Media Release

July 28, 2021

Grey Bruce No Longer COVID Hot Spot – Lessons Learned

Grey Bruce is no longer a provincially designated COVID-19 Hot Spot. We thank everyone for their continued support as we collectively work together to bring numbers down.

If the weekly pattern of new cases continues to decrease or remain stable thru the coming long weekend, we will be in a good position to move to full Step 3. Until then, we are asking the public in Grey Bruce to stay the course with the modified Step 3.

Our experience with the Delta variant is an unfortunate proof of how extremely efficient and effective it is at transmitting, and at causing sever disease leading to hospitalizations and deaths.

A two-pronged approach is necessary. Robust Case and Contact Management (CCM) was crucial in bringing this latest Delta variant surge under control. However, as the majority of transmission during the last surge was in individuals who were not fully vaccinated, an aggressive roll-out of vaccine is indispensable to ensure it does not return.

The CCM in Grey Bruce Health Unit is second to none with robust protocols and most importantly a committed and experienced team. Over the past 16 months, the team was able to bring down every surge keeping the number of new cases to a manageable level of less than 5 per day with many days without any new cases.

We conducted Social Network Analysis of the surge in Grey Bruce (attached). With the increase in our numbers, we could share this work without threatening privacy.

This analysis identified:

- Majority of transmission was in individuals who were not fully vaccinated
- Main drivers of outbreak were
    - Private gatherings/parties
    - Transient/low economic status/crowded housing
- High numbers of high risk contacts
- No increased risk of transmission in workplace/regulated settings (10+ locations investigated)

Without question, vaccination is the only way to prevent a 4th wave and our way out of this pandemic.

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Working with our partners and volunteers, the Grey Bruce Health Unit took vaccines to the community with both mass and targeted vaccinations. We vaccinated about 70,000 people, 50% of eligible public in Grey Bruce, in the past 4 weeks. The mass vaccination strategy has been successful in achieving its purpose and is ramping down.

We have reached the vaccine coverage target for the regular strains of COVID-19. However, with Delta now the dominant variant, we need to reach a higher vaccine target of 90% coverage. Therefore, we are ramping up the targeted vaccination strategy adding more pop-up and drive through clinics.

We need everyone's help to encourage those who have not had their vaccine to get protected. Having everyone who is eligible fully vaccinated is the most successful way to prevent COVID-19. There are Drop-In Vaccine Clinics every day in Grey Bruce. Vaccine Schedule

For More Information:
Dr. Ian Arra, MD MSc FRCPC ACPM ABPM
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To arrange to speak with Dr. Arra, please contact Drew Ferguson at:
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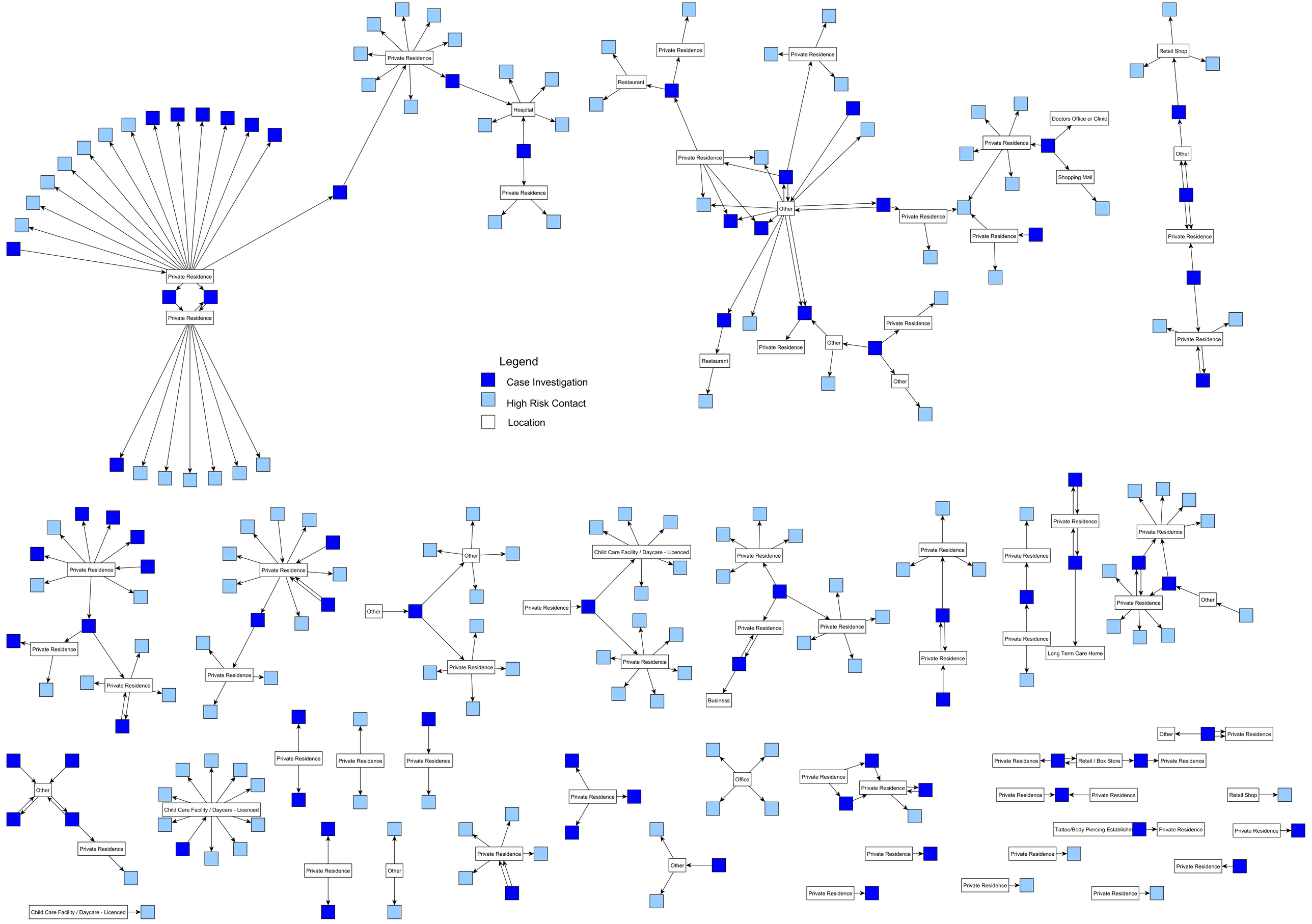
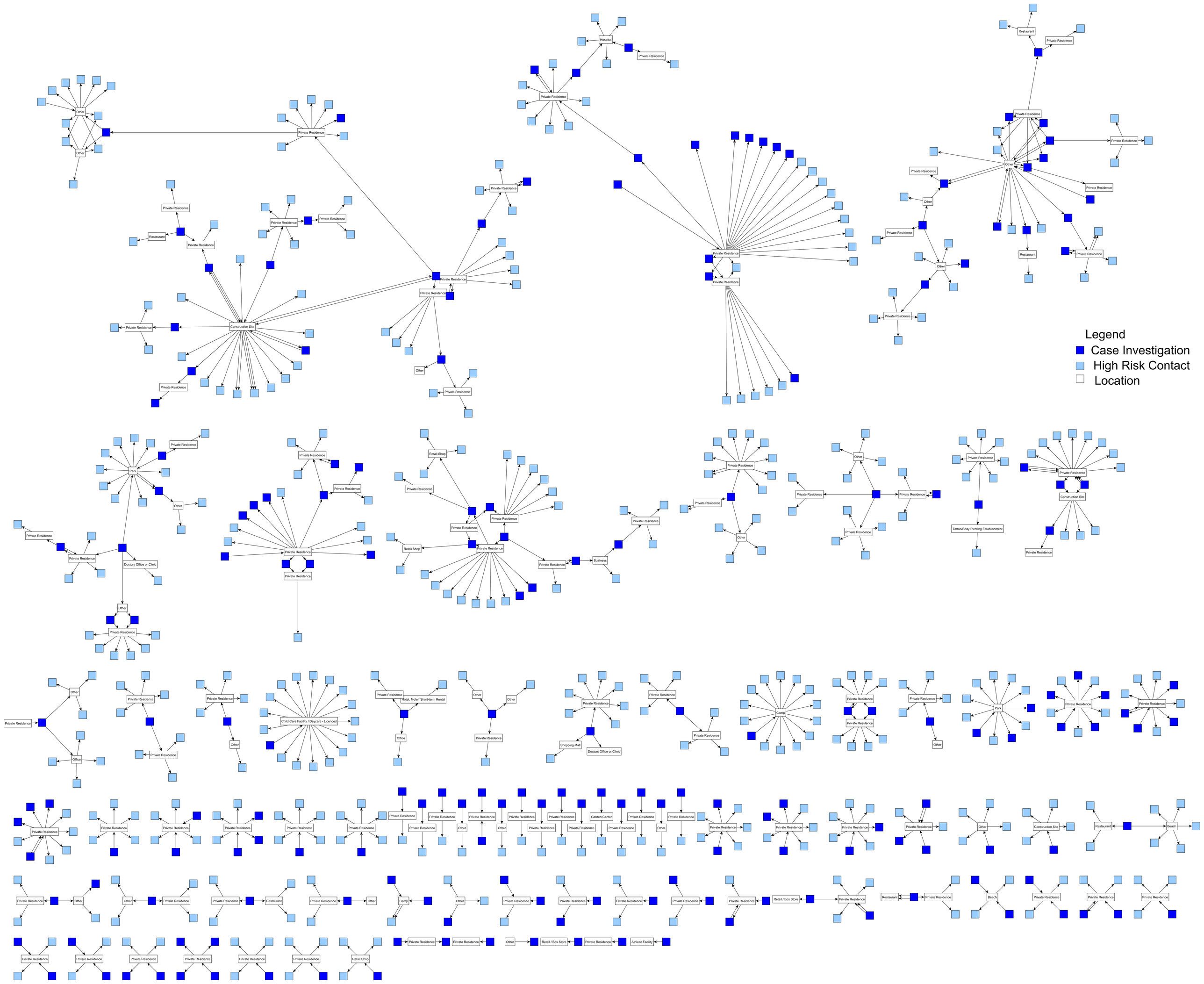

Legend
Case Investigation
High Risk Contact
Location
Private Residence
Hospital
Restaurant
Other
Doctors Office or Clinic
Shopping Mall
Retail Shop
Business
Office
Retail / Box Store
Tattoo/Body Piercing Establishm
Child Care Facility / Daycare - Licenced
Long Term Care Home


Legend
Case Investigation
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Private Residence
Restaurant
Hospital
Construction Site
Park
Retail Shop
Doctors Office or Clinic
Business
Tattoo/Body Piercing Establishment
Office
Child Care Facility / Daycare - Licenced
Hotel, Motel, Short-term Rental
Shopping Mall
Camp
Garden Center
Beach
Retail / Box Store
Athletic Facility

Media Release

August 4, 2021

Hockey Hub Success World-Wide

The Grey Bruce Health Unit hosts knowledge sharing sessions and material on the principles, plans and details of the Hockey Hub operation. This public health innovation was designed by the Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Ian Arra, and first developed by the Grey Bruce Health Unit. Since February, multiple health units, hospitals, various provincial and international health authorities have participated in and utilized knowledge from these sessions.

New Zealand heath officials had extensive contact with Dr. Arra and the Grey Bruce Health Unit as they worked to duplicate the Hockey Hub model.

More than 16,000 people took part in a mass vaccination event in New Zealand, based on the Hockey Hub model. The three-day clinic, running July 30 to August 1, averaged just over 5,000 clients per day.

A dozen vaccinators - averaging an injection every 90 seconds - worked across 240 booths set up at the Vodafone Events Centre in Manukau, Auckland.

To ensure maximum efficiency, the event was fully booked, no walk-ins allowed. Patients were bussed to the events centre from the Manukau Institute of Technology.

Coordinators are describing this as the largest vaccination clinic in New Zealand.

A repeat event for second doses is planned for September 10, 11 and 12.

We thank our partners, volunteers, staff, Board of Health and the province for their contribution to the development and success of the Hockey Hub model. It is one example of the innovate approaches being developed in fulfilling our strategic vision of making Grey Bruce the Centre of Excellence in Rural Public Health.

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Media Release

August 4, 2021

Grey Bruce Moves to Step 3

The Grey Bruce Health Unit, in collaboration with partners and the community, has been successful in bringing COVID-19 case numbers down. This enables Grey Bruce to move to the full provincial Step 3, effective 12:01 am August 5.

As the rest of the province progressed to Step 3 on July 15, a modified Step 3 was introduced in Grey Bruce to address the significant number of Delta variant COVID-19 cases. The modified Step 3 included strong recommendations, instead of regulatory orders, designed to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Moving to the full Step 3 reopening relaxes restrictions on the numbers that can gather to a maximum of 100 people outdoors and a maximum of 25 people indoors.

Personal service settings and salons may now provide services that require the removal of a face covering, with capacity limited to permit physical distancing.

Recommendations to only dine outdoors are no longer in place.

We still encourage workplaces and patrons to follow public health measures, especially at gyms, cinemas, and restaurants as well as church services and attendees.

“Our robust Case and Contact Management was the crucial factor in bringing this latest Delta variant surge under control.” Says Grey Bruce Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Ian Arra. “However, our analysis shows the majority of transmission during the last surge was in individuals not fully vaccinated. An aggressive roll-out of vaccine, and the community support for that, will help to ensure it does not return.”

Working with our partners and volunteers, the Grey Bruce Health Unit took to the community vaccinating about 70,000 people, 50% of eligible public in Grey Bruce, in the past 4 weeks.

We now need everyone’s help to encourage those who have not had their vaccine to get protected. Having everyone who is eligible fully vaccinated is the most successful way to prevent COVID-19. There are Drop-In Vaccine Clinics across Grey Bruce. Vaccine Schedule

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Kelly Lush

From: Dr. Arra, Ian (MOH) <I.Arra@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca>
Sent: August-03-21 4:56 PM
To: Dr. Arra, Ian (MOH)
Subject: Mass vaccination - New Zealand

Good news from New Zealand over the weekend!

Grey Bruce Hockey Hub rocks!!

Thank you to all GBHU staff and volunteers, and GB partners for the great work; replication of our collective work is benefiting people across the globe!!!

https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/448132/covid-19-mass-vaccination-event-continues-in-auckland

https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/125928716/covid19-15000-expected-to-receive-vaccine-as-first-mass-vaccination-event-wraps-up

kind regards,

Dr. Ian Arra, MD MSc FRCPC ACPM ABPM

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Vision: A healthier future for all.
Mission: Working with Grey Bruce communities to protect and promote health.
Core Values: Effective communication, Partnership, Respectful Relationships, Quality and Innovation, Integrity, Leadership

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Media Release

August 6, 2021

Vaccine Clinics – August 9 - 14

For the week of August 9 – 14, the Grey Bruce Health Unit will hold vaccine clinics at the following times and locations:

Monday, August 9
Hepworth Ball Diamond/Tourist location, 9:00am – 1:00pm
Ayton Arena Parking Lot, 3:00pm – 7:00pm

Tuesday, August 10
Keady Arena, 7:00am – 11:00am
Dundalk Arena Parking Lot, 4:00pm – 7:00pm
Owen Sound District Secondary School, 9:00am – 2:00pm

Wednesday, August 11
Port Elgin Nuclear Innovation Institute, 11:00am – 2:00pm
Walkerton Kaufman's Independent Grocers Parking Lot, 4:00pm – 7:00pm
Hanover P&H Centre, 9:00am – 2:00pm

Thursday, August 12
Owen Sound Heritage Place Mall, 10:00am – 2:00pm
Lucknow Sports Complex, 4:00pm – 7:00pm
Kincardine Davidson Centre, 9:00am – 2:00pm

Friday, August 13
Southampton Coliseum, 9:00am – 2:00pm

Saturday, August 14
TBA

All clinics are walk-in, bike-in, drive-in. List is subject to change. For a current list of all clinics, please visit our weekly Clinic Schedule

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Media Release

Aug 9, 2021

COVID-19 Outbreak – Kelso Villa Retirement Home

The Grey Bruce Health Unit is working with Kelso Villa Retirement Home in Owen Sound to address an outbreak of COVID-19 associated with six cases, one staff and five residents. As per ministry's most recent guidelines, two or more cases of COVID-19 triggers an automatic outbreak within the facility. This outbreak is reflected on the Public Health website**.**

All six individuals were fully vaccinated. None of the cases has severe COVID-19 disease; all mild symptoms. Factoring in the transmissibility of the Delta variant, this could have been much worse. If no one was vaccinated, it is most likely all 108 residents would have been infected by now. However, with vaccine levels in the home at 95% for residents, the risk of disease spread is decreased providing a higher level of protection to all both vaccinated and unvaccinated. More importantly, the risk of severe disease and hospitalization in the residents who are fully vaccinated has significantly diminished.

The high level of vaccine in residents of the home is reassuring. However, this being the first outbreak in Grey Bruce in a facility where vaccine levels are optimal, we are responding to the outbreak with the same rigor we used before vaccination.

This incident highlights the necessity of reaching vaccine targets to protect everyone from COVID-19 and variants.

Public Health is the lead in all outbreaks and case management. Public Health will let you know if you are a close contact with someone who has COVID-19, based on a thorough risk assessment completed only by Public Health.

The individuals who tested positive have been contacted directly by our COVID-19 Case and Contact Management Team. We are working with the cases and the Retirement Home to identify others, both in and out of the work environment, who may have been exposed and to determine their risk level.

Determining who is a close contact is a decision that can only be made by Public Health. A Public Health case manager will contact anyone identified as a contact to the confirmed case, both in and outside of the Retirement Home environment. Those at risk of infection will be contacted within 24 hours of the investigation.

Anyone NOT contacted by Public Health is not considered at risk and need not take any additional steps including asymptomatic testing.

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The Grey Bruce Health Unit will direct staff and residents in the Retirement Home to test within the facility, as directed by Public Health. Those considered at risk outside of the work environment, will be directed to testing within their local assessment centre, or other feasible location on the appropriate and recommended date(s).

There is no value in anyone being tested ahead of being notified and instructed to do so by Public Health as results would be unreliable and would put individuals at risk of more testing than is required.

All contact tracing and determination of individual and community risk is made by Public Health. This is true of all cases, whether in Retirement Homes, workplaces or the community. A health care provider or workplace official cannot make this decision.

We need everyone's help to encourage those who have not had their vaccine to get protected. Having everyone who is eligible fully vaccinated is the most successful way to prevent COVID-19. There are Drop-In Vaccine Clinics every day in Grey Bruce. Vaccine Schedule

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