also ask our MP Karina Gould, I'm sure you're getting some of those same questions. What

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

direction have you gotten from the federal government on those issues?

### **Honourable Karina Gould (00:31:08):**

Yeah, thanks. Thanks Marianne. And I'm just really a pleasure to greet everyone on the call and thank you for participating and thanks to the mayor for putting this together. I think the superintendent was pretty clear in the sense that quarantine means you need to stay within your own living space and if you're not doing that, the reason we're asking everyone to do that is so that they don't come into contact with others for those 14 days after they've returned home. It's just as if you live in a free standing house where you would have to get deliveries. If you're getting your groceries delivered, you're not supposed to open your door when they're delivered and take them from the person delivering them. We're asking that they be dropped off, that person leaves, you wait until then to pick them up. And so the same thing would go with a condo that you're supposed to stay in that space because we don't want people using common spaces.

### **Honourable Karina Gould (00:32:11):**

There are guidelines for condominiums that we can share with the mayor who can post those. But the idea is that you're not supposed to be, as the superintendent said, crossing paths with other individuals. And that includes using common spaces in condos. And just to reiterate that if you are returning from home, the Quarantine Act is fairly extensive. There can be fined up to \$750,000 or up to six months in prison if someone is found to be in breach of the Quarantine Act. So we really do encourage everyone to follow it. We've put it in place for the health and safety of all Canadians. Thank you.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:32:56):**

Thank you. And I'll just add the general question is of can I visit, so you're out of quarantine. I think that's very clear what you need to do under quarantine. But can you visit your neighbor across the hall?

### **Honourable Karina Gould (00:33:10):**

No, don't do that. The Premier, the federal government, the city have all been saying, do not go into another house that is not your home. Do not engage with people you don't live with and stay six feet away from anyone else when you're out in public. That's the best way that we can prevent a community spread.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:33:32):**

All right. Back to you, moderator, for the next question.

### **Eric (00:33:36):**

Up next we have another live question. Quick reminder to everyone joining us to press three on your phone's keypad if you would like to ask a live question this evening. We're going to have to Harold. Harold, welcome. Please go ahead.

### **Harold (00:33:50):**

During the course of this pandemic, we've been told to go home and stay home, which I totally get, but we are facing a peak hydro rate during the daytime. That's everybody who was staying home, so I was wondering if anybody's giving any thoughts towards giving us a bit of a break and shaving off or doing away with the peak rate. And the second part really is for us who are retirees or senior citizens and so forth and others who are working from home. Do we continue? Is there something that they can do for us to ease off on the peak rate even after this crisis? Thank you.

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:34:42):**

Thank you. So that, that's a two parter. I can certainly speak to the first part. So the good news is that the hydro rates have been reduced. That's not something that an individual utility can do like Burlington Hydro, those rates are set by the Ontario Energy Board and so they introduced a new, it's not quite the off-peak rate that you're used to, but it's a blended rate that's somewhere between the off-peak and the mid and higher peak rates. So it is definitely less and it'll be the one rate, sort of 24 seven throughout the crisis and the emergency.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:35:20):**

In terms of longer term, are there discounted rates for people who work from home, that again, don't know if that will continue. I know that question's been asked of us before outside the emergency and again that would be a question for the Ontario Energy Board once the emergency is lifted, if they're going to allow that kind of discretionary pricing. But in the short term, yes, the hydro rates have been eased. And thank you for that Harold. Back to you. Moderator, for our next question.

### **Eric (00:35:54):**

Up next we have a question from Marilyn. Marilyn, welcome. You're joining us live.

### **Marilyn (00:35:58):**

Okay. My question basically is I did have to go to the US on the 9th of March until the 12th to visit my sister who was dying and I returned and I got home at about two o'clock and I heard on the radio, because I was having lunch, that I had to be quarantined for 14 days, which I did and I understood that, but I didn't really know how bad it was in Canada. I was listening to everything on the US news. Anyway, my question is basically I have tried to be exactly what the government was saying, that we have to be very conscious of not being connected with people, so I've done that but I'm starting to notice I get a lot of pins and needles in my hands and my legs and this is unusual for me. I don't know what to do. Should I just ignore it or what?

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:36:53):**

I'm sorry to hear that, first of all, and thank you for doing your part. I'm going to turn that over to Dr. Kalina, the head of infectious diseases at Joseph Brant to see if he can provide some advice for you.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (00:37:09):**

Of course. I'm also very sorry to hear that and especially if pins and needles are symptoms that are new for you or something that you're not really experiencing, I would encourage you to reach out to your family physician if you have one in the area or I think also you can call Telehealth Ontario as well. Sorry, that's one other resource, and they can help redirect you to some other virtual resources in an effort to connect you with a physician who can help you with the symptoms that you're experiencing.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (00:37:47):**

Now I'm very happy that you quarantined yourself after you came back from the United States a month ago and fortunately these symptoms are not symptoms of COVID but as I think I said earlier on the call to, I think it was Chris, there are still other medical conditions that happen and that and that people still have crises and not that this is necessarily a medical crisis, but people still have medical conditions that they need to deal with during times like this and I think that there's a number of ways to reach out. As I said, a number one would be reaching out to your family physician should you have one in the area, as there are a lot of virtual and telephone options, and other than that you could also reach out to Telehealth Ontario as well.

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:38:38):**

Thank you for that question and Doctor for that answer. I am going to go back to the hydro question. I know our Member of Provincial Parliament, Jane McKenna had something to add on that, so go ahead Jane.

### **Jane McKenna (00:38:51):**

Thanks so much, Mayor. I just wanted to go back to Harold just to quickly say that yes. As of March 24th we suspended the time of use electricity rates for 45 days. So what that means is you're getting the weekend rates 24 seven. So it's 50% the rate reduction is right now, so it's 10.1 cents per kilowatt per hour so I just wanted to be clear with that. So yes, you are getting a 50% decrease. It is the weekend rate 24 seven and it's the off-peak rate which is 10.1 cents per kilowatt an hour and that is effective as of March 24th and it's for 45 days presently right now.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:39:33):**

Great. Thank you for that additional information. Jane. Back to you, moderator for our next question.

### **Eric (00:39:40):**

Up next we have Rebecca who's joining us live. Rebecca, welcome to the town hall.

### **Rebecca (00:39:46):**

Hi. I was just wondering, I'm a student from Nelson High School and I know a lot of facilities are closed. I was just wondering what your plan or city council's plan is to how and when we will open our facilities once this issue subsides. Thank you.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:40:09):**

Well thank you so much for joining the call. We really appreciate the question. Right now, and I'll also ask the city manager if he has any additional comments, right now the city and the facilities as you probably know are closed until the end of June. We will assess that prior to the end of June to see if there's an opportunity to reopen sooner. That seems unlikely at this point, but we will be evaluating that and so I'll turn it over to you Tim, in terms of any plans for opening facilities.

### **Tim Commisso (00:40:47):**

Thank you Marianne. Very good question, and I think it's the question that is on a lot of people's minds. So I know when we are reporting to council, we will be keeping them updated on the information that we're getting. But I also want to acknowledge that we are responding to an emergency that is certainly national and worldwide. The province has set out the emergency order and they make decisions that we obviously respond to as well. So things like when schools will open, that is something that also affects us in terms of our ability to open facilities. So I think what we're really doing is closely watching both of the federal level, the provincial level decisions that are made and then not just sort of responding to them but anticipating them.

### **Tim Commisso (00:41:43):**

So the decision on when we open facilities is something right now that's top of mind and I know it'll be something that as we move through the next three months, we'll be constantly updating council. But I think really what it'll come down to is when the health professionals, the Premier and others are saying it's good now for us to be able to move forward. So I would just say that's a decision that we will respond to. But at the same time we're in a position, I think, where what we're doing is really dealing with the fact that our facilities and in all of the city, parks and that, have to remain closed because it's in keeping with everything that we're doing really

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

right now to deal with the virus. So it's a roundabout answer, but I think it really comes down to the ability to open facilities safely in the context of the bigger picture.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:42:48):**

Thanks. I'm also going to ask our MPP McKenna to comment on the announcement that was just made today. Tim's right that the city can choose to voluntarily close our buildings, which we did until the end of June, but we also are required under provincial directive under the declaration of emergency to keep them close for a certain period. So Jane, can you tell our listeners the announcement that was made today by the Premier in terms of extended closures?

### **Jane McKenna (00:43:19):**

Thanks so much, Mayor. Yes, today, there was a handful of MPPs that voted unanimously that they agreed to extend the state of emergency until May 12th. You also heard the Minister of Education say that presently, right now the schools would not be going back on May 4th, so we are just waiting to see what will happen after that. But you know, it's just saying, the mayor and Karina can also chime in on this, is that talking about essential services and things that are going on, we have lots of calls in the office about certain things that are still transpiring here in Burlington and we're making sure that we're all working collaboratively together to make sure that everybody is following by the rules.

### **Jane McKenna (00:44:09):**

Not everybody, obviously with 3.1 million people in Canada that are unemployed presently, we want to make sure that we're listening because we want our economy to grow again. But we also want to make sure as we saw today with China that they have digressed back with the pandemic with opening up their flights and whatever that we don't put ourselves in that position because people's lives are so important. So yes, as of today they have extended it to May 12th. Everybody on this call does know that things are fluid and move hourly. We don't have a playbook to go back to page 13 to see what's happened in the past. We are working with everybody together to make sure that we're doing the right things and working obviously with all peoples to make sure that we're getting the proper information. So that's where we're at right now.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:45:04):**

Thanks. I think this is certainly a number one in the top five questions that I get is, how long is this going to last? And I'm just wondering, Dr. Kalina from Joe Brant, you see the modeling, you've got sort of a front row seat in terms of what's happening. Do you have any thoughts around how long we'll be in this situation of staying apart so that eventually we can come together more healthy.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (00:45:35):**

I honestly wish I had a crystal ball. I really don't. You're right, I have seen a lot of the modeling and it looks like we're getting close to our peak of number of new cases that we would see every day here in Halton region. And that would mean that over the course of the next two to three weeks we would continue to see high numbers of patients that are coming into the hospital. But realistically what it will mean for us to be able to go back to being able to enjoy our parks and go to businesses and see each other again, what it will take for that is to ensure that the virus itself isn't still being propagated.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (00:46:21):**

And because of that long two week incubation period where we can't tell if somebody has been exposed or has been infected with the virus, it actually poses quite a difficult task of determining when that spread has

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

stopped. And I mean from a public health and from an infectious disease perspective that will look like I think very few to zero cases for two to three weeks and whether there's other ways like increased tracking of people who are infected and coupled with the increased testing that we're now doing, these are all ways that we'll be able to safely reopen businesses and reopened parks and be able to see each other while reducing the risk of continuing to spread the virus or seeing kind of an uptick in virus spread, which is what we wouldn't want, obviously.

**Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:47:18):**

Thank you. Back to you, moderator, for our next question.

**Eric (00:47:23):**

We have another live question coming up now. Again, a quick reminder to everyone joining us to press three on your phone's keypad if you would like to ask a live question. Joining us now is Jennifer. Jennifer, welcome. Please go ahead.

**Jennifer (00:47:36):**

Thank you for taking my question. I wanted to ask about the safety of backyard pools. Is there any information on the effect of chlorine on COVID and will this be a safe activity for households once the weather warms up?

**Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:47:51):**

Excellent question, and I will turn that over to you, Dr. Kalina from Joseph Brant Hospital. Go ahead.

**Dr. Dale Kalina (00:47:58):**

So realistically I think that, so thank you Jennifer for your question. Honestly, I haven't looked into that too much. Chlorine is sometimes part of the cleaning techniques that we use in the hospital for instance, but I mean we tend to rely on hydrogen peroxide and on bleach as some of our cleaning procedures within the hospital. I wouldn't expect that there would be too much in the way of spread of the virus in a pool setting, but the most important thing to do for right now is to ensure that those who you're sharing your pool with aren't sick or have the risk of becoming infected. I think that would be the most prudent thing to do in that setting, truth be told.

**Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:48:48):**

Great, thank you. And back to you, moderator for our next question.

**Eric (00:48:53):**

Up next. We have a question from Bev who's joining us live. Bev, welcome. Please go ahead.

**Bev (00:48:59):**

Thank you very much for taking my call. I'm just wondering how does the city of Burlington or I know Halton Region, Oakville has given tickets to people that break the law and I'm just wondering, has Burlington done anything similar or are they just giving warnings? And what about people that have parties and even sleepovers? What happens there?

**Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:49:31):**

Excellent question. Thank you Bev, and I will turn that over to superintendent Anthony Odoardi of the Halton Regional Police Service. Go ahead.

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

### **Anthony Odoardi (00:49:41):**

Hi, thanks. Yes, so we have begun issuing offense notices and mainly that has come from the bylaw officers who are attending the calls. So when they receive the call, their first priority is to educate the residents and citizens of Burlington and to provide that education, and then on repeat calls are issuing offense notices and police are doing the same. And we are going to many of these calls and I just need to reiterate that the education and the warnings for first time calls are having a very positive impact. So there are few infractions so far to date, but we will scale up to that if need be. However, we are seeing great success with us attending and educating.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:50:37):**

And can you speak to the rules around having parties at your private residence, having sleepovers with people? I presume that is people that don't live in your household that are visiting.

### **Anthony Odoardi (00:50:50):**

Yeah. So, that becomes a little difficult to enforce, however we will investigate and absolutely anyone that is not part of your household should not be in your household. And so we get calls about that a lot. In fact, the other day, right across from the police station, I looked out my window and saw eight or 10 people congregating in a driveway and walked over and politely from a distance ask them to disperse. So that's the type of call that we're getting and the type of impact we're having via education. Now when it comes to inside a home, that becomes a little bit more difficult, but I need to assure you that both Burlington bylaw officers and the Halton Regional Police Service will attend the home, knock on the door and have a conversation with the homeowners. And there will be warnings and infractions, enforcement action taken if the party does not disperse.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:51:48):**

Thank you for that, and back to you, moderator, for our next question.

### **Eric (00:51:51):**

We have another live question coming up, but I do also want to remind everyone joining us that you have a chance to ask a live question on the town hall this evening by simply pressing three on your phone's keypad at any time. Someone will take your name and place you in the question queue. We're going now to Edward, who's joining us live. Edward, welcome.

### **Edward (00:52:10):**

Hello everyone.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:52:13):**

Hi there.

### **Edward (00:52:14):**

My question is in regards to personal protective equipment and especially N95 masks for the mouth. I phoned a number of businesses as to a look and see if they have any of these still. There's quite a shortage. So my question is, where can the public get masks that's proven to be an effective addition to keeping people safe from spreading the virus?

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:52:43):**

I'm going to see if one of our two business people on the call can speak to that. They're well connected to our business community. So we have Carla Nell from the Chamber of Commerce. We have a Anita Cassidy from

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

Burlington Economic Development. Carla, can you answer that question for Edward?

**Carla Nell (00:53:01):**

Yes. At present all of the business organization in the city have been working hard to ensure that personal protection equipment that is available within the community is for the most part directed for the use of our frontline workers and health care workers. There is on our Team Burlington website, a conduit that can be used to ensure that those supplies which are very much in demand and in short supply are for the most part and on a priority basis redirected to health care workers. So in terms of sourcing them for personal use, our advice has been, and I'm sure Dr. Kalina will weigh in on this, that those supplies, which are very much in demand, we want to ensure that they are available to those most in need, which would be those who are ill and those who are working in a healthcare setting.

**Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:54:05):**

Thanks. And I will also ask Dr. Kalina if you'd like to comment on the wearing of N95 masks by members of the public.

**Dr. Dale Kalina (00:54:17):**

I'd be very happy to. So yeah, thanks for the question Edward. I think there's two points that you've made there. The first that I'll tackle is, is wearing N95 masks. So N95 masks are really masks that are built and designed to protect healthcare workers. And in the setting of COVID-19, the only time that healthcare workers even need to wear N95 masks is when we're doing something that generates what we call aerosols. So that's little tiny specks of virus that can stay in the air, which is actually very difficult to do outside of a healthcare setting. There are, in fact, only a handful of healthcare procedures that will mechanically generate these aerosols. So an N95 mask is really not what is needed for anybody outside of a hospital.

**Dr. Dale Kalina (00:55:13):**

Now what you might also have noticed is the need or the want of the individuals to wear a regular mask outside. Now surgical masks, what they do best is prevent people from spreading the virus from yourself to somebody else. So they don't actually do an excellent job at preventing you from getting the infection and that's why they've largely not been mandated and why they've not been suggested by public health officials across the country. We can see a number of examples where masking everybody in the public helps, but also we've seen a number of examples where masking the general public has not helped stem the spread of the virus and that's really because the mask itself isn't the main factor here.

**Dr. Dale Kalina (00:56:05):**

It's the mask in conjunction with really is different public health measures, which is what we're very good with here in Canada. So just to summarize again, N95 masks are really just needed for some healthcare workers within the hospital and a surgical mask will help you prevent the virus if you are infected to other people.

**Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:56:30):**

Thanks doctor. I do get the question and I'm sure a lot of us on this call do around, how PPEs, personal protective equipment, especially medical-grade, are being procured by the country and by the province. I know there's initiatives at both levels so I'm just wondering, I'll turn it over to you, Pam Damoff, our Member of Parliament for Oakville North Burlington, if you can speak to federal efforts to get that supply and then make sure how it's distributed and then as well, Jane, what the province is doing on the same file. Go ahead Pam.

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

### **Pam Damoff (00:57:06):**

Thanks Marianne and I want to echo everyone's comments just to thank you for organizing this and for having me a part of it this time. I really appreciate it. In terms of procurement, my colleague in Oakville, Minister Anita Anand has been in charge of that and has been working on procurement for several months actually, and really trying to make sure that we have the supply that we need in Canada, which in turn gets distributed through the provincial government. So she has been working with industry both in Canada and around the world to get the equipment, the personal protective equipment, the masks, the gowns, the ventilators, has worked with colleagues in government to set up a website where local business can say, "We're ready to retool, we can start making hand sanitizer. We can start turning over to make face shields."

### **Pam Damoff (00:58:15):**

I know the Burlington Library is using their 3D printers at Joe Brant, which is super cool to hear, but really mobilizing the country and so there have been shipments that have landed as recently as this past weekend in Hamilton. They're checked by Health Canada to make sure that they're acceptable and then they're, they're distributed by the province of Ontario. So I think she's been doing a good job on behalf of all of us to make sure that we are making sure that everything we need is available. Now having said that, Canada is also in the market with every other country in the world trying to procure these really important things for our healthcare systems. So it's a challenge. I'm not trying to make it sound like it's easy because we are competing with everyone else. This isn't a problem that's unique to Canada.

### **Pam Damoff (00:59:13):**

So we're trying to make sure that we have everything and I think if you check with the folks at Joe Brant, you'd find out that so far we've been doing a good job. They've certainly been gaps, but I think one of the things that has stood out is how we're all working together. The feds, the federal government, the province and local health care to make sure that we're delivering for Canadians. So I can turn it over to Jane if she wants to add the provincial perspective to that.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (00:59:45):**

For sure. Go ahead Jane.

### **Jane McKenna (00:59:47):**

Thanks so much. And Pam, I just want to say you're 100% right. I've heard the mayor, and I've heard Karina and yourself say this numerous times, is that we all are in this together. So we've done a really good job of all extending a hand, but I'll just let you know that over the last five days, there's been more than-

### **PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [01:00:04]**

### **Carla (01:00:00):**

Just to let you know that over the last five days there's been more than 13 million surgical and procedural masks, 200,000 N95 respirator masks, and 38 ventilators have been delivered to Ontario's pandemic stockpile warehouses. So this includes 6.5 million surgical and procedural masks this past weekend, over 650 providers across the province, to protect our frontline workers, patients, and residents. And also the Premier has also personally picked up thousands of N95 masks and delivered them to the central supply. So we're all working extremely hard.

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

### **Carla (01:00:39):**

Obviously you saw Jason Kenney bringing over quite a bit to Ontario as well and we're all extending a hand to help out where the need is, and we're all very grateful for all levels of government.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:00:54):**

Thanks for that Jane. And I'm just going to go back to Anita Cassidy from Burlington Economic Development to speak to this issue, and also the retooling efforts that are happening in a number of our businesses right here in Burlington. Go ahead Anita.

### **Anita Cassidy (01:01:10):**

Great, thank you Mayor. So obviously Dr. Kalina outlined the issue of N95 versus other masks. So as Carla mentioned, we've got a lot of companies that are ensuring that our local healthcare and provincial healthcare receive those.

### **Anita Cassidy (01:01:27):**

We've also got companies that are re-tooling to deliver some of these essential services, and so as it was a question about non N95 masks, which would be suitable for the public to use, I'll mention a local business Stitch It, which the CEO lives right here in Burlington. So you've probably seen their throws across Canada. They've actually switched their business model to producing non N95 masks that they're producing primarily for business use, so non-essential settings. But I'm sure you could look into sourcing those, and they'll be on the market soon. And there's a number of examples of other companies that are helping either source N95 products, or who are switching their business models to help deliver some of those new services. There's Better Bitters for example, Nickel Brook Brewing that's known as well, who's also shifting their business model to hand sanitizers, and lots of examples of great businesses are in our communities. And I'm sure if you've been in some of our pharmacy locals locally, you've probably seen a number of the hand sanitizers with actual distillery labels on them, which is a very cool thing to see our businesses adapting to support our community in that way.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:02:39):**

Thanks very much for that Anita. Excellent discussion. I think we are now ready, moderator, for our next question,

### **Eric (01:02:47):**

We do have another live question coming up. Again, a quick reminder to everyone who is joining us that you can press three on your phone's keypad at any time to ask a live question. We're going now to Patricia, who's joining us live. Patricia, welcome.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:03:01):**

Thank you, and thank you for putting this call together and the very assertive and coordinated fashion with which our local government is working with their provincial and federal counterparts, it's really quite terrific. And with the business community, of course.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:03:15):**

I'm particularly concerned about seniors in our community. They live in a variety of facilities, and I think the media is sometimes, not with any bad intention, but there's a there's a variety of facilities. There's long term care, there's retirement homes and there's all kinds of different facilities. But we do know that staff are moving between clients. There could be five people going into this facility and two going into that and people jumping

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

back and around and back to homes. And I really worry about the potential of cross contamination, and also about the pay rates these people are getting. So I wonder if there is an, I may have missed a provincial and announcement today, but I wonder if there's any move by the Chief Medical Officer and others to say, you work in this home or you work in that home or you're a freelancer and you work between people's residences. But the potential for cross contaminating people is, is frightening. And I wonder how we are working at a local level even to prevent this.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:04:17):**

And I secondly ask about parking lot visits or keeping that six or seven foot separation. There seems to be different guidelines at different residences at different times, and if we could get some coordination. Particularly for seniors, it's important that they maintain social contact, especially with hearing loss and everything else. We want to make sure that they're as connected as possible and as safe. So not sure who's going to answer that Mary?

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:04:49):**

Thank you for that. And just to clarify, what do you mean by parking lot visits so we can get the best answer for you.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:04:55):**

Well there are some mobile seniors that are entering their parking lot to do some walk-about and are visitors, like family, allowed to go to those places and see them, or are they completely restricted to talk through windows.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:05:10):**

Okay. That's very helpful, thank you. So I know Jane was, I hope you're still on the call. Are you still on the call Jane? I know she had to leave shortly.

### **Jane McKenna (01:05:21):**

Yes, yes I still am.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:05:21):**

Okay, great. So go ahead, there was an announcement with the respect to the first question on people working in multiple homes. So go ahead on that Jane.

### **Jane McKenna (01:05:33):**

So the announcement is actually coming tomorrow on the long term care. But yes, the Premier has said numerous times throughout the last couple of days that that has been obviously an issue. So there is going to be an announcement tomorrow on that.

### **Jane McKenna (01:05:48):**

Also because of the surge not affecting some hospitals, there was an announcement today that local teams and local hospitals will be going to long term care homes and being in certain long term care homes, because obviously there are limited care homes that aren't having staff that are being able to help the people that are there. So tomorrow there will be one for sure, an announcement on that. So please watch for that. And also again with the hospitals. Yeah. So that's the long term care, to be able to go to the long term care hospitals with the local teams from the local hospitals.

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:06:32):**

Thank you. And with respect to the second question, I'm going to turn that back over to Anthony Odoardi from Halton Regional Police, in terms of how you would interpret that under the emergency orders that you've been given to enforce. Is it okay for people to speak to each other across the parking lot if they are keeping six feet separation?

### **Anthony Odoardi (01:06:57):**

Yeah, there's a couple different moving parts to that, and permutations. If you boil it down, the basic answer is do not congregate in groups of five or more, period. Anywhere. And there's family stipulations of course, being of the same family. But if you can avoid congregating as a group, even at six feet apart, to say hi to someone, you should try to do that. However, we know that just for health of people and mental health of people, and we see it all the time, driving by parent's homes or relative's homes and stopping on the front lawn, not congregating and having well wishes. The police and bylaw won't have a problem with that as long as they abide by the five and over rule, and not make it a social gathering, that is interaction with the people that they intended to visit.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:07:52):**

Great. Thank you for that. And we are ready for our next question, Mr. Moderator.

### **Eric (01:07:57):**

We're going to our next live question coming up from Peter. Peter, welcome.

### **Peter (01:08:02):**

Hi. Yeah, my question is, are you allowed to go for a walk and bike ride? I've heard a conflicting stories on this, and I just want to get an idea of what we're allowed to do.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:08:16):**

Thank you. I can certainly speak to that. We have encouraged people to go through our parks and not linger, not stop, certainly not gather or congregate. However, there are some parks that have been closed. And those aren't necessarily city parks, but I know folks think they're all, if they're in the city, they wonder if the same rules apply. So Conservation Halton parks, which are not run by the city but are within our boundaries, those have all closed because they simply couldn't manage the crowds that they were getting, and there was no way to keep the social distancing. The Bruce trail has asked people to stay off their trails for the same reason. Part of it was also that there'd be a lot of congregating at the entry points of the trails and very difficult to maintain that distance.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:09:10):**

Of course the province has closed all of its parks, so that would be, the closest to us, would be a Bronte Creek Provincial Park is absolutely closed. So there are some parks that are completely closed within the city. Our parking lots are closed, and we've done that to encourage people to walk and stay in their own neighborhoods to enjoy the parks in their neighborhoods. We have over 150 of them in the city of Burlington, and so there's a park within walking distance of everybody in the city. And not to get in your car and drive to a larger park that is outside your neighborhood, because that's what's contributed to crowding and people being unable to maintain that six foot distance.

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:09:53):**

So yes, if it's not signed closed and fenced as the park itself is closed, you can walk, jog or cycle through it. But also please stay off any of the park amenities. So buildings within parks are closed, washrooms are closed, and of course the playground equipment is closed, because we don't have a way of sanitizing that. So going through it is okay.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:10:20):**

I did want to go back to our MP, Karina Gould. They had put some guidelines out around gathering. So I want to come back to you to speak to that question Karina, go ahead.

### **Honourable Karina Gould (01:10:30):**

Oh, thanks Marianne. No, it was just on long term care. The federal government did put out guidelines over the weekend with regards to best practices and long term care facilities. I know that BC has already taken the decision to not allow personal support workers and nurses to work in several different facilities. So of course we look forward to what all the provinces are going to be putting forward, but that is something that we've done. Long term care is a provincial responsibility, but the Public Health Agency of Canada has put guidelines out there.

### **Honourable Karina Gould (01:11:10):**

And just to reiterate that you can follow all of the guidelines and guidance on the Government of Canada's website. It's just [canada.ca/covid19](https://canada.ca/covid19), and you can see the latest information on the statistics and the modeling, but also the different guidance with regards to, whether it's for communities, for schools and daycares, health professionals, businesses, industry, community leaders, et cetera. It's a really great resource to get the latest information from a Public Health Agency of Canada, and I would just encourage folks to take a look at it. So thanks so much Marianne.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:11:49):**

Great, thank you for that. And we are ready for our next question, moderator.

### **Eric (01:11:55):**

We have another question coming up now from Lucy. Now, Lucy doesn't want to ask her question live, so I'm just going to read it out for her. Lucy's question is, I just want to know if you're a family that has self isolated for two weeks, would you be safe to go see another family that has also not left their house for two weeks?

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:12:14):**

Ah, I'm pretty sure the answer to that is no. But I'm going to turn that over to Anthony Odoardi of our Halton Regional Police in terms of how you would interpret the provincial orders on that.

### **Anthony Odoardi (01:12:26):**

Yes. I think it's pretty clear, is that the Emergency Measures Civil Protection Act is asking people not to visit anyone outside their own household. The medical reasons why are quite clear as well, but I'll leave that to our physician on the call.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:12:44):**

Dr. Kalina, did you want to speak to the risk of doing that?

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

**Dr. Dale Kalina (01:12:49):**

Sure, happy to. At the end of the day, Lucy, the risk really is in not being able to confirm that individuals may or may not have been in contact with somebody who's had the virus. So I recognize what you're saying about individuals who, two different families that have been quarantined for 14 days. I think the risk is very low But I still do think that it is safest if we aren't visiting other people's houses, and we are maintaining the social distancing right now.

**Dr. Dale Kalina (01:13:23):**

At the end of the day, the quarantine may be over after those 14 days. But it is still safest if we're practicing that social distancing for the time being. And I think that that's just the safest thing to do.

**Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:13:39):**

Great, thank you. And the city has encouraged, we can't enforce it, but the city has encouraged people not to visit anyone, any other household and to only interact with people that you live with. So that's been our very clear message to the community that that's how you protect yourselves and others around you. We are ready for our next question, moderator.

**Eric (01:14:03):**

Up next we're going to Gary. Gary, welcome to the town hall. Please go ahead.

**Gary (01:14:09):**

Yes, thank you. Is there a drop off box at City Hall for depositing property taxes. Thank you.

**Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:14:16):**

Thank you for that Gary. I will turn it over to our city manager, Tim so he can speak to that.

**automated (01:14:24):**

I am sorry. That is not a valid extension. Please try again.

**Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:14:30):**

All right, I think we're back. We're back, and Tim, I hope you heard that, is there a drop off box at City Hall for people to drop their property taxes to?

**Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:14:46):**

Okay, we'll come back to that.

**Tim Commisso (01:14:48):**

Sorry Marianne, I was on mute.

**Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:14:52):**

Yeah, go ahead.

**Tim Commisso (01:14:54):**

So the question was-

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:14:56):**

The question was is there a drop off box at City Hall for people to drop their property taxes at.

### **Tim Commisso (01:15:03):**

Okay. Well the due date for property taxes has been extended to June. I know there is a drop off box right there. I just have to be honest in terms of whether we are encouraging people to drop off their property taxes. So I'm going to have to actually not answer that questions.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:15:25):**

I would say to Gary, best to mail it, and you don't have to drop it off till June 30th, that's the next payment date for sure.

### **Tim Commisso (01:15:37):**

We will put that on our website though.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:15:40):**

Okay. And just for the folks who may be tuning in, all the questions that we get tonight, as well as any that are in the queue that we weren't able to get to an answer, we are getting the questions and we will get the questions and answers up online, so if we are not able to give it to you tonight you will certainly still have an opportunity to get it. All right moderator, back to you for our next question.

### **Eric (01:16:04):**

We have another question coming up now from Laura. Laura, welcome to the town hall.

### **Laura (01:16:07):**

Hi, thanks for taking my call. This question is a maybe two part question. Is there a group or assistance program that helps our seniors that are living on their own in senior citizen buildings? They don't have computers to get help with groceries, medication delivered to them. That's pretty much my question.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:16:29):**

Okay. Was there another part? Go ahead.

### **Laura (01:16:33):**

Yeah. Also my household is full of essential workers. My husband works for the military, my daughter works at a veterinarian clinic, And my mother is on her own, so for us to go and visit her, she's very isolated, she is on her own. Is there any way that she should be left alone, if she is depressed or should we get her some kind of assistance? Is there a program for her?

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:17:03):**

Well thank you for that and I'm going to ask some of my council colleagues to speak to this one. The first piece about seniors on their own without computers. Rory, I'm going to turn it over to you. He's our counselor for Ward 3 who had a something that all the counselors I think ended up doing, to reach out with that information for folks without computers.

### **Rory Nisan (01:17:33):**

Thank you Mary. Yes, if a senior or other vulnerable person doesn't have access to the internet, there's a phone

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

number that they can call. And it's organized by a group of volunteers in the GTA, so it's called Good Neighbor Project GTA. And you can request assistance there for groceries or other supplies. And the phone number is area code (647) 873-2230. (647) 873-2230, so they can help you out.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:18:12):**

And Shauna did you want to speak to the Facebook page as well for a resource support available? Not just for seniors, but certainly for seniors who might need it.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:18:29):**

Shauna? Okay, we'll come back. We'll come back to you. You might be having, sometimes we have trouble getting off mute. The other option is calling 311. And that's a service that is coordinating food deliveries for seniors. Food for Life is also doing that, and it can connect people with mental health supports.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:18:55):**

So on the question, that Laura raised the second part of her question where her household is full of essential workers. She has a senior parent who lives on her own. What can be suggested? They can they go into that home? And again, I'll turn that over to maybe Dr. Kalina can speak to that. It's kind of a two-parter. It's physical health but also mental well-being there.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:19:26):**

Yah, happy to, thanks Mayor. And you're right Laura, I think that's a very difficult balance to strike. Of course I live in a household where I'm an essential worker, and I've been trying to limit my exposure to other family members, especially those who are over the age of 65. And it is, I can't stress how difficult a balance that is. I think that it is important, unfortunately, to try to limit that exposure to your mother. Especially to those in your household who are essential workers, because at the end of the day, there is an increased risk to those essential workers to becoming infected. I think that that's something that we try to mitigate, but that risk is still there. And the last thing that I would want is to expose somebody who had the opportunity to not be exposed, really.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:20:26):**

And recognizing the other side to that, of preserving somebody's mental health and helping with, whether they be clinical conditions such as a clinical depression or general mental health, and I think that it's important to be able to try to reach out to family members however you can. And whether that phone calls or virtually, or if you do have the opportunity to visit, but with social distancing, and making sure that you're not within those two meters, as to not expose to your mother. Because I think that it's important to weigh the risks and benefits of these sorts of interactions, and ultimately we're trying to reduce exposure of the infection, while ensuring that everybody is healthy from a holistic perspective as well.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:21:18):**

Thank you doctor. And I'll also turn to a Ward Two Cancer Lisa Kearns to kick us off, I know a number of the counselors work together to get some printed material out to the community for folks who may not have computers. Lisa, can you speak to what council members did there?

### **Lisa Kearns (01:21:36):**

Absolutely, and this is a great opportunity to build on this opportunity for resourcing into our communities. In the coming days, each and every resident across the ward should be receiving a single sheet of paper from

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

each of your counselors that will indicate a personalized message and some standardized information around how you can seek out resources and or how you as a community member can offer resources, or volunteer, or donate or things of that nature. It also provides you with some very critical information around how to protect yourself with the effects of COVID-19, and gives you a directory to all of the resources that are available to you, to give you the best information and most up to date accurate information. It also includes the number that counselor Nisan had mentioned. So for anyone who doesn't have that access online, they would be able to have that as a quick resource coming right to their mailbox to deliver their support there.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:22:35):**

Thanks very much. And I'll also, I think counselor Sharman, Ward Five, counselor Galbraith, Ward One also mailed that to their residents. Paul are there additional resources out in your area for seniors or for community members that need help and can connect?

### **Paul Sharman (01:22:57):**

Thank you very much, Marianne, I appreciate the opportunity to comment. Certainly the food bank is really important in terms of getting food delivered. They're doing that now for every person who is accepting food from them. The Hope Bible Church, which is right on the edge of Ward Five there on BurlOak is also offering to provide food, and services, and prayers for anybody who would like them. And there are a number of other opportunities to get help from neighbors. We've already talked about a couple of the services. So no, we're doing well, thank you.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:23:41):**

Thank you. And Kelvin, did you want to add anything about what's happening out in a Ward One?

### **Kelvin Galbraith (01:23:47):**

Certainly, thank you Mayor. We have a little cell that's been created out of St. Matthew's Church and every Monday and Wednesday from one till three, people can donate groceries, extra food, whatever they have. And that gets distributed to those people that are in need.

### **Kelvin Galbraith (01:24:08):**

We had the Compassion Society as a strong member of our community closed down several weeks ago. It is an open in some capacity now, but this cell basically opened up to help replace what the Compassion Society was doing. We also have the food bank in Ward One, and there's some other community organizations that are doing what they can.

### **Kelvin Galbraith (01:24:33):**

My mailer should be out to the community also within the next week or so. And that has that phone number that Rory mentioned and a lot of other information and links, that people can call if they need help. Thank you.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:24:50):**

Yeah, thanks very much for that Kelvin. And then finally, Angelo, anything you want to add about what's happening in Ward Six?

### **Angelo Bentivegna (01:25:03):**

A number of volunteers within Ward Six, again through the food banks, both the Burlington Food Bank and Food For Life, we're working on getting, actually not far, warehouses that we can probably... One of the difficulties

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

some of these food banks are having right now is trying to get these packages that are being delivered to some of these homes for volunteers to distance themselves. The areas aren't large enough to be able to pack a lot of these hampers that are going out. So we're working on trying to find locations. We have found some, where we'll be working with the volunteers to put these programs together.

### **Angelo Bentivegna (01:25:48):**

The one thing I do ask is these individuals who are somewhat isolated, wherever they live, for those people who can, make contact with them and then be able to contact the food banks. They will deliver the products that are needed, both food and anything else that they need through volunteers. They just have got to be able to get to the food banks and they'll get the product to them.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:26:19):**

Great, thank you for that. So a lot going on and watch your mailbox for further information from your member of council.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:26:29):**

All right moderator, back to you for our next question.

### **Eric (01:26:32):**

Up next, we're going to go to Danielle who's joining us live. Danielle, welcome. Please go ahead.

### **Danielle (01:26:38):**

Hi, thank you for taking my call. Actually, I have a quick comment before my question. I just wanted to tell people about my own personal protection equipment. I've gone out and got myself one of those clear bubble umbrellas that come down below the shoulder, and I've had lots of comments on how intelligent that seems to be or ingenious.

### **Danielle (01:26:59):**

Anyway, my question is concerning second hand smoke, and if we should be concerned about that. The other day I was well beyond six feet from somebody who was smoking, and as I walked by them I could ingest and smell their smoke. I'm wondering if there's any vapor in there, if potentially they had COVID-19 that people should be worried about it from any type of second hand smoke?

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:27:22):**

Thank you very much for that and I will turn that over to Dr. Dale Kalina, the head of infectious diseases at Joseph Brent Hospital. Go ahead.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:27:29):**

Thanks Danielle. So that type of question's actually come up in a little bit of a different way that I've heard a few times, and it's mostly been with being able to smell people running past you. And I think that the point that it shares in common is that you're smelling the smoke and you're smelling the sweat, or whatever it may be. But those types of processes, like a smell is actually being able to smell a chemical, which is an aerosol that's in the air. And that's very different from what carries the virus.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:28:05):**

So the virus is carried in droplets which fall from the air, and they fall within that two meter radius when you're

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

sneezing, for instance. So you think of the velocity, the speed with which you will launch a droplet out of your mouth if you sneeze, as opposed to smoking or running and that sort of thing. The smells that you experience from that, and second hand smoke and the chemicals, those do travel a fair bit more than any droplets that would contain the virus itself.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:28:42):**

The caveat to all of that of course is any second hand smoke is bad for you. So putting on my regular physician hat as well, it's certainly important to avoid that in this time as well. But that I think the risk to exposure to COVID, as long as you're preserving that two meter, hockey stick, caribou, whatever it may be, distance away from you, you should be safe.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:29:11):**

One of the questions that we had on the town hall last time was around whether, if somebody has COVID and they're breathing or they sneeze, if it stays up in the air and then you walk by. And you had a great answer for that, I'm just wondering if you could speak to that on this call as well, doctor.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:29:29):**

Oh boy. I hope I can give the same type of answer. That's a tall order. But at the end of the day, I hope what I said, and what think I said was that we've all seen what a sneeze looks like. We've all seen those gross pictures that are back-lit. And that's how the virus is spread. So the virus is spread by droplets, which is what comes out of our mouth and our nose, if you sneeze, or if you cough. In contrast, an aerosol is something that does get carried by-

## **PART 3 OF 4 ENDS (01:30:04)**

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:30:00):**

An aerosol is something that does get carried by the air and can be carried great distances. And there are viruses that are caught... That are carried by aerosol like measles and chicken pox. But this virus isn't one of them, which is great because this virus really is only spread by droplets, aside from certain medical procedures. But it is spread by droplets and that means they fall out of the air pretty quickly. And that two meter radius is really taking into account the distance someone can sneeze, for instance.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:30:39):**

And the fortunate thing is that it really does fall out of the air and really can't remain in the air for any length of time. There are a lot of studies actually from over the course of the past few weeks... Few months, sorry, that has shown that there isn't any evidence of infectious particles remaining in the air surrounding infected people, which is really great news.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:31:04):**

That's great. And just a followup to that, Doctor, that I get a lot is how long can the virus live on a surface? And maybe there's... Maybe it has different lives on different surfaces, but if it falls to the ground, does it stay alive? Is it... Or how long can it stay on a package or a piece of paper or something that somebody might hand you?

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:31:26):**

Yeah, so that is a great question. I've been asked it a number of times as well and I think that the most important thing off the bat to remember is that the main way that we get the virus really isn't through spread

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

on inanimate objects. It really isn't spread by groceries or cardboard and things like that.

**Dr. Dale Kalina (01:31:48):**

So the risk of contracting the virus is quite low in those situations. But really, if you are touching something, it's always important, just like we'd say in flu season, with doorknobs for instance, is to wash your hands after that because you get the virus by getting a droplet on either in your eyes in your nose or in your mouth. So there isn't that risk of contracting the virus through your skin, but it's that risk of then contaminating your own face with those droplets that are, that are found in different areas.

**Dr. Dale Kalina (01:32:25):**

And that's why the importance of washing hands really can't be underst... Really can't be overstated, rather. The length of time that the virus can stay on the surface, the more porous a surface is, we've all tried to clean a ceramic tile or something like that, and it's like that. That the more porous it is, the longer it will be able to stay in there.

**Dr. Dale Kalina (01:32:50):**

But really in a number of very well performed studies over the course of the past few months, it's been shown that those surfaces really aren't very good at contract... Or at propagating the infection. You can't actually get the infection from a lot of these surfaces. So it is important always wash your hands when you're touching other objects, especially outside of the house. But recognizing that the main way of spread really isn't through that way.

**Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:33:22):**

Great. Thank you. Over to you, moderator, for our next question.

**Moderator (01:33:28):**

We have another live question now coming up from Stephanie. Stephanie, welcome to the town hall. Please go ahead.

**Stephanie (01:33:34):**

Hi. I have questions mainly for the MPP and MP. Firstly, we hear a lot about testing and how we're being told by Prime Minister Trudeau and Premier Ford that testing is critical, that we need to increase it, but it seems like Canada and in particular Ontario is very... Had a very slow start and continue to lag behind other countries.

**Stephanie (01:34:06):**

So what I'm wondering is what is the real reason that we're not testing more? Is it for lack of supplies or why aren't we... I look at places like Alberta as a province and Germany as a country and their testing... Their tests are comparatively much greater than ours.

**Stephanie (01:34:27):**

The other thing I wanted to know is we have a lot of talk about that we're going to focus testing on longterm care facilities, but by the very nature of those facilities, once one person gets it, it's going to spread. Why do we not simply assume that pretty much everyone has it there and take all the necessary precautions and then use those tests for the greater public that are walking around and have the potential to spread it much further? And that way we kill two birds with one stone, so to speak.

**Stephanie (01:35:08):**

And I'd also like to know, are we measuring the collateral damage of closing everything? For example, how many people will die because there aren't... They're not being examined for things like heart issues, cancer. How about all the people whose cancer treatments are on hold and therefore are going to be negatively impacted? And I have a personal, a friend of mine whose treatment is actually being delayed, actually know two people and the mental health suicide rates.

**Stephanie (01:35:45):**

Is the province and the federal government looking at this? And alternatively, are they looking at also COVID people, patients that have passed away, how many of them have would passed away anyway? I'm just curious because I'm in favor of this, but I think that we really need to look at all these things.

**Stephanie (01:36:08):**

And my final question is we keep hearing about the peak and even today we heard about this surge, but it seems to be getting moved from week to week and no one really seems to know when it's happening yet. ICU rates seem to be declining, not increasing. I think they were at 22% capacity last week. I don't know if that's changed. And if we've been isolated for a month, why wouldn't it be pretty much not written in stone, but a fair... Fairly conclusive as to when the peak should be expected? Because mathematically, if we've been isolated for four weeks, even if half the people are out there and half aren't with 14 day incubation of the illness, wouldn't that mean that after a month we should be... Or we should know relatively speaking when we hit the peak because there's just people out there passing it along?

**Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:37:14):**

Okay. Thank you very much for that comprehensive... Several questions there. So I'm going to break it down and direct different pieces to different folks that are on our panel here. So the first I'm going to go to our member of parliament, Karina Gould to speak to testing and then I will go to our Joseph Brant Hospital folks to also talk about that and talk about the the peak as well as the hold on elective surgeries or other factors. So go ahead Karina.

**Honourable Karina Gould (01:37:46):**

Great, thanks Marianne. And thanks for your questions. I think you raised a lot of really valid concerns that people are feeling. And I think that one of the things to recognize is that governments, federal, provincial, municipally are all doing their best to try to save lives, prevent infections, and ultimately prevent death. And when it comes to testing, Canada has done over 450,000 tests. We're probably in the top five in the world in terms of tests per capita. So we're not quite at Taiwan, South Korea or Germany, but we're pretty close up there.

**Honourable Karina Gould (01:38:31):**

And so we are doing fairly extensive testing. Obviously as you mentioned, different provinces have different strategies and that's one of the unique aspects of Canada in terms of the provision of healthcare services that happens at the provincial level. There are different reasons for this, whether it's the tests that are being used, access to reagent, there's... And Pam mentioned this earlier we're right now in a global pandemic, something the world has really never seen in modern history. And even I would argue, in history that we've been experiencing, because even with the Spanish flu, which was the one that's all in our collective memory, it didn't happen all at the exact same time around the world.

**Honourable Karina Gould (01:39:18):**

And so what's unique really about COVID is that it was just last Thursday that it had been a hundred days since the first case of unconfirmed causes of pneumonia was recorded in China. And in the a hundred days we've seen over 1.7 million people officially infected and over 100,000 deaths. And so we're all learning and moving pretty quickly together on this.

**Honourable Karina Gould (01:39:47):**

And so just in response to some of your questions about the mathematical modeling and we should know. The world is really learning about this virus in real time and trying to respond as best as possible. The modeling that came out last Thursday from the federal government is just that. It's modeling and there are... There's a high end of what we can expect and there's a low end of what we can expect. And I want to be cautious in what I am about to say but the reason why we're taking these extraordinary measures is so that we come out on that lower end of that modeling.

**Honourable Karina Gould (01:40:27):**

The fewer people who have to go into ICU, the fewer people who get infected means that there will be fewer people dying. And we understand, and I understand how unbelievably difficult this is for people. There are significant repercussions with regards to mental health. There are significant repercussions with regards to economic wellbeing, which is why the federal government has taken the measures it has with regards to income support and supports for businesses. It's why we're working with all levels of government to try to address this as quickly as possible. But we also really want to avoid the... What Italy and Spain and the United States are experiencing right now, which is an inability for their medical system to cope with the number of patients who require medical assistance.

**Honourable Karina Gould (01:41:18):**

And so flattening the curve means delaying the infection rate as well. And so I completely understand your concerns, but it's so important for us to continue with these measures so that we don't overwhelm the capacity in our medical system.

**Honourable Karina Gould (01:41:33):**

And I also just want to address your question with regards to the age of patients who are unfortunately passing away. And I think that one thing is really important is that as a government, our responsibility is to all citizens. And every human life has tremendous value. And it's something that we're trying to do to prevent people, no matter what their ages, from first getting infected, but also to try and save their lives because we really do place an equal value on all human life. And I would also just highlight that while the majority of patients, and perhaps Dr. Kalina can speak to this as well, and those who who are not surviving COVID are older.

**Honourable Karina Gould (01:42:27):**

There is a number of patients that are under the age of 40 that are being infected, that are being hospitalized and unfortunately some are even passing away. And so again we really are doing this to protect all people and even though those who are more vulnerable, who have underlying medical conditions are more at risk. We have seen transmission and fatalities in younger healthy people as well.

**Honourable Karina Gould (01:42:56):**

So we really are doing this to protect the health and the wellbeing of everyone in Canada. And so I appreciate how difficult this is, but these really are extraordinary times that we're taking these extraordinary measures. So

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

thank you for your questions. And really glad to be able to share some answers to them.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:43:16):**

Thanks, Karina. I'll ask Eric Vandewall, President and CEO of Joseph Brant Hospital if he would like to speak to the surge, the peak and the way testing is done in the hospital or how it's done at all.

### **Eric Vandewall (01:43:34):**

Thanks Mayor Meed Ward. I'll maybe ask a Dr. Kalina to kick us off on that if we could.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:43:38):**

Sure. Go ahead. And the other question which I was going to ask Dr. Kalina to speak to as well was the impact of delaying certain procedures and does that unintentionally put those people at risk? So, unintended consequences I think was to how it was phrased. So go ahead, Doctor.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:43:59):**

Of course. I'm very happy to answer all... I think it was Stephanie's questions. I echo a lot of what Minister Gould said that I think very, very well articulated is that this is a very unprecedented and as she said the last time that we've had a worldwide infection and pandemic like this was the Spanish flu and it was very different because it did take so much longer.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:44:25):**

And this is because of a consequence of our globalization right now that this has spread so much faster and really a lot of the response has been to try to stem that flow and to try to ensure that we do have the capacity in our healthcare facilities across the country to be able to treat patients and give them the level of care that they need to be able to survive or the level of care that they would... And hopefully not have to ration anything like that. And that's exactly what we're seeing.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:45:02):**

And one of the things that that was raised in the question was why is... Why are we unable to provide dates for when the surge is expected or when it's ending? If you looked at way, way back when we first started talking about flattening the curve and things like that. When you flatten the curve, you change the date as well because you delay when the actual surge hit because you are slowing the spread of the infection amongst the population.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:45:33):**

So if you did absolutely nothing, we would... Everybody would get the infection at once. And because you'd overwhelm the system, a number of people would die as a result of that, which is what we're trying to avoid. But because of the measures that have been put in place, this delaying the peak and the delay and when we're seeing the surge and things like that, this is about the best news that we in the healthcare community could possibly be receive.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:46:02):**

And I know that there've been a number of news stories last week about how a number of physicians such as myself at Joseph Brant, but also at I think they were talking about Mount Sinai Hospital downtown Toronto. We're getting an opportunity to prepare and to run these protected code blues to plan for when patients are coming to the hospital. And this opportunity, it's something that we have because we were able to plan and

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

because we were able to stem the flow of patients that were coming in.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:46:32):**

Now some of the things that you mentioned, are we testing enough people in Ontario? I think that it's really great that we are expanding the ability for us to test more and more people because I think that that's one of the tools in the tool chest and we've got to actually stem the flow and to allow us to resume being able to see each other, like I said earlier. And at the end of the day at Joseph Brant Hospital, to be candid, we are essentially treating every patient who comes through our doors as someone who we're suspecting has COVID in addition to whatever it is they might be coming in with, whether it be a broken bone or a heart failure exacerbation. We are frankly just considering everybody who comes through the doors as suspicious for having COVID as well and that's because we do have so much community transmission with the virus.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:47:27):**

The last thing that you mentioned was the risk of delaying other important therapies such as cancer therapy. And cancer therapy is actually something that's really important because it is so timely and because time is so much of the essence with the vast, vast majority of cancer therapies, whether they be chemotherapy or surgery, and again to be candid, those are the outpatient clinics that are still continuing at Joseph Brant. Those are the outpatient scheduled surgeries that are still continuing at Joseph Brant.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:47:59):**

And those which have been delayed, those elective surgeries or outpatient appointments. If they aren't able to be conducted virtually, which the majority are, they are being scheduled in a way that reduces the risks for people and they're being scheduled at a timeframe so that we don't lose that acuity and that time frame that is necessary to treat these other conditions.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:48:24):**

Because you're very right, with people being frightened of coming into the hospital or frightened of calling their doctor, which I, I can't implore you enough not to be. We are seeing delays in presentations to medical care and that will come as a surge of patients later on of other conditions. But to remind you there are a lot of services, whether they be Telehealth Ontario, your family physicians and then even virtual clinics and that sort of thing at our hospital to help with those other conditions as well.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:48:58):**

I know there was a lot to digest there and thank you for all the questions and allowing me to talk about that.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:49:05):**

Thank you very much. Before we go back to moderator for our last probably one or two questions, we have about 10 minutes left in our town hall and probably time for one, maybe two, depending on how detailed they are. They've been a very full questions, very comprehensive questions.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:49:26):**

I think the both the listeners and the questioners. So back over to you, moderator, for our next one.

### **Moderator (01:49:34):**

We have another live question coming up now from Marilyn. Marilyn, welcome to the town hall.

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

### **Marilyn (01:49:40):**

Hi. I'll get right to my question. I'm just wondering with the youth and having to stay home, no school, no activities, if there's longterm mental health strategy in place for going forward?

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:49:56):**

Well, thank you very much for that and I know there has been some activity at the provincial level and we are... We lost Jane, she had to go to another appointment. So I'm going to ask our Dr. Kalina if he has some insight around what supports might be available for mental health in the community.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:50:25):**

Sure. I do... That's not my area of expertise, but I will try my best. At Joseph Brant Hospital, actually our deputy chief of staff is, Dr. Selchen, is in fact a psychiatrist who has been working on this piece quite a lot. And while I can mostly talk about what we've been able to do in the community associated with Joseph Brant, I expect this is what's being echoed in other psychiatric and mental health practices.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:50:54):**

The reality is that the mental health piece I think is often been somewhat fraught and there's been a lot of work that's been going into improving care, improving access to care for mental health services over the course of the past few years. And that has actually broadened during this crisis... During COVID as well because of the ability to expand to other virtual services, other phone-based services as well.

### **Dr. Dale Kalina (01:51:22):**

And that's where everything from group activities to one-on-one counseling as well. I know that Dr. Selchen has been working with a number of different providers in Burlington directly with family physicians to help provide that level of care as well. Because you're very right to say with a lot of the isolation that'll exacerbate a lot of underlying mental health conditions and there are a number of individuals on a medical perspective that are working to help ensure that those who need it have access to that care.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:52:01):**

Thanks. I'm also going to turn it over to Pam Damoff, our member of parliament for Oakville-North Burlington to speak about the federal government initiatives in this area.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:52:11):**

But just before I go to Pam, I know The Reach Out Centre For Kids here in Burlington is continuing to treat people virtually. I know there are a number of supports and in the mailers that the council members are sending out to each of their wards, there are some phone numbers or contact information for where people can find local mental health supports as well. Pam, over to you.

### **Pam Damoff (01:52:36):**

Thanks Marianne. I was going to mention Reach Out Centre as well because they do such a great job in our community. One of the things that we saw early on is the number of kids who are reaching out for a variety of reasons. Home is not always a safe place for kids. So in addition to being isolated and having mental health issues because of that, sometimes kids don't feel safe at home for a number of reasons.

### **Pam Damoff (01:53:06):**

And so one of the things that Karina and I really pushed for with some funding for Kids Help Phone, which we

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

are investing an additional \$7.5 million for them to be able to ramp up their services. And when I talked to them, they were talking about they've had a tremendous outpouring of support from the community with volunteers, but they need staff to be able to vet those volunteers, to be able to train them and coach them. So Kids Help Phone is available. It's a terrific organization. Kids can text 686868 to get help or they can call 1-800-668-6868.

### **Pam Damoff (01:53:46):**

And I know that the demand for their service has been exponential and that's why we were pleased to support. So if you do know of any youth who are struggling, please do pass on Kids Help Phone, Reach Out Centre For Kids here locally as well.

### **Pam Damoff (01:54:04):**

There are a number of organizations who are doing some great work to support our youth. And just to add to Kids Help Phone, it's not just young kids. Young adults can call as well and they've just added services for frontline health workers to be able to contact them. I don't have the number, but they've added additional services for our frontline health workers.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:54:27):**

Thanks for that Pam and I know Councillor Kearns currently in Ward 2 has been very much involved in the mental health. What supports Councillor Kearns in addition to the ones that have been mentioned are available?

### **Lisa Kearns (01:54:43):**

Thank you for the opportunity and it really is important at this time to take care of our mental health as well as our physical health. And so I do want to invite anyone who is feeling that they can't quite work with the feelings that they're feeling during this crisis, to reach out to the Health and Distress Centre.

### **Lisa Kearns (01:55:03):**

It's a registered charity that supports people in our community to better cope with crisis, loneliness and emotional stress. And they provide telephone support on the distress line every single day and they can support you with a crisis chat or text. And although services are confidential, anonymous and free for all age groups, you can text (647) 557-6250 or you can call the Burlington location which is available at (905) 681-1488.

### **Lisa Kearns (01:55:37):**

There's also a North Halton and an Oakville site as well and you can reach that at (905) 849-4541 and North Halton is (905) 877-1211. Thank you for the opportunity to share that.

### **Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:55:53):**

Okay, thank you. I think we have come to the end, Mr. Moderator, I think we don't have time for any further questions. Is that correct?

### **Moderator (01:56:04):**

Well actually you're correct, Mayor Meed Ward. We are just about reaching the end of the event with the last couple of minutes are there some closing remarks you'd like to share with everyone?

## City of Burlington - April 14, 2020 Telephone Town Hall on COVID-19 Response and Support

### Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:56:13):

Yes, thank you. I did want to thank everyone in the community for joining us on this call and giving us two hours of your time, those of you who've stayed right to the end. Of course, I want to thank our outstanding panel of experts for the answers that they've provided and the information that they've provided to the community.

### Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:56:35):

So thank you to Honourable Karina Gould, our MP from Burlington, Pam Damoff, our MP from Oakville-North Burlington, our Member of Provincial Parliament, Jane McKenna, Eric Vandewall, President and CEO of Joseph Brant Hospital, dr. Dale Kalina, the Medical Director of Infectious Diseases at Joe Brant hospital, our Fire Chief Dave Lazenby, Superintendent Anthony Odoardi from the Halton Regional Police Service, Carla Nell, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce. Anita Cassidy, the Executive Director of Burlington Economic Development, Tim Commisso, City Manager, and of course all the members of city councilor on the line tonight.

### Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:57:17):

Kelvin Galbraith from Ward 1, Lisa Kearns Ward 2, Rory Nisan Ward 3, Shawna Stolte, Ward 4, Paul Sharman, Ward 5 and Angelo Bentivegna, Ward 6. And of course your Mayor, myself. I'm always very interested to hear what's on your minds and to be able to provide information that will be useful for you and useful for your family in making decisions to keep everybody healthy and safe.

### Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:57:45):

So the call is being recorded and the questions are also being recorded and the answers, so we will get that up within a couple of days on the city's websites. So if you know somebody who missed the call that would like to tune in, they will have that opportunity. We will post all of the questions. There may be maybe folks still in the queue. We had over a hundred people on the last call though that didn't get to answer... To ask their question and we may have similar numbers this time but not to worry. Your question will be taken down by our scribes in the background and we will endeavor to get those answers up for you as well. So, thanks everyone.

### Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:58:26):

We will be sharing updates and posting that on the city webpage and mine. Thank you again so much for joining us tonight. Please stay home. Please stay healthy. The longer we stay apart now, the sooner we can come together. And most important, let's endeavor to be kind and gracious to one another. These are tough times. We heard... We talked a lot about mental health on this call and it is so important to be caring and compassionate with each other and understand we are in an unprecedented emergency crisis.

### Mayor Marianne Meed Ward (01:59:00):

We are all doing the best that we can to look out for each other and we will come through this together and when we get to that other side, we are going to have a big Burlington party to celebrate once we can come together again. So thanks everybody for joining us. I greatly appreciate your time.

### Moderator (01:59:21):

Thank you again to everyone for joining us this evening. If you still have any questions or any feedback on today's telephone town hall, I want to remind you that you can share those with us by emailing them to us at [city@Burlington.ca](mailto:city@Burlington.ca). Please email any questions and feedback to [city@burlington.ca](mailto:city@burlington.ca). Thank you again for joining us this evening and have a good night.

### PART 4 OF 4 ENDS (01:59:40)