

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

July 28, 2020

Mandatory mask use coming for the region

Northwestern Health Unit (NWHU) will be requiring the use of masks or face coverings for anyone in an enclosed public space, beginning August 17, 2020.

NWHU is requiring every business and organization that has an enclosed space accessible to the public to have a mandatory mask use policy. "Over the next few weeks we will be working with our partners and local businesses to ensure they receive the support and resources needed to implement this change," says **Dr. Kit Young-Hoon**, Medical Officer of Health and NWHU.

As communities reopen, there is an increased risk of transmission of COVID-19 due to opportunities for close contact with others. "By wearing masks when in indoor public spaces, we can reduce the spread of COVID-19 and increase the likelihood of local businesses being able to stay open by keeping our case numbers low," explains Dr. Young-Hoon.

NWHU hopes this approach will normalize mask use in advance of a potential second wave of the virus later this year. The use of face coverings must be paired with the other personal protective measures including physical distancing, hand washing, avoiding touching your face, and staying home if you are sick.

NWHU will continue to support businesses and organizations to protect their workers and the public during the time of change. Resources and information to help implement the new mandatory masking order will be provided to the public and all businesses, organizations and workplaces, and will be found on our website in the upcoming weeks.

For more information, visit www.nwhu.on.ca or call our COVID-19 hotline at 1-866-468-2240.

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Visit Ontario's [website](#) to learn more about how the province continues to protect Ontarians from COVID-19.

A reminder to the media that Dr. Kit Young-Hoon hosts online COVID-19 media briefings every Tuesday, 10:00 am - 11:00 am CT as well as Q&A sessions for the public every Wednesday, 10:00 am - 11:00 am CT. If you do not have a link to the media briefings, please email jbegg@nwhu.on.ca.