

**Carleton University
Joint Health and Safety Committee and Union Leadership
COVID-19 Update Meeting #20 – February 24, 2021
Microsoft Teams, 10:00 am**

The JHSC Management co-chair Tony Lackey, chaired the meeting.
Given the special nature of the meeting, quorum was not required (although it was attained)

Information#1. Tony provided an update related to new COVID restrictions and protocols.

Ottawa has been placed into the Orange designation which has eased some of the restrictions. The university is allowing a few photoshoots to take place on campus, no physical events are being allowed on campus at this time. The main floor of the library is open, the Art Gallery is about to open up for service a total of 4 days per week. Streaming and media production, conducted in a safe and compliant manner, is going forward.

The portal for screening has been launched to make it easier for individuals who have permission on campus to get screened quickly. The portal also focuses on those individuals who still require access to campus and relays the need to the individual's manager.

Statistics indicate that a third wave will likely take place in late March to early April and this could result in further lockdown measures.

Variants of the virus are spreading and this is causing difficulties with modeling and determining a suitable plan to approach the variants.

Information #22. Nancy provided further updates related to COVID-19.

The Ministry of Education has tightened up screening requirements for children in the Ontario school system. Children with one symptom are told to stay home and get tested, this includes all siblings in the same household.

A medical journal article released recently commented on masking. The article provided details on how to improve the efficiency of mask use. The article provided details about ill fitting surgical masks, double masking and even an innovative mask folding technique to get closer to the N95 standard.

The COVID info line and screening group are receiving communication about some unhappiness throughout the community. The correspondence has escalated to the point of being considered harassment. Reminders will be sent out to individuals to ensure that they are respectful to all other individuals.

Inspections completed by the JHSC Committee members showed that all rules were being followed and in compliance with current health guidelines. The face to face pilot projects will be reviewed shortly to see if there are any lessons learned for the summer semester.

Questions

Q1 – Question regarding the new screening process for students and families? Nancy indicated that all family members need to isolate if one of their children exhibits symptoms. All schoolboards have requirements for asymptomatic testing which could result in a spike in asymptomatic cases and how the classes those children are part of conduct their operations. The screening requirements are more stringent than in the past. The impact to all work from home staff should be minimal but may have greater impact for those employees in essential services who are working on campus.

Q2 – How is the fall semester currently expected to run? Currently the plan is still being evaluated due to the numerous variables that are still factoring and impacting the ability for the community to return to normal operations. The university will wait to make a final decision concerning the fall until further details are revealed. There is hope that some sort of increased on campus activity will take place in the fall semester.

Next meeting(s)

The next meeting will be **Wednesday, March 10, 2021, at 10:00 AM**, Microsoft Teams.

Adjournment