



August 29, 2021

## **Public Safety and Public Health Analysis of Current COVID-19 Situation in Kahnawake**

The following document is meant to provide a snapshot of the current risk level in the community in comparison to the regions around us. It is also a communication regarding rationale for the measures that will be implemented in Kahnawake in the weeks to come. COVID-19 will be amongst us for the coming years and the following is a preliminary overview of the plan to move forward. This plan is a new plan, meant to address recovery towards a “new normal”. Considering that the community will move throughout various risk levels, the plan is meant to be fluid to respond to level of risk the community is in at any particular time, while meeting the objectives and guiding principles highlighted below. The plan is based on community education and individuals’ responsibility to make informed decisions to protect the collective as level of risk is identified. Success in the recovery period is not based on directives but on teamwork and collective responsibility. The 4<sup>th</sup> wave is already worse than all 3 waves before it. In order to maintain economy, education, mental health, spiritual health and physical health, all community members must work towards common goals and not against each other. Now is the most important time to band together and be strong against this virus.

### **4<sup>th</sup> Wave Planning:**

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES:**

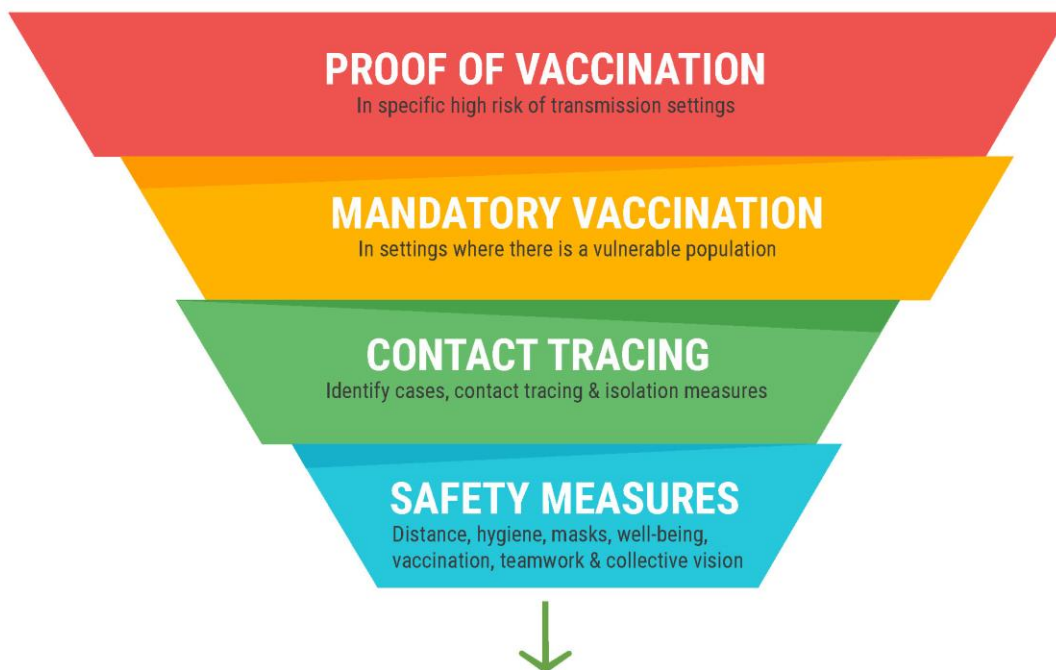
- Save lives/minimize hospitalization and death
- Protect the most vulnerable: Keep residences open (KMHC, TBEL, ILC)
- Maintain economy: keep businesses open
- Minimize impacts to mental health: maintain small gatherings, decrease isolation
- Protect hospital and front line services
- Keep cases and contacts to a minimum
- Ensure continued education: keep children in school, on-site
- Ensure physical activity for all ages: maintain sports and recreation in and out of schools
- Use minimal measures to achieve goals
- Collective needs vs individualism
- Move towards a state of normalcy (avoid return to state of emergency)

## 4<sup>th</sup> Wave Vision:

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES & OBJECTIVES

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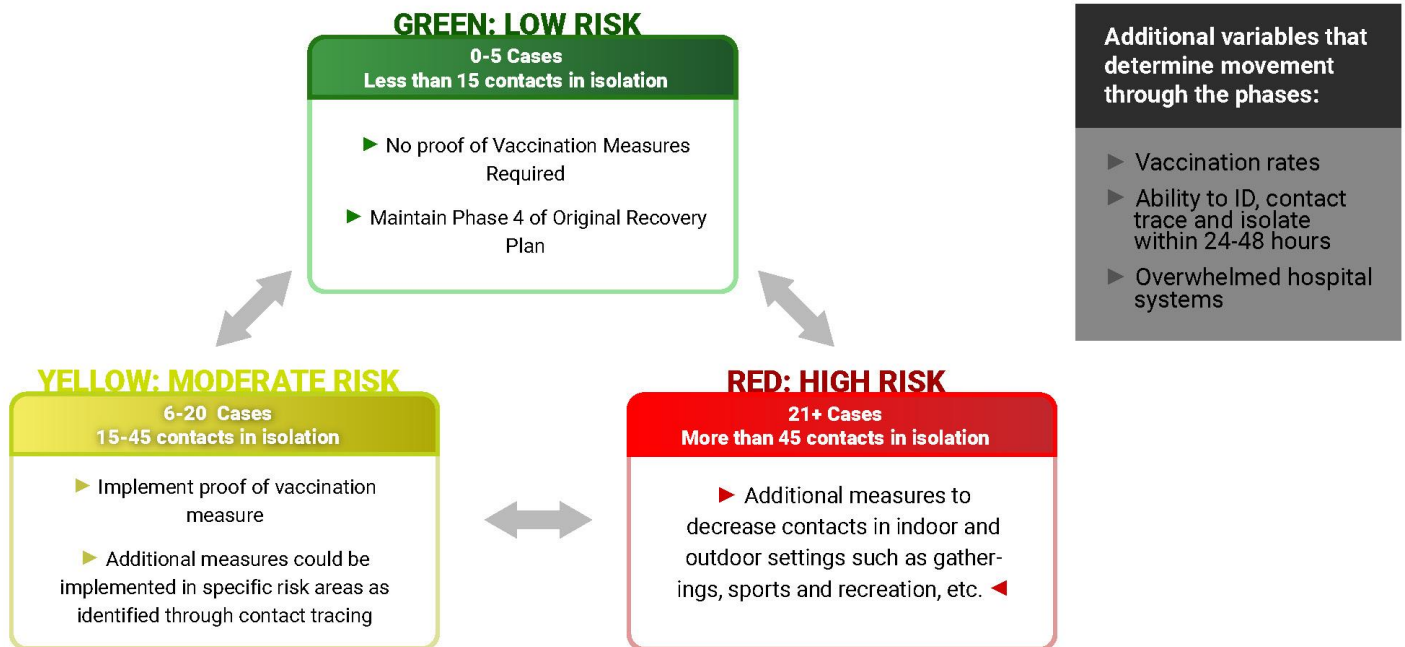
Kahnawà:ke Public Health has adopted the following guiding principles and objectives to help steer the community on a safe route towards the “new normal.” These factors play an important role in how successful the pandemic is mitigated within Kahnawà:ke for all aspects of health.



- ▶ Save lives/minimize hospitalization and death
- ▶ Protect the most vulnerable: Keep residences open (KMHC, TBEL, ILC)
- ▶ Maintain economy: keep businesses open
- ▶ Minimize impacts to mental health: maintain small gatherings, decrease isolation
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# 4TH WAVE PLAN

Kahnawà:ke Public Health has created a new risk identification system. Each color identifies the level of risk and the measures that correspond. As we navigate through the pandemic, it is expected that we have fluid movement through each phase, according to the level of risk at the time. The variables also help determine how we move through each phase.



The number of cases is not a sole identifier of risk level. There is an expected increase of COVID-19 cases during the 4th Wave. As a result, the number of contacts is a more reliable indicator of risk level, as the community's ability to isolate positive cases and contacts remains paramount in controlling transmission.

## RATIONALE

### CURRENT COVID-19 DATA IN QUEBEC AND CANADA:

#### Measures being applied in provinces and country as of August 26, 2021:

- Canada issued vaccination mandates for all federal public servants
- Many private businesses mandating vaccination across the country for example Air Canada, RBC, BofM, higher learning institutions
- Quebec issued vaccination mandate for all health care workers
- Quebec stated publicly that any employer wishing to implement mandatory vaccination will be supported
- Quebec urges businesses to slow down return to work plans
- Legal firms across country endorse mandatory vaccination requirements
- B.C issued vaccine passports
- B.C universities and colleges mandating vaccination as well as passport system
- Manitoba instituting mask mandate and vaccine passports as well as mandatory vaccination for provincial workers
- Ontario mandating vaccination for workers in high risk settings
- PEI has issued vaccine passports at this time for travel in and out of province
- Vaccine mandates for all international travel (train, air, boat)
- Provinces implementing new proof of vaccination measures and vaccination mandates daily

**Goal of these vaccination mandates and passport like measures: slow down the spread of the virus by limiting contacts of positive cases who would be likely to become COVID positive, protect front line workers and patients of high risk settings and increase vaccination rates in order to allow “life” to continue without having to completely shut down = least restrictive measures to save lives and decrease long-term impacts as much as possible.**

#### Quebec statistics:

Number of active cases as of August 27, 2021	706
Cases in Monteregie related to DELTA variant as of August 27, 2021	27% (208 cases)
Hospitalizations in Monteregie as of August 26, 2021	15
Number of deaths since beginning of pandemic in Monteregie area	1559
Percentage fully vaccinated in Quebec	79.1%

Data regarding number of cases, hospitalizations and number of deaths in Quebec: <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/covid-19/donnees/par-region>

Data regarding vaccination coverage in Quebec: : <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/sites/default/files/covid/vaccination/vigie-vaccination-20210827.pdf>

## Vaccine Efficacy

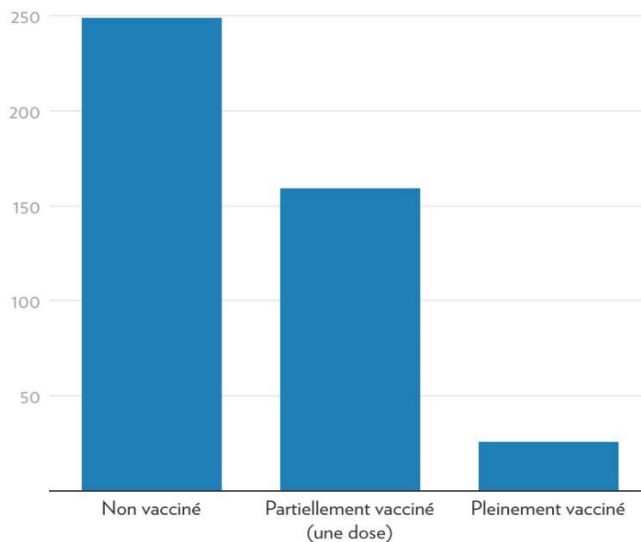
- mRNA vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna) are 60% - 80% effective in preventing COVID-19. According to Quebec efficacy data, they are effective at preventing hospitalizations by 98%. Recent data from the United Kingdom and Ontario suggests lower efficacy against the Delta variant with only 1 dose of mRNA vaccine. However after 2 doses, protection against symptomatic infections is estimated at approximately 90% and protection against hospitalizations is at 96% <https://www.msss.gouv.qc.ca/professionnels/covid-19/vaccination-contre-la-covid-19/vaccins-a-arn-messenger/>

See La Presse article data below for the Data from Quebec from July 30 – 26 August 2021 according to vaccination status.

The **first chart** represents **new cases** and the **second chart** represents **hospitalizations**. <https://www.lapresse.ca/covid-19/2021-08-28/hospitalisations/la-quatrieme-vague-risque-de-deferler.php#>

### Cas selon le statut vaccinal au Québec

Nouveaux cas de COVID-19 rapportés au Québec du 30 juillet au 26 août, selon le statut vaccinal, pour 100 000 habitants



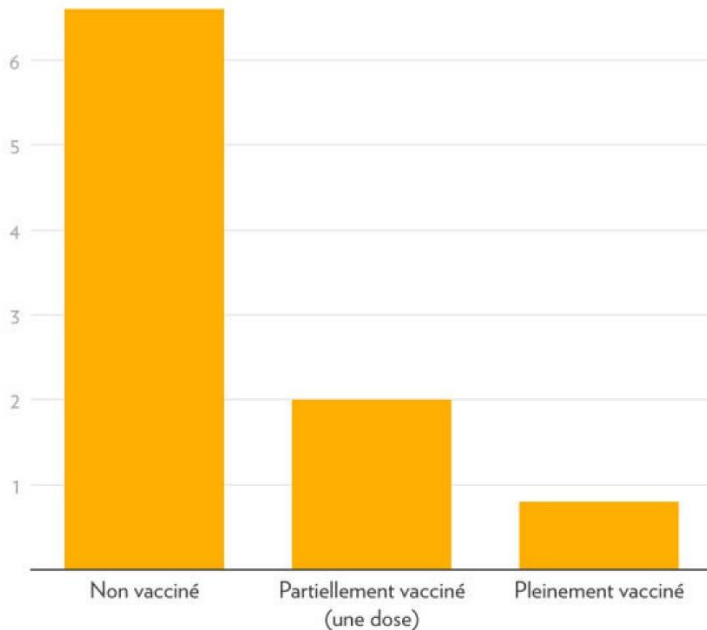
Données mises à jour le 27 août 2021

Source : ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec



## Hospitalisations selon le statut vaccinal

Nouvelles hospitalisations dues à la COVID-19 rapportées au Québec du 30 juillet au 26 août, selon le statut vaccinal, pour 100 000 habitants



Données mises à jour le 27 août 2021

Source : ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec



<https://www.lapresse.ca/covid-19/2021-08-28/hospitalisations/la-quatrieme-vague-risque-de-deferler.php#>

- **Current data demonstrates that people who are not protected (0 doses of COVID-19 vaccine) are at a much higher risk of contracting COVID-19 and therefore transmitting COVID-19 and are at a much higher risk of hospitalization.**
- **Data from Kahnawake Public Health demonstrates similar findings – see charts below.**

## CURRENT COVID-19 DATA IN KAHNAWAKE:

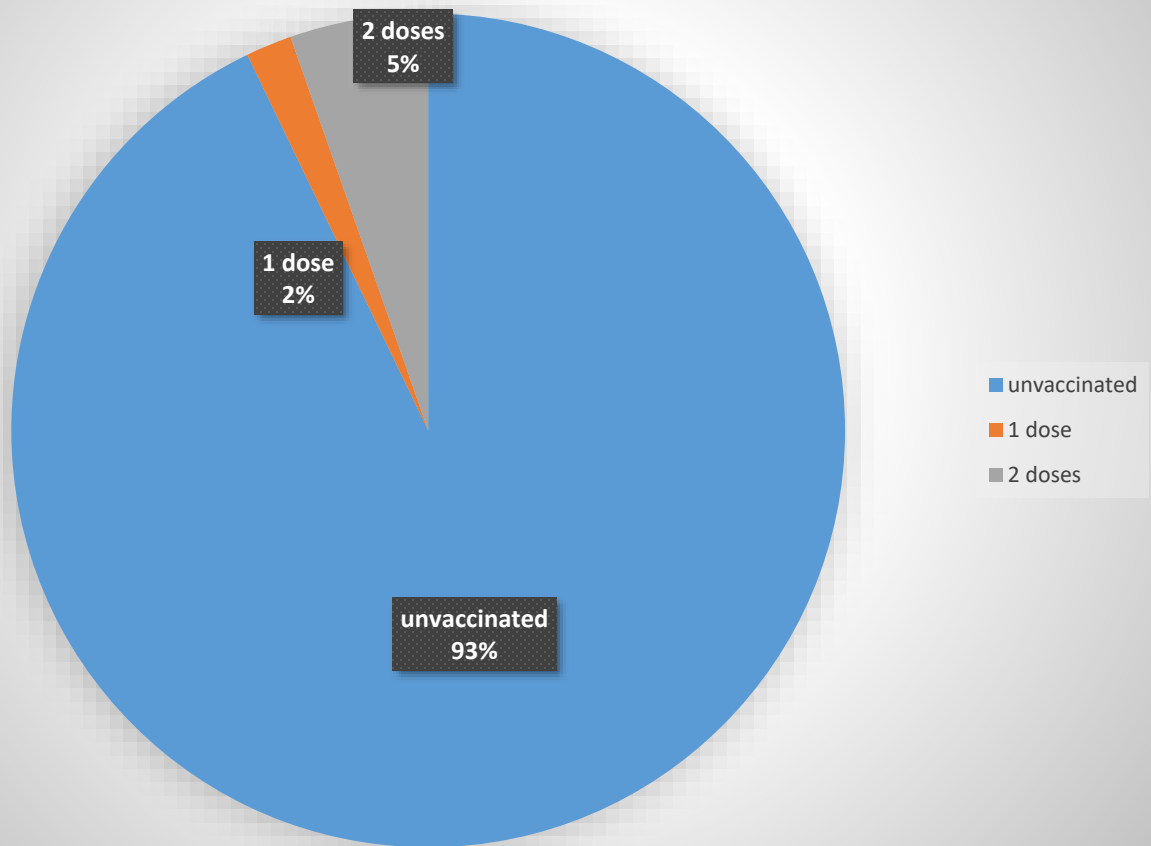
Kahnawake Statistics as of August 28, 2021:

<b>Total # cases 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> wave (March 2020-July 12, 2021)</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>Total # cases 4<sup>th</sup> wave (July 12, 2021-August 28, 2021)</b>	<b>56</b>
Total # of hospitalizations in 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> wave	2
Total # of hospitalizations in 4 <sup>th</sup> wave	1
As of August 28, number of active cases	18
As of August 28, number of active clusters	6 with 1 superspreader event

### Comments:

- 4<sup>th</sup> wave started 1 ½ months ago and we already have 42% of the number of cases we had in first 3 waves all together
- DELTA related cases rising daily in Quebec however in Kahnawake, at least half of 4<sup>th</sup> wave cases are related to DELTA variant and others still under investigation
- Hospitalizations and death gradually increasing as cases rise all around us
- Vaccination rates higher in surrounding communities than in Kahnawake
- Risk of infection and death significantly higher amongst unvaccinated. Expected strain on hospital system both in and outside of Kahnawake, impacting ability to contact trace and contain spread as well as impact on people requiring other hospital emergency services

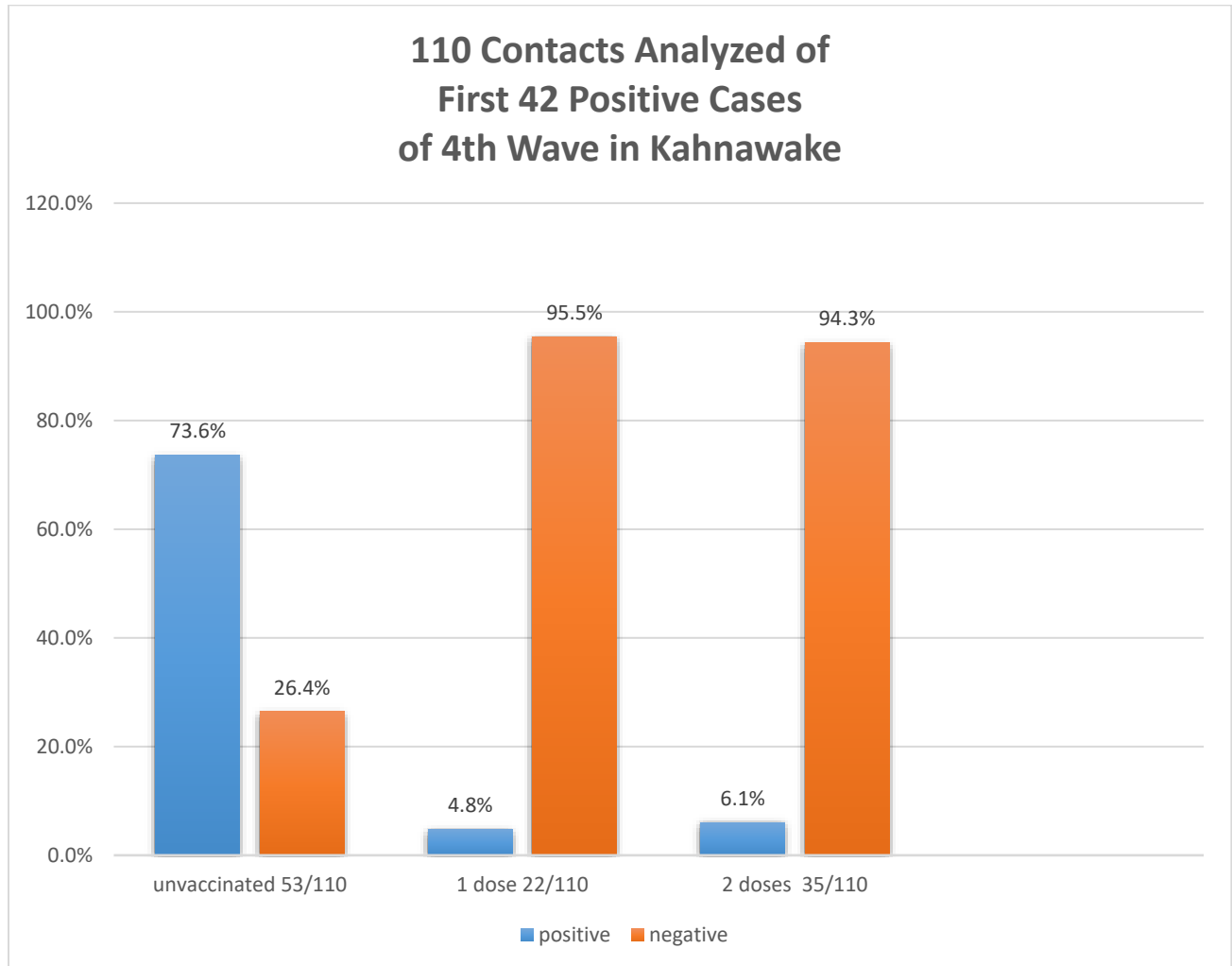
## VACCINATION STATUS OF NEW CASES FROM JULY 12 - AUGUST 28



- Of the 56 positive cases in 4<sup>th</sup> wave, 93% are unvaccinated



We analyzed data from tested contacts of first 42 positive cases. Upon analysis of the data, all contacts being assessed as moderate to high risk contacts, if you were unvaccinated, you were 74% likely to develop COVID-19 as compared to 6% if you were fully protected (2 doses) and 5% if you were partially protected (1 dose). (Sample size is small and therefore positivity rate between those who had 1 dose compared to 2 doses is not significantly different. Quebec data using larger sample sizes demonstrates the need for 2 doses to increase vaccine efficacy against the DELTA variant – see data above)



**Comments:**

- Number of contacts and number of cases growing rapidly with current active cases linked to initial outbreaks still. Demonstrating transmissibility of DELTA variant.
- Several cases unable to identify location of transmission pointing to possibility of community transmission

## Kahnawake Vaccination Rates (As of August 27, 2021):

Goal of Vaccination Campaign:

- Protect population from severe illness and death
- Protect hospital system by limiting rate of transmission
- We have demonstrated the efficacy of the vaccines in preventing spread of COVID-19 but you CAN get COVID even if you are vaccinated. The vaccine protects against hospitalization and death.

AGE CATEGORY	1 DOSE	2 DOSES
12-15	236/350; 67%	236/350; 67%
16-17	133/150; 89%	112/150; 75%
18+	4046/5100; 79%	3540/5100; 69%
<b>ALL AGES COMBINED</b>	78%	70%

- Considering the DELTA variant, 2 doses are absolutely necessary to increase efficacy and current data suggests the need for a minimum of 95% vaccination rates for herd immunity. Quebec's current vaccination goal is set at 83% as an expected standard for safety and minimal measures.

### Current Level of Risk in Kahnawake:

Current variables (not in order of importance) which drastically increase risk in Kahnawake and need for additional measures to obtain goals:

- Travel (provincial and international)
- School reopening
- Fatigue leading to a decrease in compliance to measures
- Change in weather leading to increases in indoor activities
- Perception of safety in Kahnawake and perception of Kahnawake "bubble"
- Increased risk associated with DELTA variant: increased transmissibility (1 index case leads to 15 cases on average) and severity (expected increase in hospitalizations and deaths in vulnerable population)
- Low overall vaccination rates
- Current DELTA variant evidence suggests that vaccine efficacy in the face of COVID variant decreases significantly after 6 months. The majority of Kahnawakero:non received their second dose in March – 6 months ago.
- Imminent threat of DELTA variant (increase in cases, severity and transmissibility): all indicators of hospitalizations and death on the rise in regions around Kahnawake
- Frontline staff imminent inability to contact trace within 24-48 hours

## SUMMARY:

Considering all of the above information and our objective of maintaining holistic health (economy, education, mental health, spiritual health, physical health), we recommend the following in order to reach our goals and stay true to our guiding principles:

- **As number of cases increase as well as number of contacts: implement temporary measures to ensure a decrease in cases and contacts, together with vaccination rates, ability to ID, contact trace and isolate within 24-48 hours and hospital system (both internal and external to Kahnawake) ability to respond:**
  - a. **Proof of vaccination in public areas of high risk**
    - Kahnawake data provides evidence of the need to limit social contacts in high risk settings of unvaccinated population (vs vaccinated population who are low risk for infection) in order to protect both the unvaccinated and vaccinated population and ensure to meet our objectives as stated above in Phase 4 plan.
    - Any type of proof acceptable (electronic, paper, Quebec QR code)
    - QR code being used all throughout Quebec – many Kahnawake:non already have downloaded
    - Quebec expanding its implementation due to rapid increase in DELTA variant and associated risk therefore recommendation to implement immediately in the following areas for everyone age 13+:
      - Outdoor events and festivals
      - Sports venues and indoor sports events
      - Organized sports
      - Bars, restaurants and social clubs
      - Gaming and bingo hall
      - Indoor recreation areas: KidsRUs
      - Gyms are excluded from this measure due to low volumes and existing environmental adaptations – they are not considered high risk in Kahnawake
  - b. **Strong recommendation that private businesses implement vaccination mandates for their employees in non-essential, high-risk settings such as restaurants and gaming**
  - c. **Vaccination mandates where service is provided to a vulnerable clientele:** Health, Social Services, Education. This provides protection to vulnerable clientele who use these services as well as provides occupational health and safety to human resources of the organization. Decisions about vaccination mandates are to be made by each individual organization and their respective Board of Directors.
  - d. **Recommended limitations on gatherings (indoor and outdoor, private and public, sports-related:** provide education so that as we move from green to yellow to red,

community can make informed decision about their role and responsibility in the collective response – limit gathering sizes, avoid large groups, protect self and others

- e. **Further recommended limitations depending on analysis of cases and contacts at any given time**

**It is not Public Health or Public Safety intention to recommend a complete lockdown as this would have drastic impacts on all areas of health: mental, spiritual, physical, economy, education with drastic long-term consequences. Kahnawake has to learn to live in “new normal” which includes fluctuations between moments of higher and lower risk. Our individual actions must be in line with risk level in community at any given time.**

No matter how we respond currently, we are presently at an increased risk of experiencing the death of a community member. We must protect the whole and work as a team – vaccinated and unvaccinated together so that we can respect each other’s choices and protect the collective. We must work collectively to decrease contacts and positive cases or ultimately we will increase chances of hospitalization and death in the community. Our actions will also directly impact future generations and the impacts that COVID-19 can have on them in the years to come.

**Further information will be forthcoming over the coming days and weeks.**