



Renfrew County and District Health Unit

"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

July 14, 2020

Dear Renfrew County and District Residents,

I want to start off by thanking the businesses, fellow health care workers, essential workers, and all the residents of Renfrew County and District. It is because of your diligence in adhering to public health recommendations that our case numbers of COVID-19 have been the envy of much of Ontario.

As we enter Stage 3 of the Provincial re-opening plan, masks will play an important role in keeping our numbers low by reducing transmission as businesses re-open and people return to work. Although I recognize this is a temporary inconvenience for some, the overwhelming majority have expressed support for this important, socially responsible intervention. We all want the economy to reopen and this is what is required when physical distancing is not possible in enclosed public spaces. At all cost we do not want to go backwards, something we have seen in the USA and even Australia when communities drop their guard.

At the same time, I want to remind everyone that we must practice civility and be kind to each other during these challenging times. Residents and businesses alike need time to adjust to mandatory masking practices, and we can't expect everyone to be perfect overnight. This period of transition will be a time of education regarding when, where, and how masks should be worn. We need to support one another.

We also need to remember that not everyone can wear a mask, and this should be respected. People should not have to disclose to others what medical condition(s) they have. We need to trust one another and rely on the goodwill of our fellow citizens.

As I said at the beginning, our local track record during this pandemic is the envy of Ontario. The residents of Renfrew County and District are adept at following guidelines and preventing the spread of COVID-19. I am confident that you will continue to do so by adopting the mask policy for enclosed public spaces quickly, all the while being kind and considerate of those who cannot do the same.

On behalf of the hardworking staff at RCDHU, thank you for your ongoing support.

Dr Robert Cushman, MD FRCP(C)
Acting Medical Officer of Health