

03 June 2021

Dr. Salvatore Spadafora  
Professor Department of Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine  
Senior Advisor to the Dean Temerty Faculty of Medicine  
Special Advisor to the President and Provost on COVID-19, University of Toronto  
Medical Sciences Building, Room 2109, 1 King's College Circle  
Toronto, ON M5S 1A8

Dear Dr. Spadafora:

**Re: Vaccination of University of Toronto Students for the 2021-2022 Academic Year**

As universities across Ontario prepare for students to return to in-person learning and on-campus living for the 2021-2022 academic year, ensuring high rates of vaccination among the student population will be critical to Ontario's pandemic control.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant impact on Peel region and its residents. To date, Peel has the highest cumulative incidence rate of any public health unit in Ontario. Throughout much of the pandemic, overall case volumes and incidence rates have been highest among those age 20 to 29 years. While COVID-19 tends to be less severe among younger people, variants of concern that emerged in Ontario's third wave have led to an increase in ICU admission rates across all age groups. Furthermore, due to the higher contact rates of younger populations, transmission among this age group has contributed to sustaining community transmission.

Congregate living settings also pose unique risks for SARS-CoV-2 transmission. Post-secondary on-campus residences are high density, contain shared common spaces, and may present challenges to effective isolation or quarantine should a student become infected. For these reasons, high two-dose vaccination coverage among the student population (ideally >90%) will be necessary to prevent local outbreaks in the upcoming academic year.

The University of Toronto Mississauga Campus is an integral component of the Peel community. We share a common goal of keeping students, and the broader community, safe. Peel Public Health is supportive of the University of Toronto pursuing policy options that would facilitate the highest vaccination coverage possible among the student population, especially students who choose to live on-campus in residences.

Thank you for working to support the health and safety of our community.

Sincerely,



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Lawrence C. Loh, MD, MPH, FCFP, FRCPC, FACPM (*he/his*)  
Medical Officer of Health  
Region of Peel

**Health  
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