



Hamilton

COVID-19 Situation Report & Organizational Update

Board of Health

April 4, 2022



Canadian Public Health Week

PUBLIC HEALTH MATTERS

April 4-8, 2022

Overview

1. Overall Status
2. COVID-19 Situation Report
3. Scarsin Forecast
4. COVID-19 Vaccine Update
5. Organizational Update

Overall Status

- Seeing increased COVID-19 transmission in Hamilton
 - Due to changes in protective behaviours and increasing prevalence of BA.2, a more transmissible Omicron sub-variant
 - Reported cases, test positivity, hospitalizations and wastewater indicators continue to increase
 - Intensive care unit admissions remain low and stable
- Updated forecasts indicate that COVID-19 will continue to circulate in Hamilton out past the end of June 2022

Overall Status

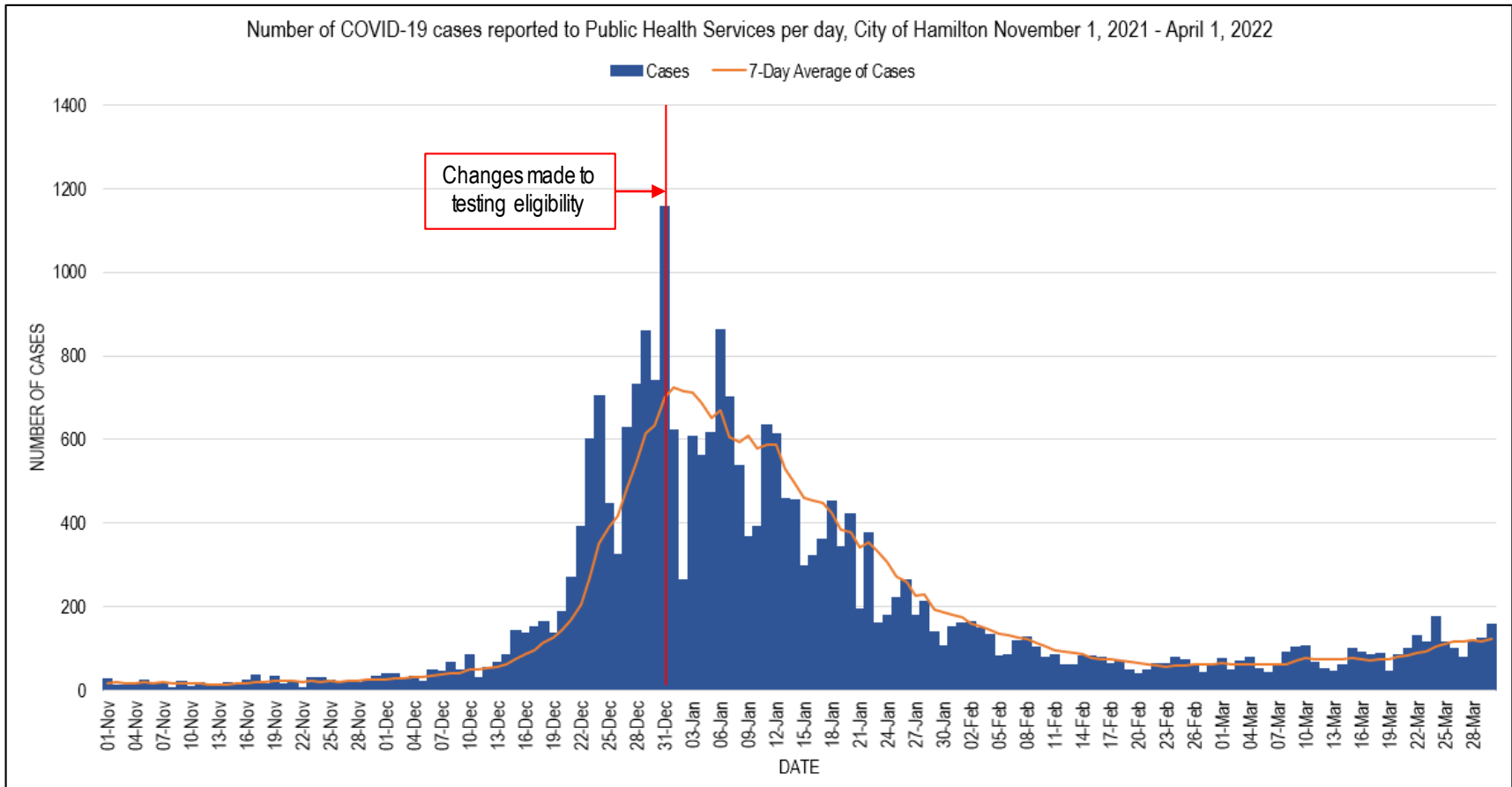
- Vaccination Status (As of March 31, 2022):
 - 90.4% of 12yrs+ with one dose, 88.1% with two doses
 - 53.1% of 5-11yrs with one dose, 36.2% with two doses
 - 57.1% of 18yrs+ with 3rd dose
- Make sure you are up-to-date with your vaccines
 - Eligibility for additional boosters undergoing review at federal, provincial levels

Overall Status

- Hamiltonians are encouraged to use protective measures to reduce serious health consequences from COVID-19 infections
 - Get vaccinated and stay up-to-date with vaccines
 - Wear a mask when indoors and/or when unable to distance
 - Stay home if you have COVID-19 symptoms
 - Speak to your healthcare provider, know in advance if you're eligible for treatment and where to access
 - Practice physical distancing

SITUATION REPORT

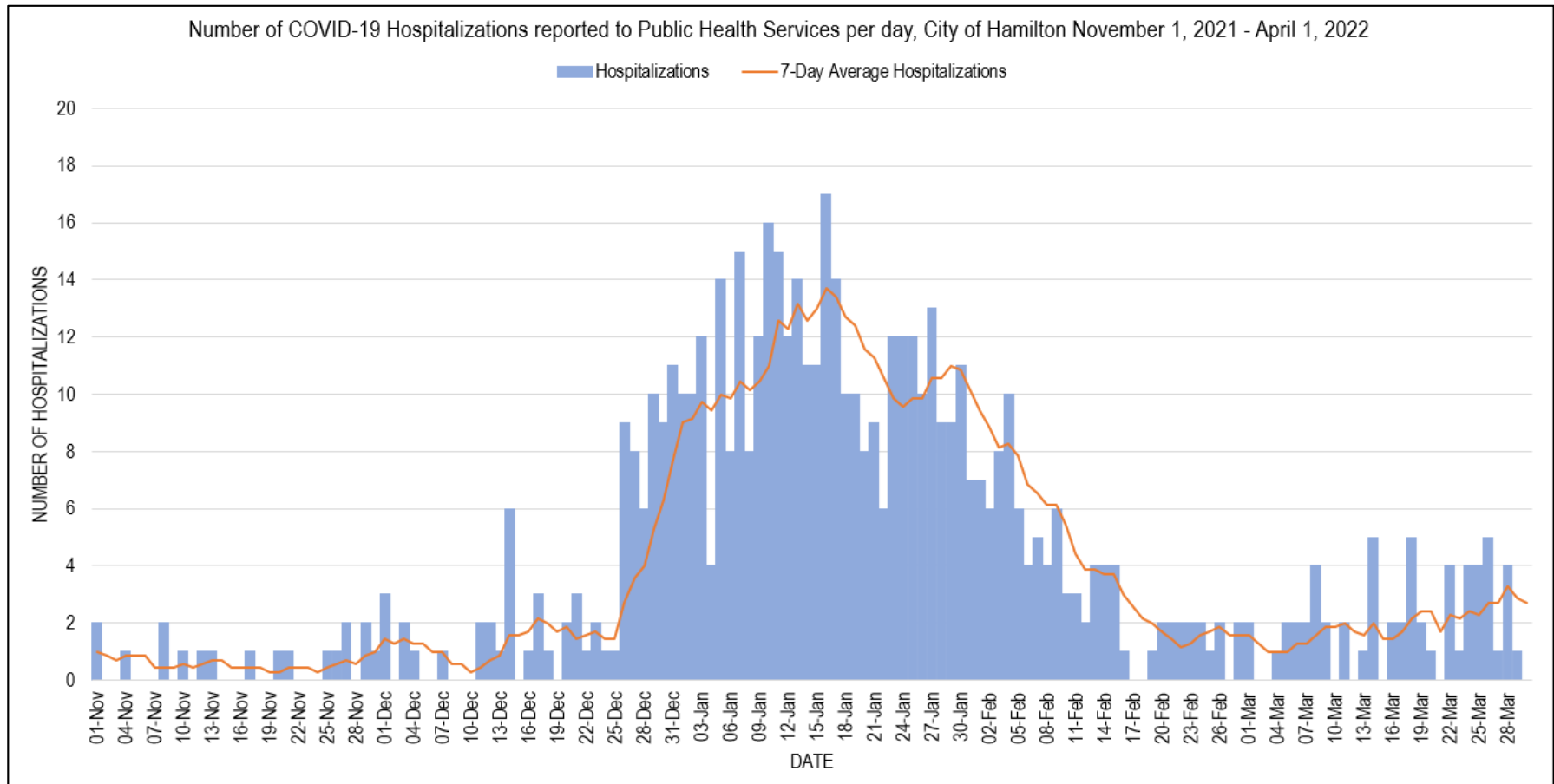
Erin Rodenburg, Epidemiologist



Key Messages

- COVID-19 Case data is known to be underestimated due to Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test eligibility, however it remains an important measure to determine the trends of COVID-19 transmission in our community
- As of April 1, 2022, the 7-day average of cases is **124**, which has increased since last Board of Health (March 21, 2022), when the 7-day average of cases was **84**

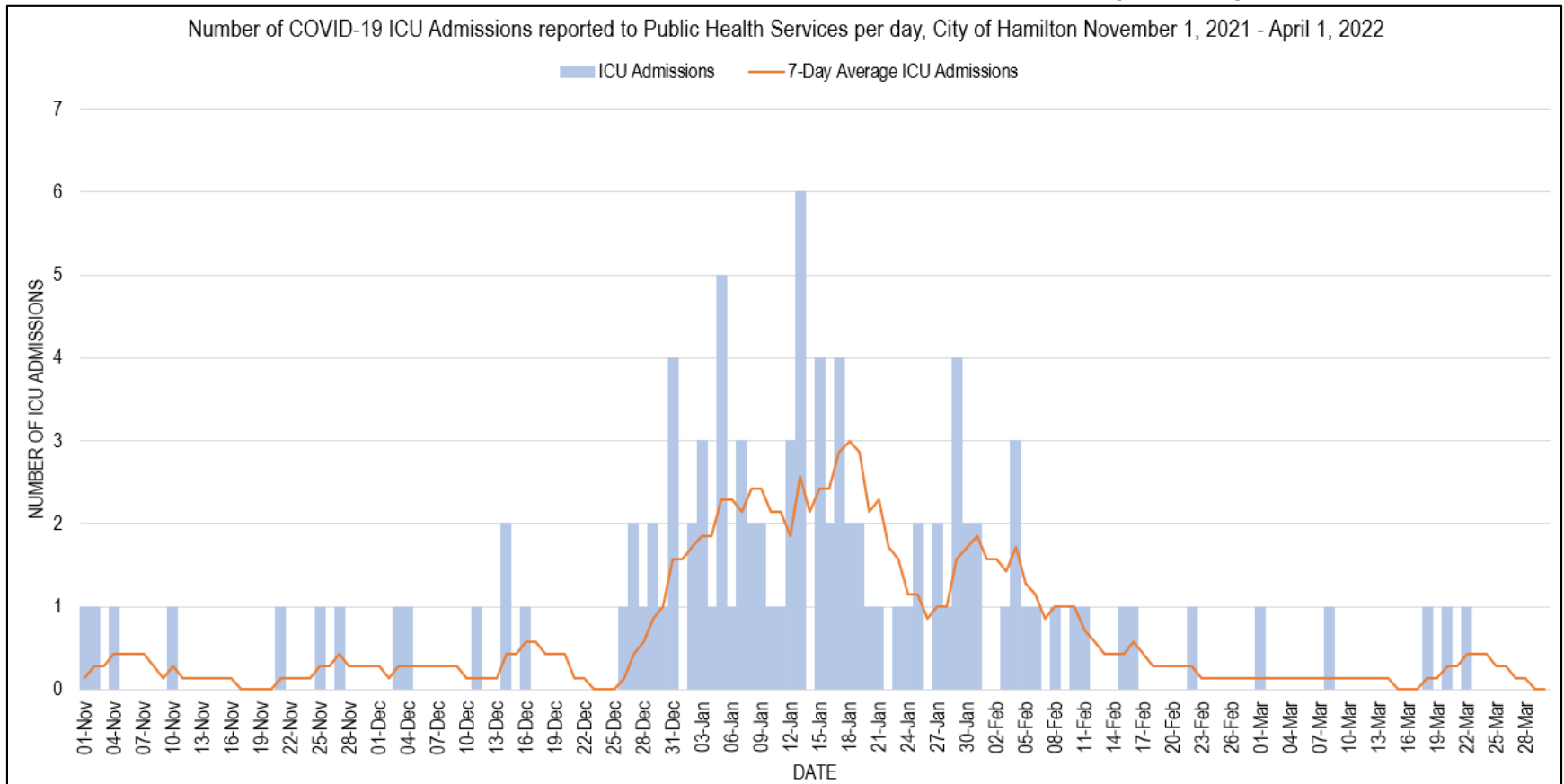
Hospitalizations



Key Messages

- COVID-19 Hospitalizations had levelled off since the peak of the Omicron wave but has since begun to increase.
- As of April 1, 2022, there were approximately **2.7** new COVID-19 hospitalizations per day reported to Hamilton Public Health. This 7-day average was **1.7** at our last Board of Health (March 21, 2022) update

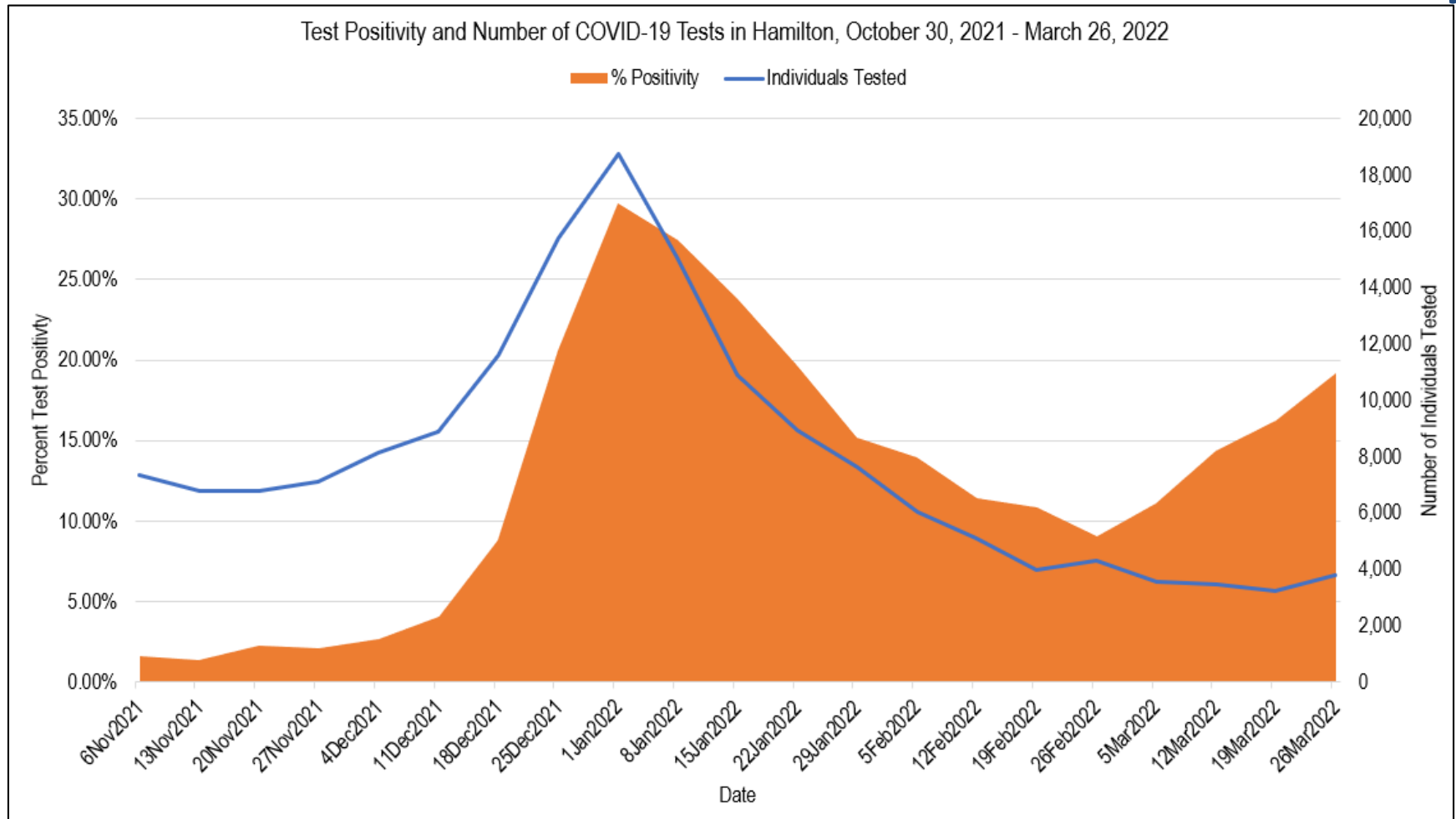
Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Admissions



Key Messages

- COVID-19 intensive care unit admissions had been decreasing since the peak of the Omicron wave and have since levelled off.
- As of April 1, 2022, there were **0.0** new COVID-19 intensive care unit admissions per day reported to Hamilton Public Health. This 7-day average has been less than **0.5** since February 17, 2022

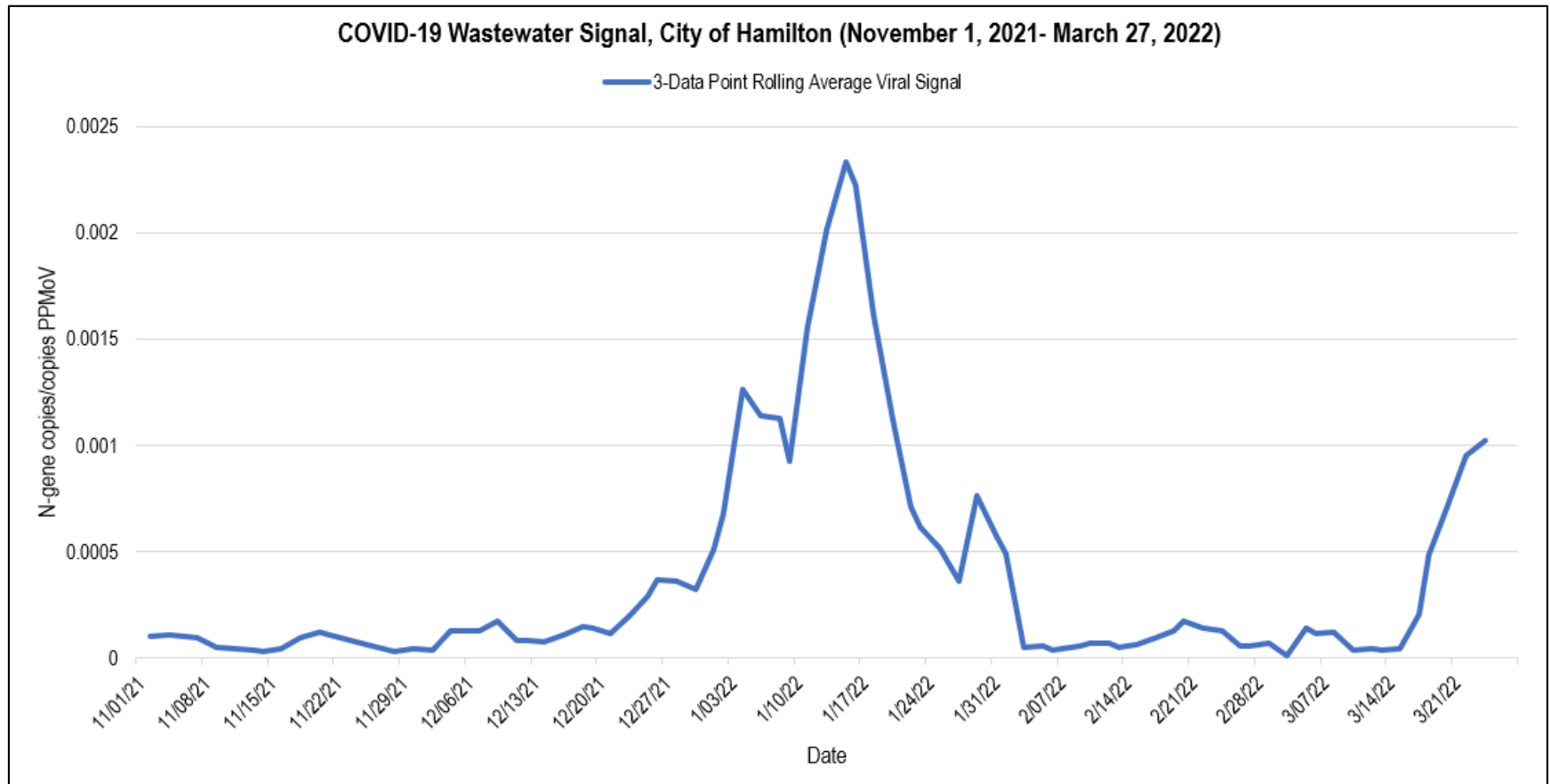
Test Positivity



Key Message

- Most recently, test positivity and the number of individuals tested has been increasing

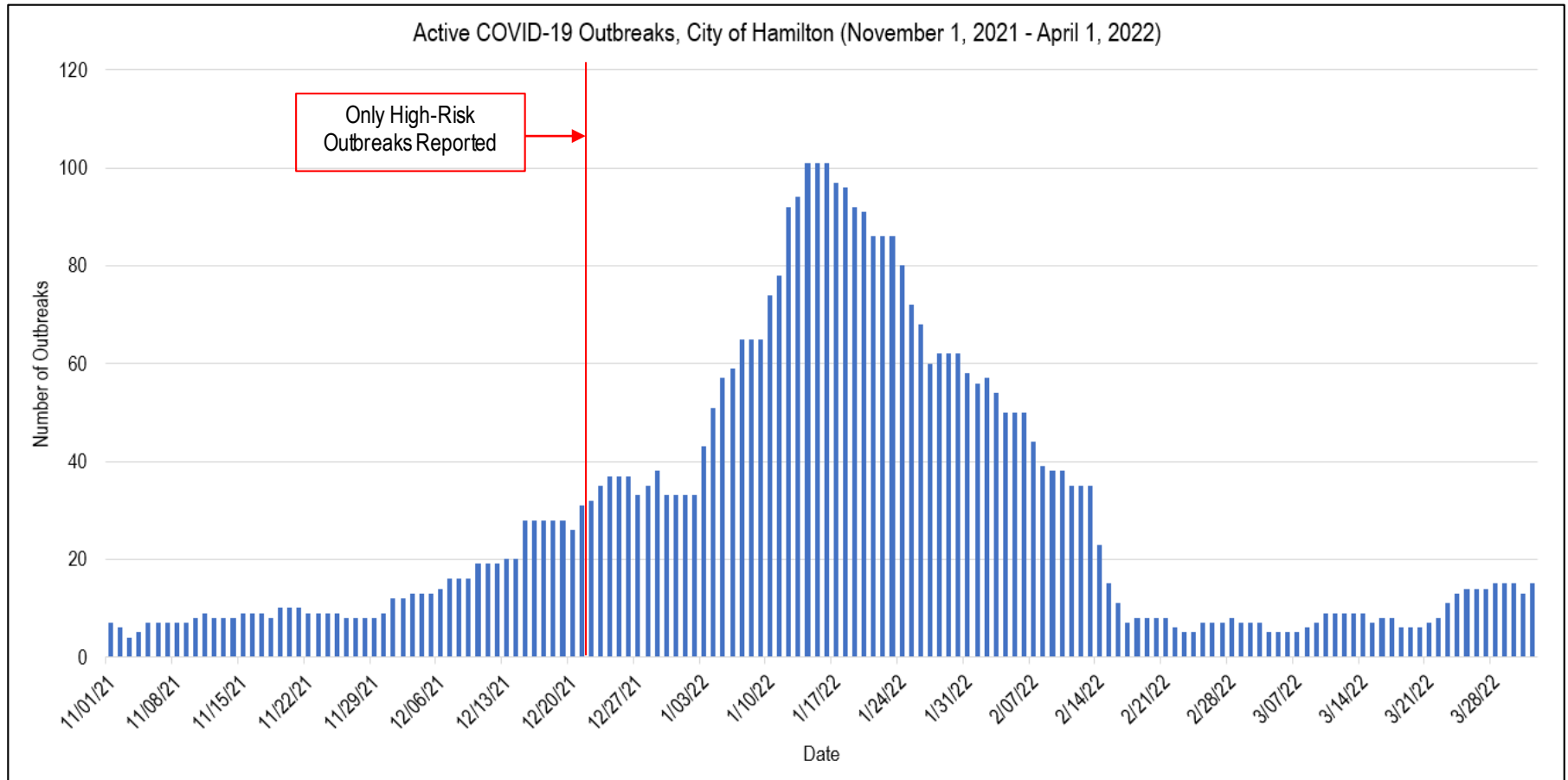
Wastewater Surveillance



Key Messages

- COVID-19 Wastewater Surveillance is a new tool being used by Hamilton Public Health Services to understand community transmission
- The 3-point average of viral signal for detecting COVID-19 in wastewater samples is increasing in samples taken between March 18 – 27, 2022

Active outbreaks



Key Messages

- COVID-19 outbreak activity in the Omicron wave peaked in mid-January 2022
- The number of active COVID-19 outbreaks in recent weeks has begun to increase after levelling off from mid-February to mid-March 2022

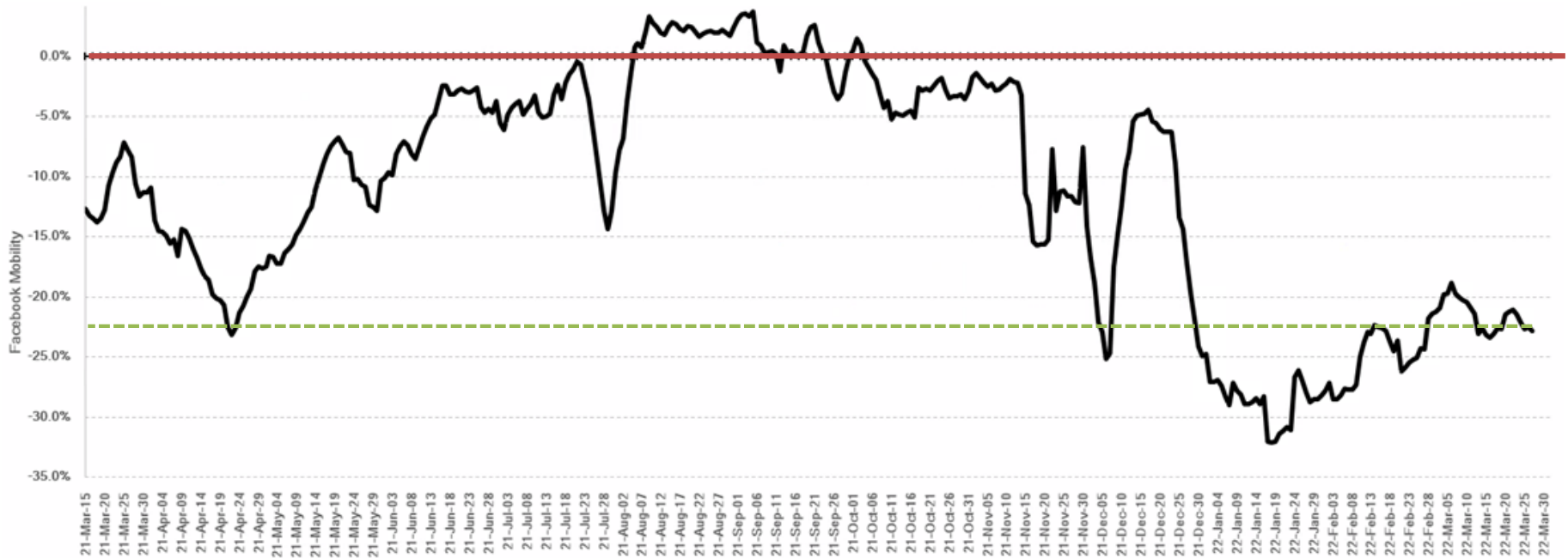
SCARSIN FORECAST

Ruth Sanderson, Epidemiologist

Scarsin Forecast Key Messages

- Updated resurgence base scenario forecast out to the end of June 2022 which now includes:
 - The increased transmission impact of the Omicron subvariant BA.2 assumed to be at 45% of cases on March 31, 2022
 - Waning immunity from both infections and vaccines
- Mobility continues to increase modestly
- With the removal of mandate for protective measures, infections are forecast to increase in the short term, however with the increase of BA.2, these higher levels will likely be sustained for a longer period than previously forecast (out beyond June 2022)

Overall Mobility, Hamilton

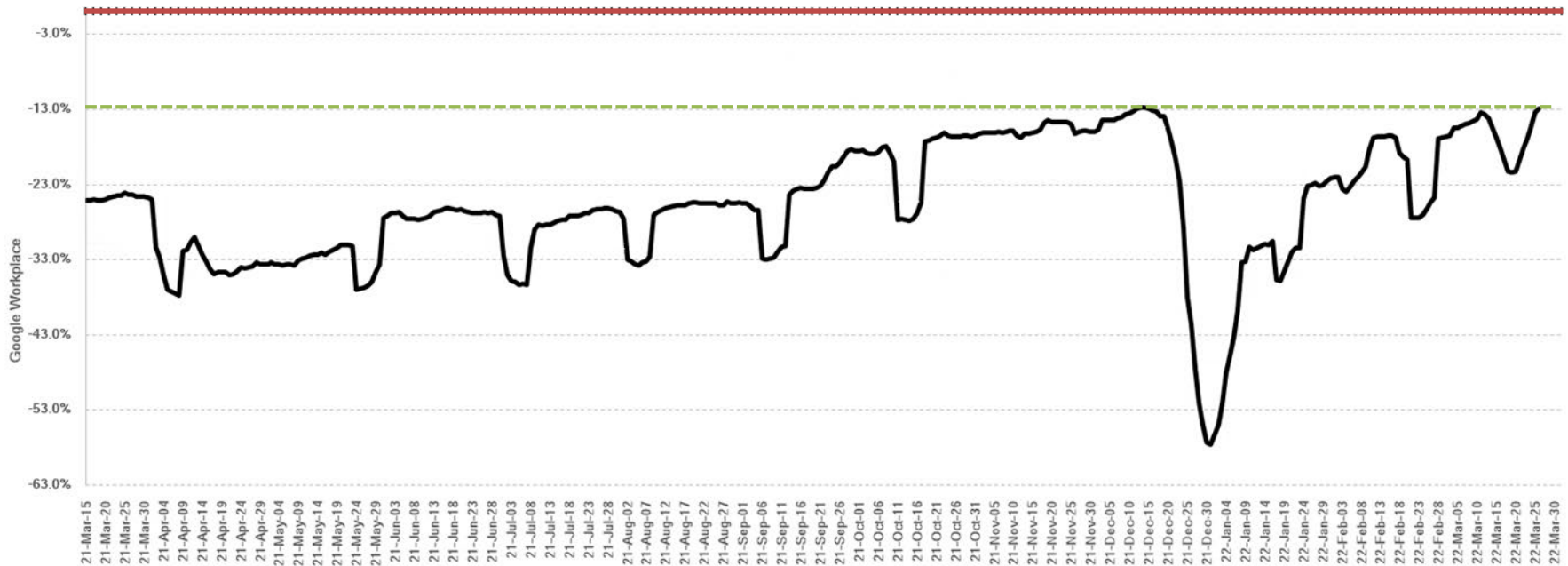


Data Source: Scarsin Decision Support System retrieved Mar 29, 2022

Key Messages:

- Overall, community mobility continues to remain low. Mobility is increasing slowly while oscillating and was at 23% below pre-pandemic levels on March 27, 2022

Workplace Mobility, Hamilton



Data Source: Scarsin Decision Support System retrieved Mar 29, 2022

Key Messages:

- Workplace mobility is at pre-Omicron levels; however, it is still 13% below pre-pandemic levels as of March 26, 2022

Overview of Scenarios and Assumptions

Scenario 1 – Resurgence Elevated contact transmission with staged reopening and BA.2

Scenario Assumes:

- Public health measures aligned with Ontario's reopening plan including lifting of mask mandates on March 21, 2022
- Omicron severity is approximately 36% severity of Delta
- Transmission rates adjusted for increased transmission of Omicron subvariant BA.2 at 1.3 times that of BA.1. Assume BA.2 at 45% of cases as of March 31, 2022 and increasing from there
- Transmission rates were aligned with current hospital actuals
- Comprehensive waning immunity, 2nd and 3rd dose immunity incorporated as well as waning immunity for those infected at 210 days
- Vaccinations updated (included 4th doses) to align with Hamilton's actuals and planned doses out to end of Dec 2022; targets adjusting for decreasing trend in dose throughput

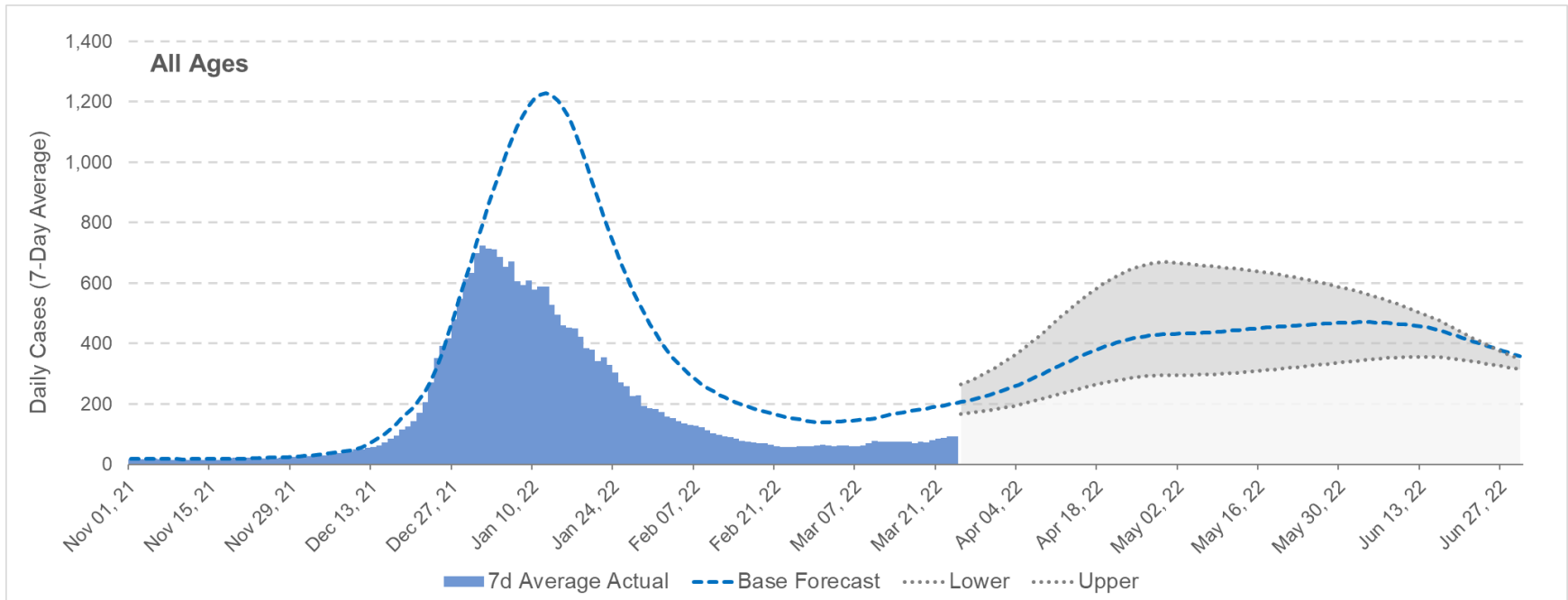
Limitation:

- Challenging to model the spread of COVID-19 due to major changes in testing practices late December 2021, which led to increased undercounting through identified lab-confirmed cases

Updated Data:

- Case/ hospital/ death data retrieved March 27, 2022
- Updated vaccination and mobility data

Scarsin Forecast COVID-19 Cases, Hamiltonians

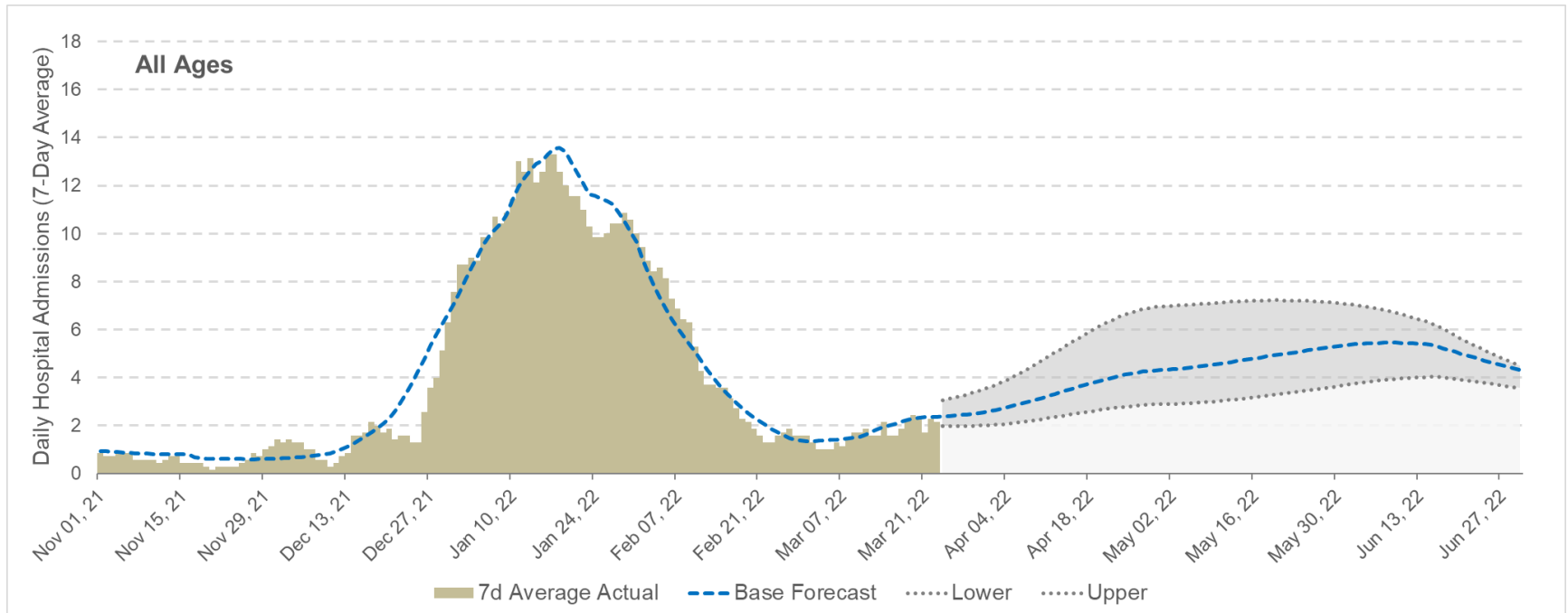


Data Source: Scarsin Decision Support System retrieved March 28, 2022

Key Messages:

- **Base Scenario – Resurgence** continues to indicate that Hamilton will likely experience an increase in cases due to increased transmission from the changes in Hamiltonian’s preventive behaviours due to reopening and increasing levels of the Omicron sub-variant BA.2 circulating. This surge may be prolonged into the summer

Scarsin Forecast COVID-19 Hospital Admissions among Hamiltonians



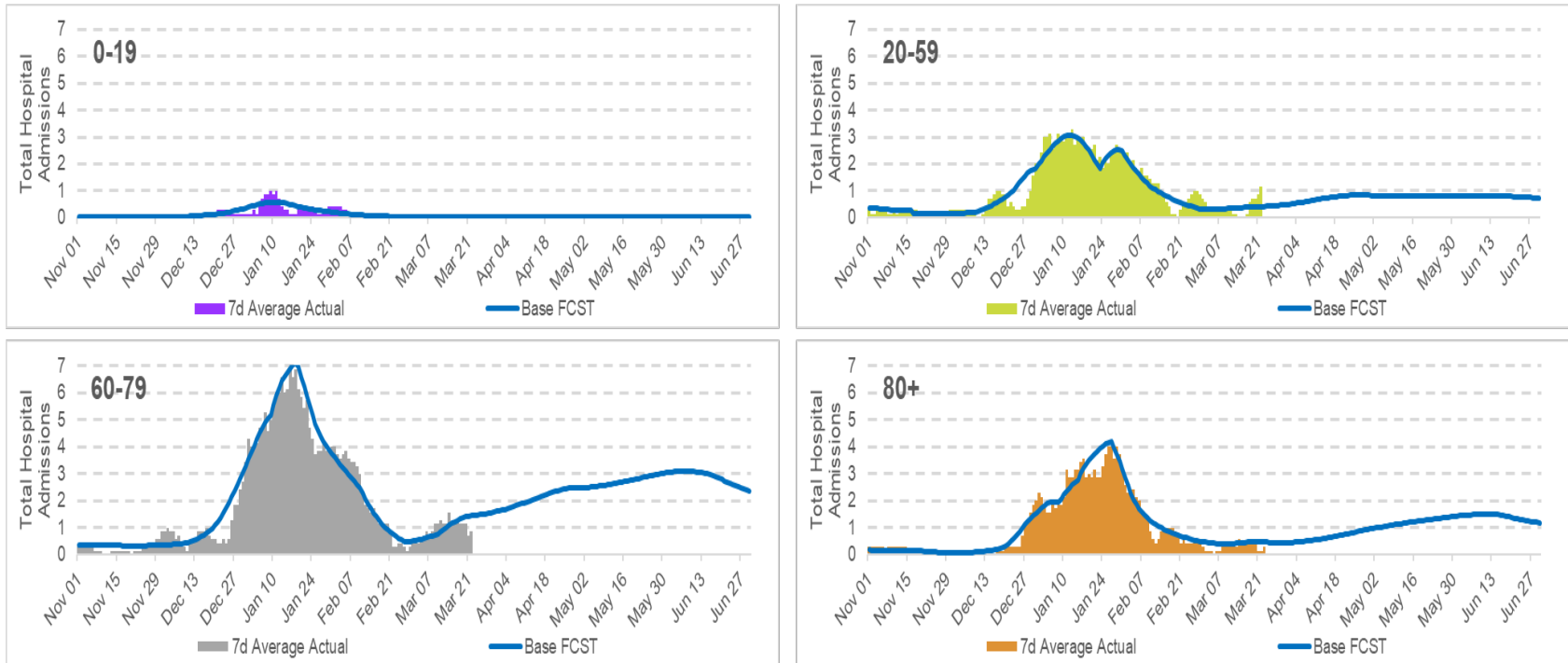
Data Source: Scarsin Decision Support System retrieved Mar 28, 2022

Key Messages:

- The **Base Scenario – Resurgence** indicates that the recent increase in new hospital admissions is likely to continue into the summer. Approximately 400 new hospital admissions are anticipated between April 4 to June 30, 2022. The timing of the peak will vary depending on the level of transmission. The surge is forecast to remain below the previous peak Omicron-wave level

Scarsin Hospitalizations Base Scenario Resurgence

COVID-19 Hospital Admissions by Age Group, Hamiltonians

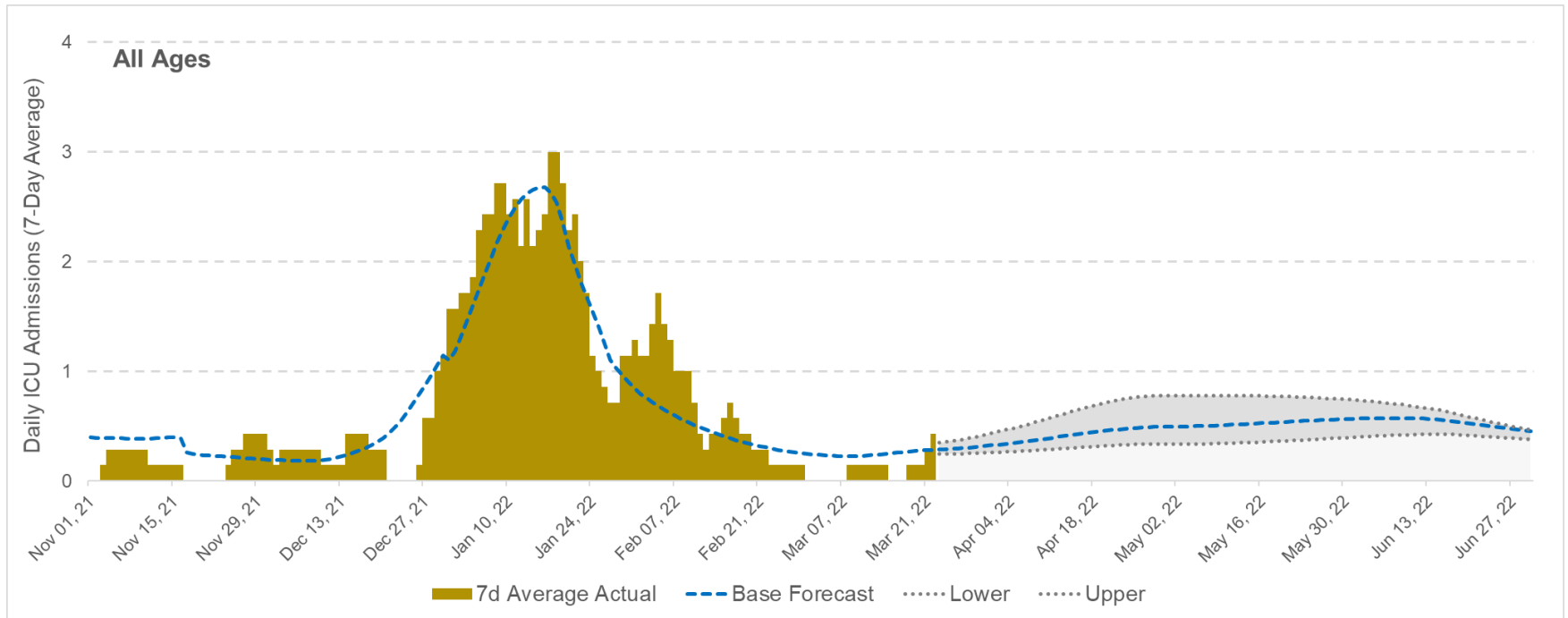


Data Source: Scarsin Decision Support System retrieved Mar 28, 2022

Key Messages:

- Trajectories differ by age group. The 60–79-year-old age group may drive new hospital admissions

Scarsin Forecast COVID-19 Intensive Care Unit Admissions among Hamiltonians

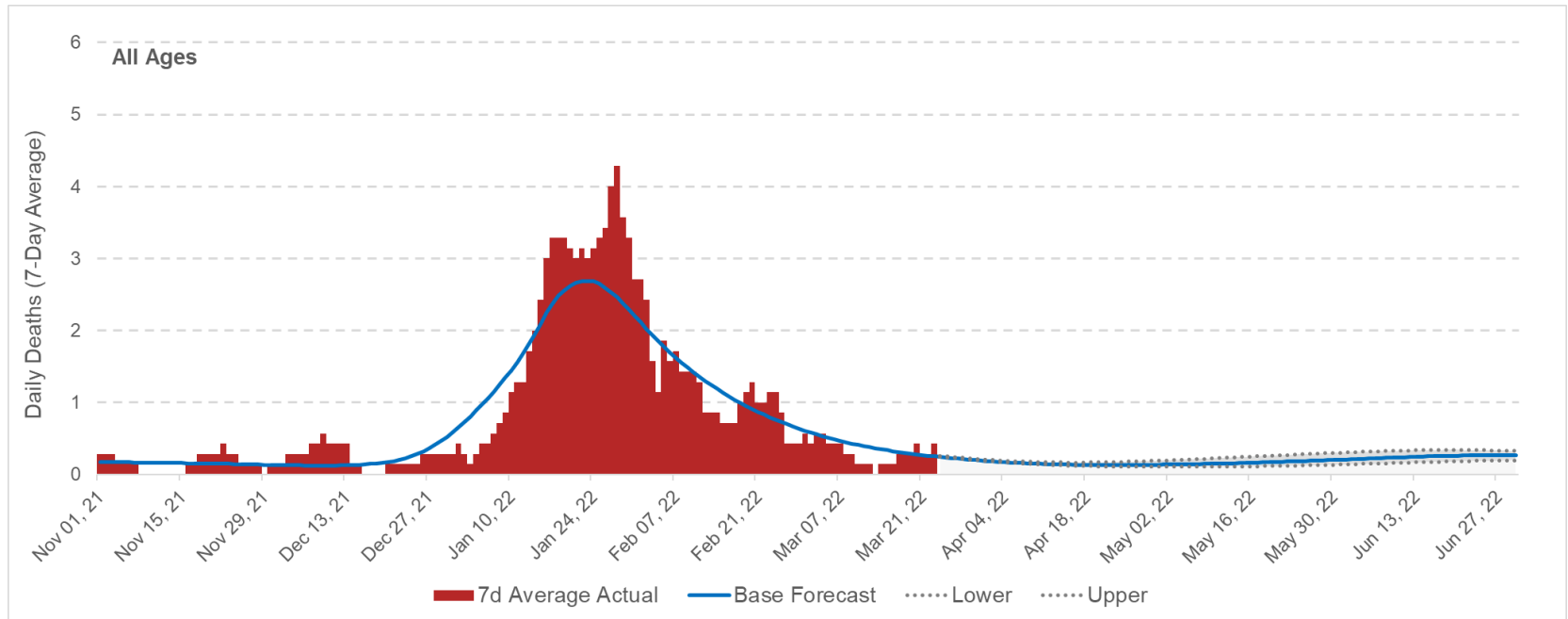


Data Source: Scarsin Decision Support System retrieved Mar 28, 2022

Key Messages:

- The **Base Scenario – Resurgence** scenario predicts 44 new intensive care unit admissions among Hamiltonians from April 4 to June 30, 2022. Intensive care unit admissions will increase slightly about pre-Omicron levels and remain below peak levels to the end of June 2022

Scarsin Forecast Deaths Due to COVID-19 among Hamiltonians



Data Source: Scarsin Decision Support System retrieved Mar 28, 2022

Key Messages:

- The **Base Scenario – Resurgence** scenario predicts 16 deaths between April 4 to June 30, 2022, and return to near pre-Omicron wave levels out to June 30, 2022

Scarsin Forecast Summary

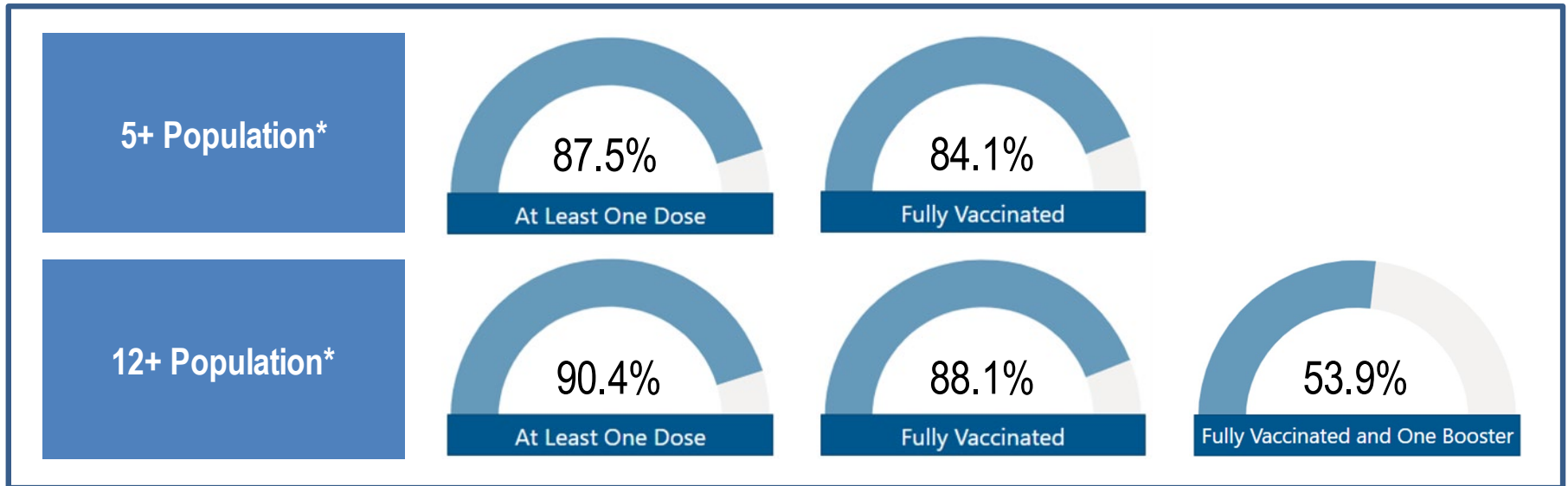
- The forecast, now out to the end of June 2022, indicates that COVID-19 is expected to continue to circulate in Hamilton
- With the removal of mandate for protective measures and the increase in transmission due to BA.2, the current resurgence of cases and hospitalizations may be sustained out past the end of June 2022
- As anticipated, Hamilton's susceptible population is steadily increasing as the protection from vaccinations and past infections wane

COVID VACCINE UPDATE

Melissa Biksa, Manager – COVID-19 Vaccine

COVID-19 Vaccine – Overall Coverage

Estimated as of End Of Day March 31, 2022



- Minimal recent change in 1st and 2nd dose coverage among 12+ year-old population
- Coverage in 5 to 11 year-old population increased to **53.1%** (1st dose) and **36.2%** (2nd dose)
- 3rd dose coverage in adult population is **57.1%** with higher coverage in older age groups

Note: Includes Hamilton residents and individuals vaccinated in Hamilton who cannot be assigned to a health unit region.

*The 5+ population includes individuals born in 2016 or earlier, 12+ population includes individuals born in 2009 or earlier, and 18+ population includes individuals born in 2003 or earlier.

Sources: IntelliHealth (COVAXon Data Load); IntelliHealth (Population Projections, 2020).

COVID-19 Vaccine – Geographic Coverage

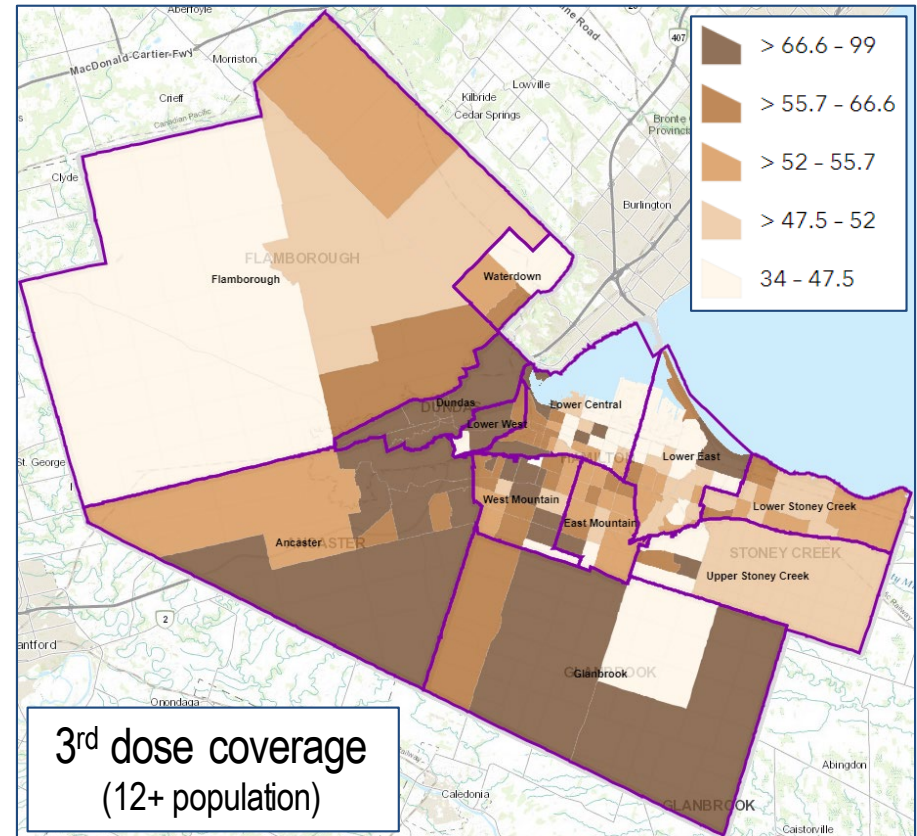
Estimated as of End Of Day March 28, 2022

12yrs+ Population

- Majority of areas have achieved over **90%** 1st and 2nd dose coverage
- Lowest coverage continues to exist in Flamborough and Waterdown, but also in areas within Lower Central, Lower East and Lower Stoney Creek

Pediatric Population

- Ancaster, Dundas, Glanbrook and Lower West over **60%** 1st dose coverage
- Lowest coverage continues to exist in Lower East, but also in areas within Lower Stoney Creek, Lower Central and West Mountain



Sources: IntelliHealth (COVAXon Data Load); Statistics Canada (2016 Census) adjusted for population growth estimated by the Planning and Economic Development Department, City of Hamilton

COVID-19 Vaccine – Operational Update

- Limeridge Mall clinic currently operating as Grade 7/8 vaccines catch-up clinic
 - As of March 31, 2022, 1022 vaccines have been administered. 815 appointments are booked between April 1 and 15, 2022
 - COVID-19 vaccines will still be available
- Mobile Team operating one clinic per day, 5 days per week
- COVID-19 vaccines continue to be available through various community channels

COVID-19 Vaccine – Communications Campaign



Protect your health too.

Be prepared. Protect yourself.
GET BOOSTED FOR COVID-19.

hamilton.ca/GetYourVaccine 



Protect yourself from long-term damage.

Be prepared. Protect yourself.
GET BOOSTED FOR COVID-19.

hamilton.ca/GetYourVaccine 

Campaign launched March 31, 2022

COVID-19 Vaccine – Additional Booster Eligibility

- National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) reviewing at the federal level
- Provincial guidance expected to follow after the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommendations

Status Summary

- Seeing increased COVID-19 transmission in Hamilton
- Hamiltonians are encouraged to use protective measures to reduce serious health consequences from COVID-19 infections
 - Stay up-to-date with your vaccines
 - Wear a mask when indoors and/or when unable to distance
 - Stay home if you have COVID-19 symptoms
 - Speak to your healthcare provider, know in advance if you're eligible for treatment and where to access
 - Practice physical distancing

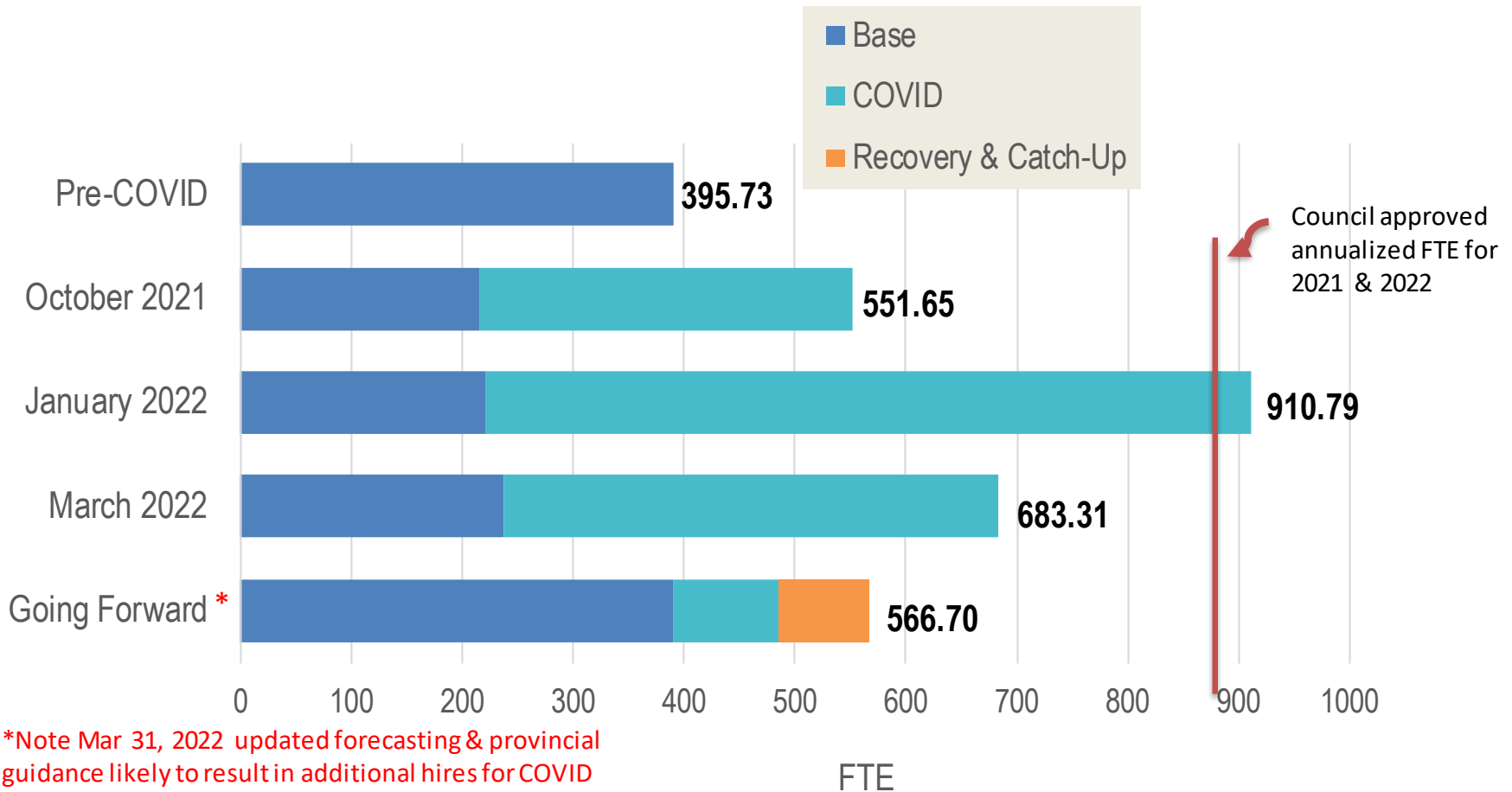
ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATE

Dr. Elizabeth Richardson, Medical Officer of Health

Adapting PHS During Pandemic & Recovery: The Challenge

- Ongoing role in COVID-19 disease control, vaccine delivery as COVID-19 transitions over the coming year(s) requires extra resources
- Need to resume full operations as per Standards
- Significant deficits of care and service backlog require period of enhanced programming to meet community needs, address service levels and reduce risks
- Staff numbers, capacity, and recruitment significantly impacted by length and extent of public health response
- Capacity and time for change/process low
- Prioritization of work remains essential

Snapshots of Staffing Numbers late 2021-2022



*Note Mar 31, 2022 updated forecasting & provincial guidance likely to result in additional hires for COVID vaccine delivery under Going Forward Scenario

Adapting Public Health Services During Pandemic & Recovery: Risks

- COVID-19 related
 - Resurgences, new waves, waning immunity & new variants make for fluctuating path
 - Provincial direction for local Public Health continues to change frequently
 - Responses often urgent
 - Continue to require flexible staffing for pandemic response
 - *O. Reg 116/200* under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020* (redeployment of public health staff) ends as of April 27, 2022
 - Passing 2-year mark for temporary contracts – unionized staff (ONA, CUPE) and small number non-union staff (mostly Supervisors, Managers)

Adapting Public Health Services During Pandemic & Recovery: Risks

- Extent of deficits of care/community need may outstrip resources
- Public health system reviews coming
 - Extent and timing of any related change uncertain
- Provincial funding
 - Annual funding increase less than inflation
 - Recovery funding criteria, quantum not well-defined

Adapting Public Health Services During Pandemic & Recovery: Mitigation Strategies

- Return majority of permanent staff to base positions by April 26, 2022 timeline, including necessary management
- Continue to ask Province for longer term plans to improve sustainable planning (financial and human resources)
- Provincial funding letters expected soon will provide some clarity

Adapting Public Health Services During Pandemic & Recovery: Mitigation Strategies

- Priority program reopening/recovery focus:
 - School aged immunizations,
 - Mental health & substance misuse across lifespan,
 - Prenatal, early years, school programming
 - Oral/dental health,
 - Resuming full capacity for all inspections
- Continue to monitor & adapt strategies to align with roles and funding
- Continue to adapt Public Health Services structure to support reopening of all services, catch-up and response roles

One-Time Funding Request – Recovery and Catch-Up

- Initial request (\$20.8M) submitted to the Ministry on March 1, 2022 as part of the Annual Service Plan & Budget
- Planning continues to evolve, details of recovery and catch-up have been further refined based on needs, recruitment and capacity
- Based on this further analysis, recovery costs will be reduced to \$9.0M
- An amended request will be forwarded to the Ministry upon approval



Hamilton

QUESTIONS?