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Dear CORE participants, parents, and caregivers,

I hope everyone is keeping well, and has found enjoyment over the summer.

A few months ago, we were looking toward a gradual reopening of in-person supports beginning this fall. At that time, case numbers in Ontario and Toronto were much lower, and decreasing. Vaccination rates were steadily increasing and the province was moving through the stages of re-opening ahead of target.

Recently, case numbers in Ontario have begun to increase quickly again, and vaccination uptake has stagnated. The delta variant is presenting new challenges and is causing severe illness. The ongoing impact of this evolving virus is evident in public health reporting and international news, and Ontario has slowed down reopening as a result.

Last week, the government of Ontario categorized developmental services day programs as high-risk settings for transmission of the virus. Even with all current public health protocols in place, there is still risk for large indoor gatherings, and in particular for the population CORE serves.

Research findings from the onset of the pandemic have shown that people with developmental disabilities are significantly more likely to become severely ill if exposed to the COVID-19 virus. This is concerning but important information and we hope that continued precautions will help to keep everyone in our community safe.

Please visit the links on the following page for more information.

Due to the rise in number and severity of new cases, and the measured impact on the population served, CORE will not be reopening in-person services in September, and will continue virtual support until further notice. We will continue to observe public health guidelines and trends, follow Ministry directives, and look to common practices in the sector for guidance on timing to reopen.

As an organization, CORE is committed to doing everything possible to protect the health and safety of participants, staff, family members, and the broader community.

We appreciate your support, understanding, and patience as we all continue to navigate the ongoing situation together.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us at any time.

The CORE Team

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[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/eclinm/article/PIIS2589-5370\(21\)00029-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/eclinm/article/PIIS2589-5370(21)00029-8/fulltext)

<https://www.porticonetwork.ca/web/hcardd/news/-/blogs/research-evidence-regarding-covid-19-and-developmental-disabilities>

<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1000750/ontario-makes-covid-19-vaccination-policies-mandatory-for-high-risk-settings>