

Dr. Vera Etches
Ottawa Public Health
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July 29, 2021

Dear Dr. Etches,

I am contacting you on behalf of the Carleton University Academic Staff Association (CUASA), the certified trade union representing over 950 professors, instructors, and librarians at Carleton University.

In recent weeks, several Ontario universities have announced new vaccination policies citing updated advice from the Medical Officer of Health for their regions (Waterloo, Guelph, McMaster, etc). Ottawa University has also recently announced that all students living in residence must be vaccinated (or obtain a medical or religious exemption). Western University and the University of Toronto announced mandatory vaccinations months ago, and Seneca College is insisting on mandatory vaccines for all those attending campus, with on-line learning and work readily available for the un-vaccinated.

The cohort of Ontarians aged 18-29, which comprises almost all of our students, has plateaued at the lowest vaccination rate of any age group (70.47%/51.6%). These numbers fall far short of what is required for a safe congregate setting such as our campus. Since students tend to go everywhere on campus every day (several classes, the library, the gym, the cafeterias), and everywhere in the NPR, a single case of infection could quickly spread throughout our campus and beyond.

With thousands of students set to arrive from all over Ontario, Canada and elsewhere even as their vaccination rate stagnates, the current strategies that have successfully mitigated the spread of COVID in Ottawa will be insufficient to keep our campus and our region safe. We are therefore seeking updated direction on recommendations for student vaccinations, COVID testing, and contact tracing in advance of the Fall-term return to campus.

Sincerely,



Raj Singh, PhD
External Relations Officer
Carleton University Academic Staff Association

CC: Angelo Mingarelli, President of CUASA. president@cuasa.ca