



# Public Health COVID-19 Update

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Commissioner and Medical Officer of Health  
Halton Region  
Presentation to Council – February 17, 2021



# COVID-19 cases in Halton



**Total cases: 9,073**

- Active: 259
- Resolved: 8,629
- Deceased: 185



**Fig: Number of new COVID-19 cases in Halton residents, by reported date and case classification, Mar 1 2020-Feb 15 2021**

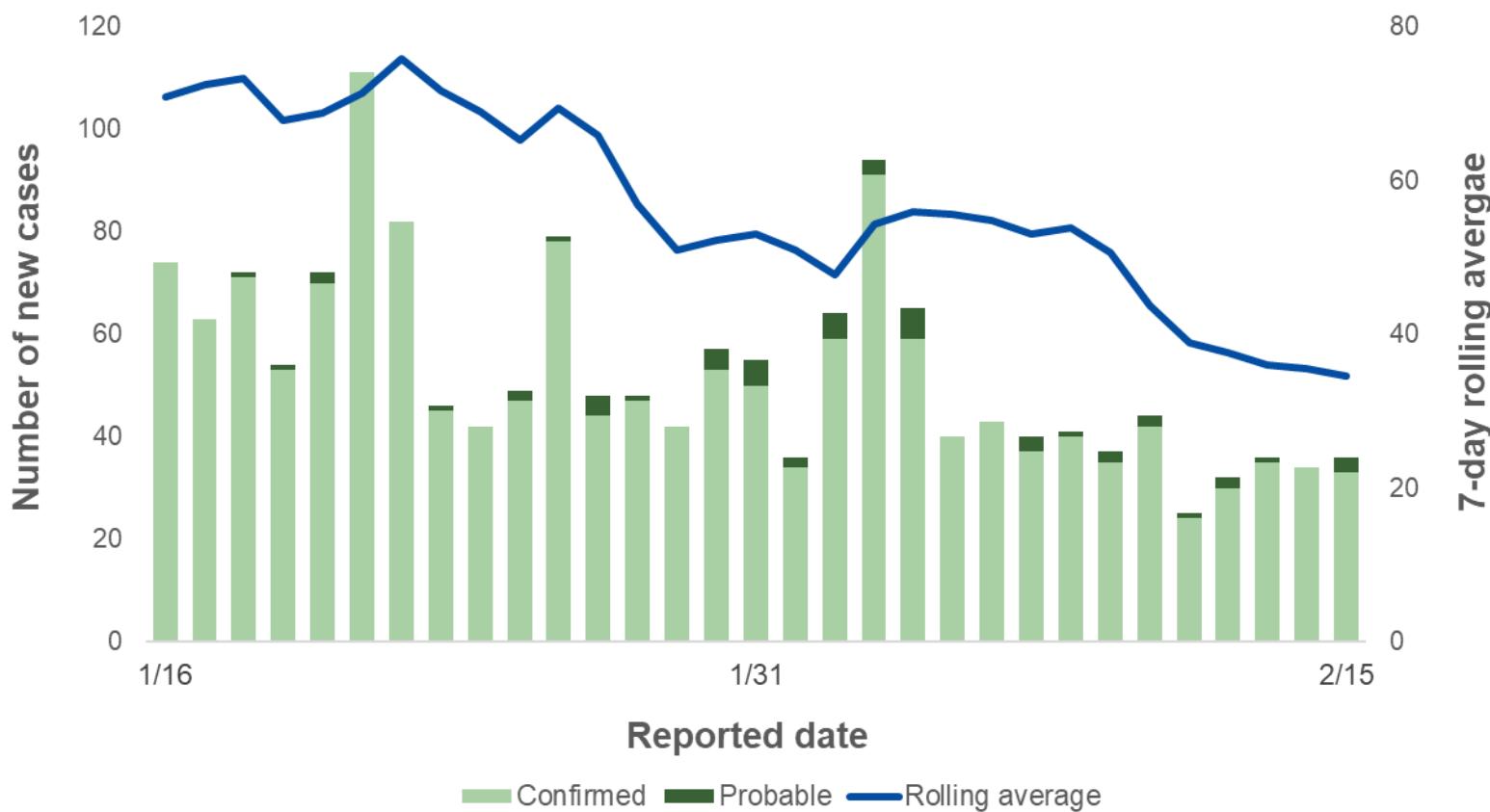
# COVID-19 cases in Halton



## Past 30-days

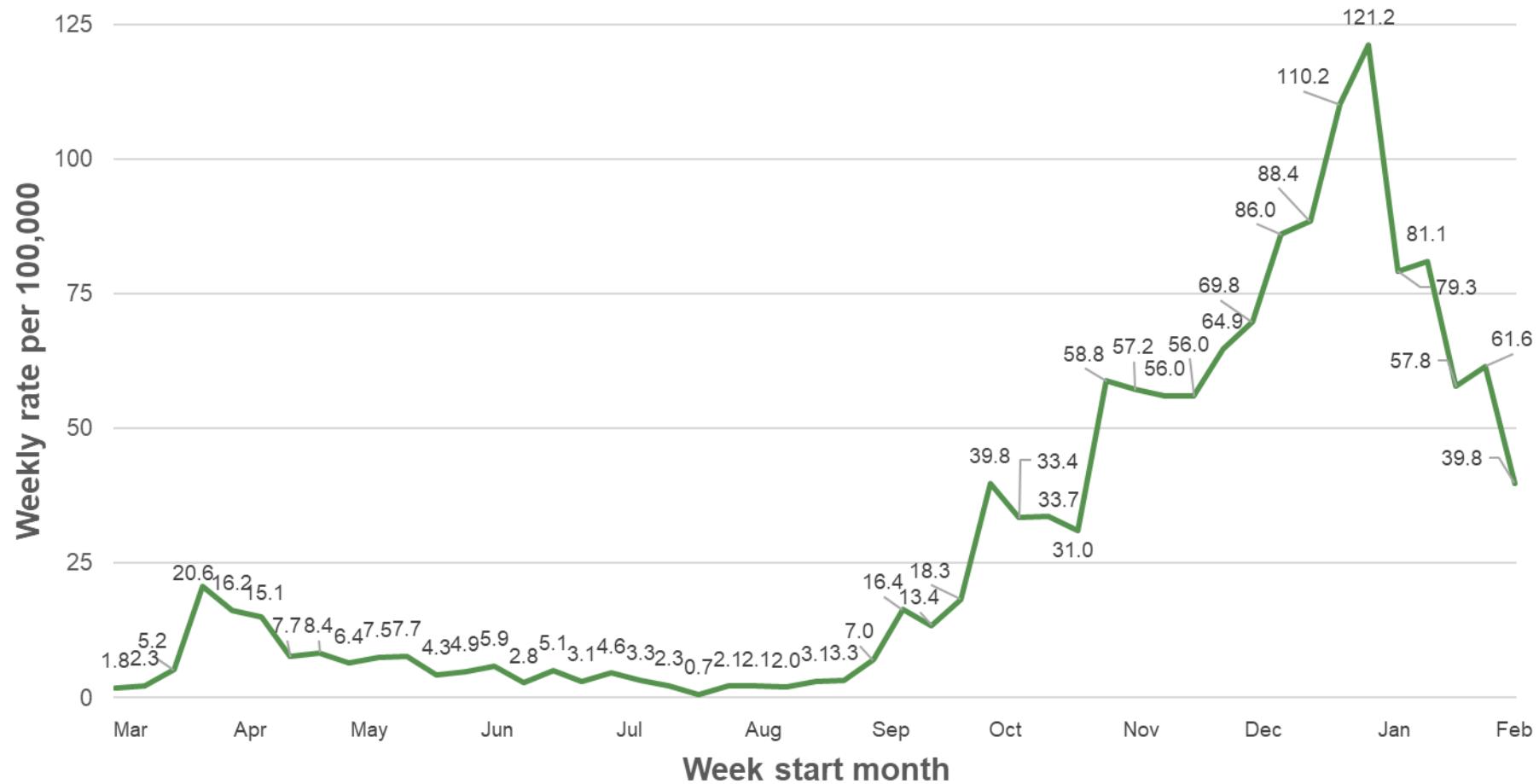
**Jan 16, 2021 – Feb 15, 2021**

- On Jan 16 the 7-day average was 71 compared to 35 on Feb 15
- Daily case counts generally lowering, with some fluctuation driven by outbreaks



**Fig: Number of new COVID-19 cases in Halton residents, by reported date and case classification, Jan 16 2021-Feb 15 2021**

# Weekly rate of COVID-19 in Halton



**Fig: Weekly COVID-19 incidence rate per 100,000 population, Halton, Mar 1 2020 – Feb 13 2021 (confirmed cases only, based on case reported date)**



# COVID-19: Inequities

- More Halton COVID-19 cases have a non-official language as their first language or belong to a racialized group than would be expected based on the 2016 census.

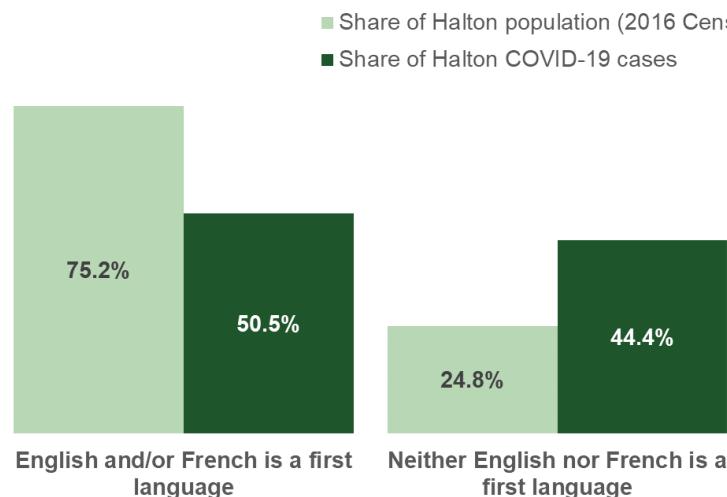


Fig: First language, % of Halton COVID cases and % of Halton residents (2016 Census)

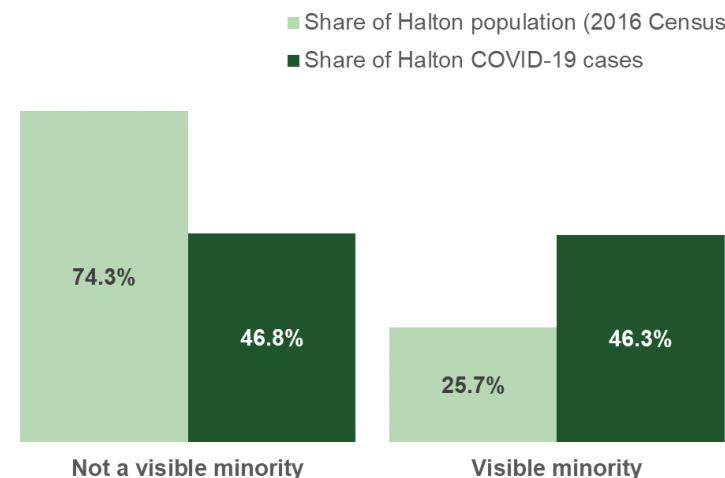


Fig: Visible minority status, % of Halton COVID cases and % of Halton residents (2016 Census)



**NB: Interpret results with caution due to ~20% missing data. Includes non-institutional cases reported Jul. 1, 2020-Jan. 19, 2021.**

# COVID-19 patients in Halton hospitals

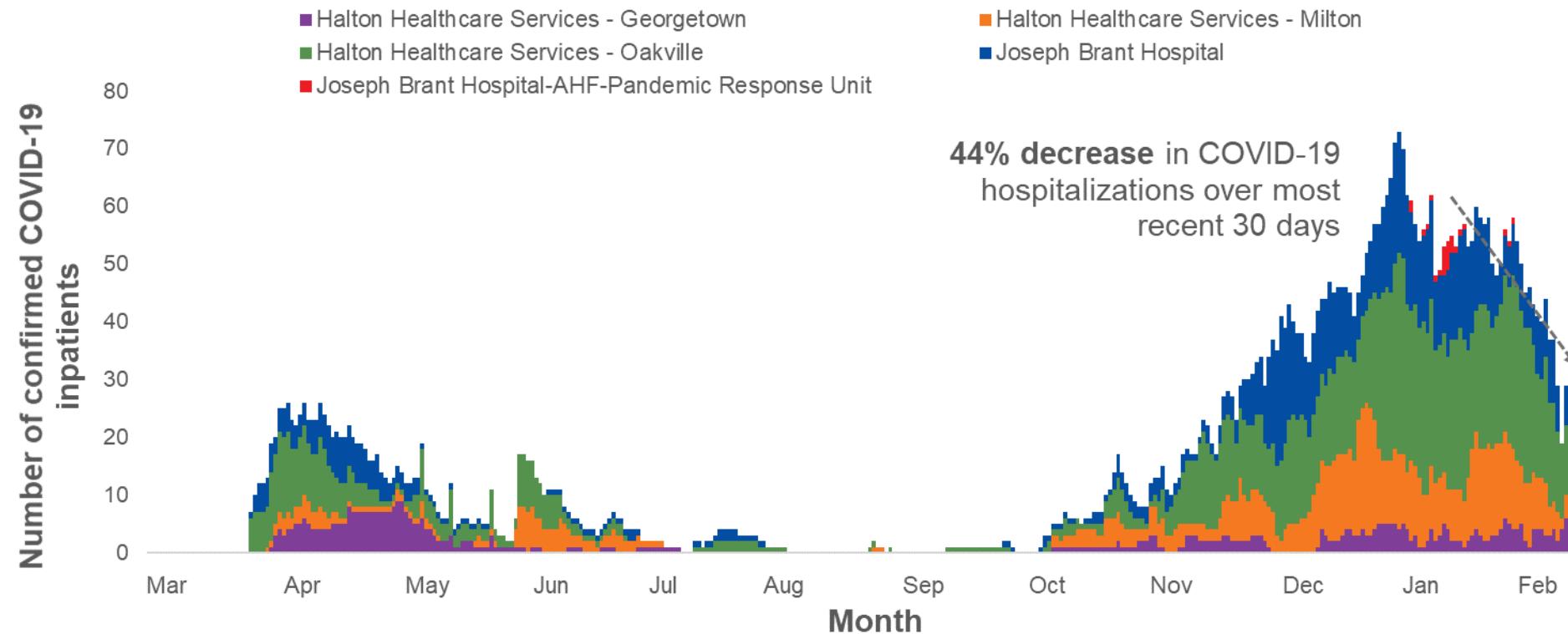
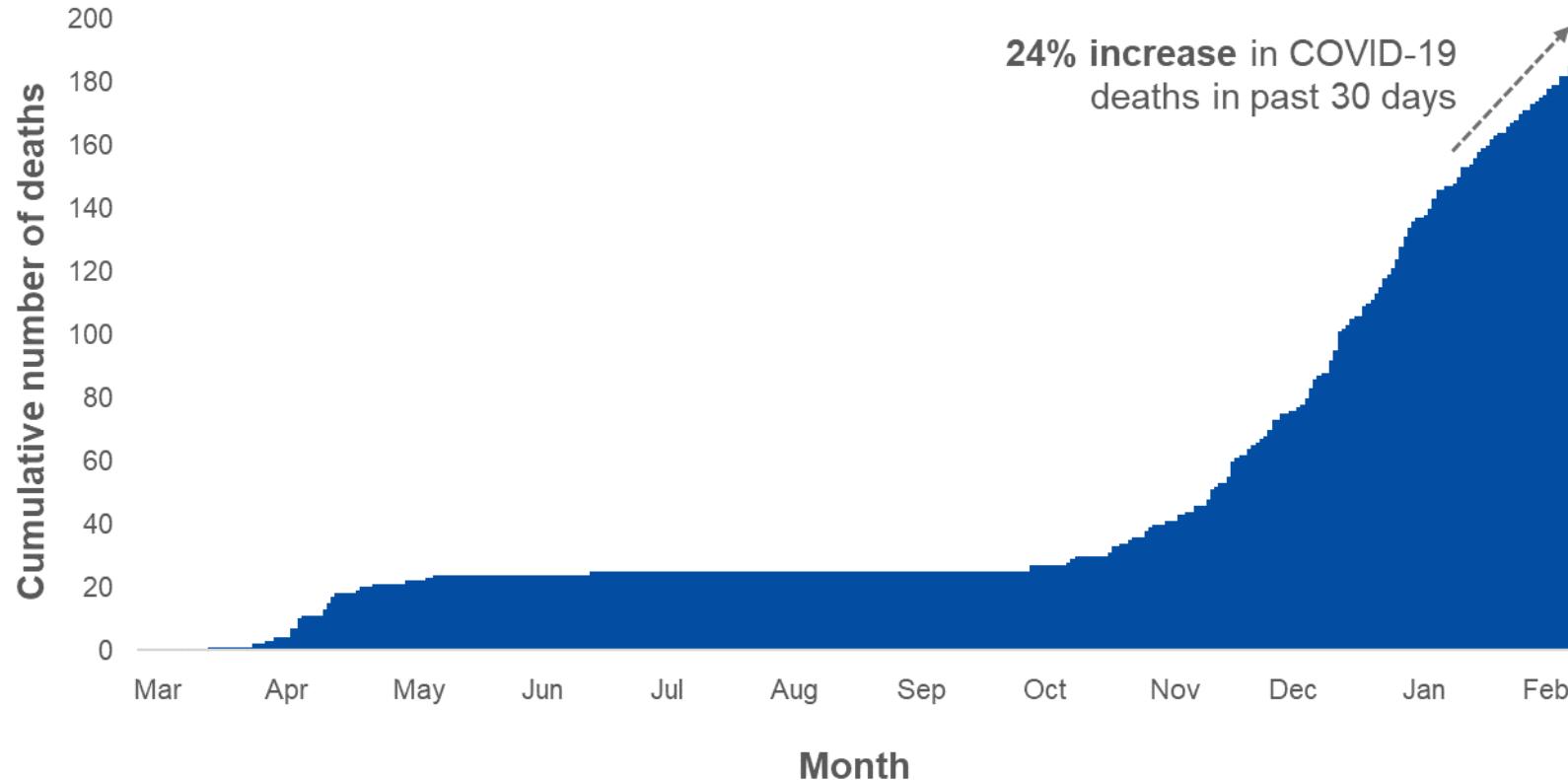


Fig: Hospital inpatients with confirmed COVID-19, Halton hospitals, Mar 1 2020 – Feb 15 2021

# COVID-19 deaths in Halton



**Total deaths: 185**

- Mar-Jun: 25
- Jul-Sep: 0
- Oct-Feb 15: 160

142 out of 185 deaths (77%)  
among residents aged **80+**



**Fig: Cumulative number of deaths among COVID-19 cases, by day, Mar 1 2020 – Feb 15 2021**

# COVID-19 deaths and age

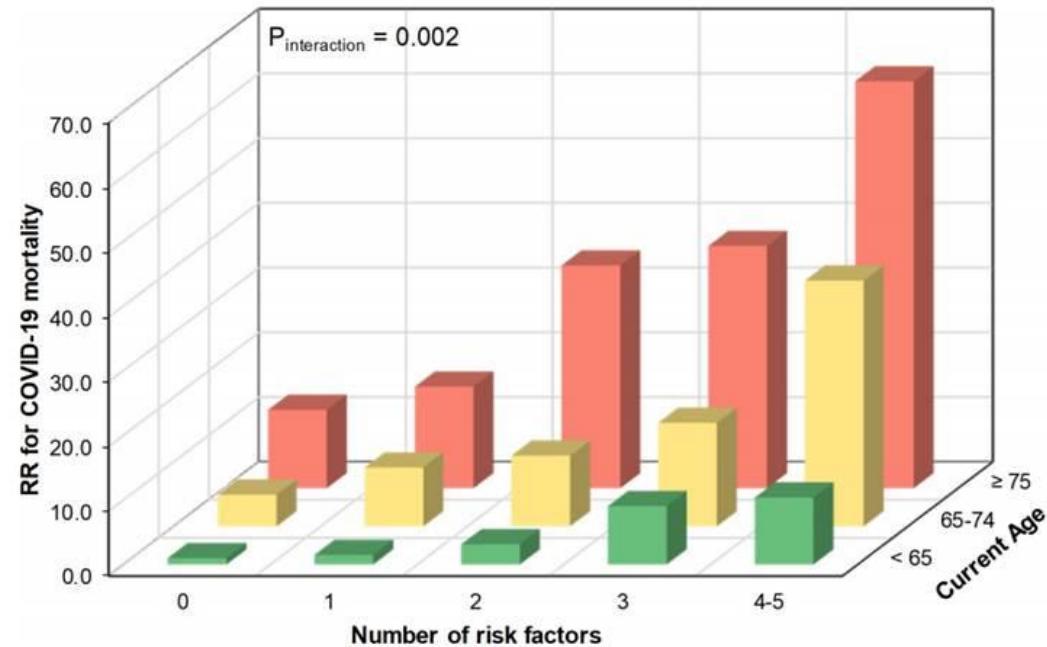


Fig 3. Association between age group combined with number of risk factors and COVID-19 mortality. Adjusted for sex, ethnicity, deprivation, duration of follow-up. Risk factors included smoking, obesity, hypertension, FEV<sub>1</sub>, frailty, and number of LTCs ≥3.

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0241824.g003>

Individuals aged  $\geq 75$  years had significantly greater risk of mortality compared to individuals  $< 65$  years, even taking into account other risk factors

# Variants of Concern (VOCs)

- Genetic variations of viruses are common
- A variant has several significant mutations to a virus
- A variant becomes a concern when it affects:
  - disease spread
  - disease severity
  - tests used to detect the virus
  - vaccines and treatments
- COVID-19 VOCs are more transmissible



# VOCs and Public Health Response

- Federal international travel changes
- Ontario labs screen all positive cases for VOCs
- Enhanced case and contact management
  - Lower threshold for classifying contacts
  - Prioritizing follow-up with cases with VOCs
  - Enhanced outbreak management for all high priority settings
- Increased communications

## VOC cases as of Feb 15

- Halton: 3
- Ontario: 319



# Rapid Antigen Testing in Long-Term Care Homes

- Rapid antigen tests yields results within 15-20 minutes
- Used to screen asymptomatic individuals
- All rapid antigen screening is being conducted by Panbio™ test
- Deadline to implement rapid testing in LTCHs is March 15, 2021
- Once program fully operational, PCR testing only to be used in certain circumstances



# Alcohol and COVID-19

- Pre-pandemic, 49% of Halton adults were consuming alcohol above recommended guidelines
- Some Canadians consuming more alcohol during the pandemic
- 26% of Canadian respondents reported binge-drinking in the past week
- Currently assessing whether alcohol use has increased in Halton during the pandemic



# Provincial Framework: Control (Red) Level Restrictions

Sector	Revised and Strengthened Framework
Retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 75% capacity limit for grocery, convenience, and pharmacies</li><li>• 50% for all other retail</li><li>• Post capacity limits and screening posters</li></ul>
Restaurants & Bars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limit 10 people seated indoors per establishment; 4 seated together</li></ul>
Sport & Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 10 people indoors or 25 people outdoors</li><li>• Team sports may train and practice (no games or scrimmages)</li></ul>
Personal Service Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cannot offer services that require removing a mask</li></ul>
Cinemas & Performing Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Closed to the public</li></ul>





# Vaccine Rollout Update



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# COVID-19 Vaccines: Our progress to date

## DECEMBER

**December 23**  
Halton Healthcare clinic opens

**January 11**  
Halton Public Health and Paramedics start mobile clinics for LTCHs

## JANUARY

**January 25**  
Halton Public Health and Paramedics start mobile clinics for high-risk retirement homes

**January 5**  
985 staff in LTC and retirement homes have received their first dose

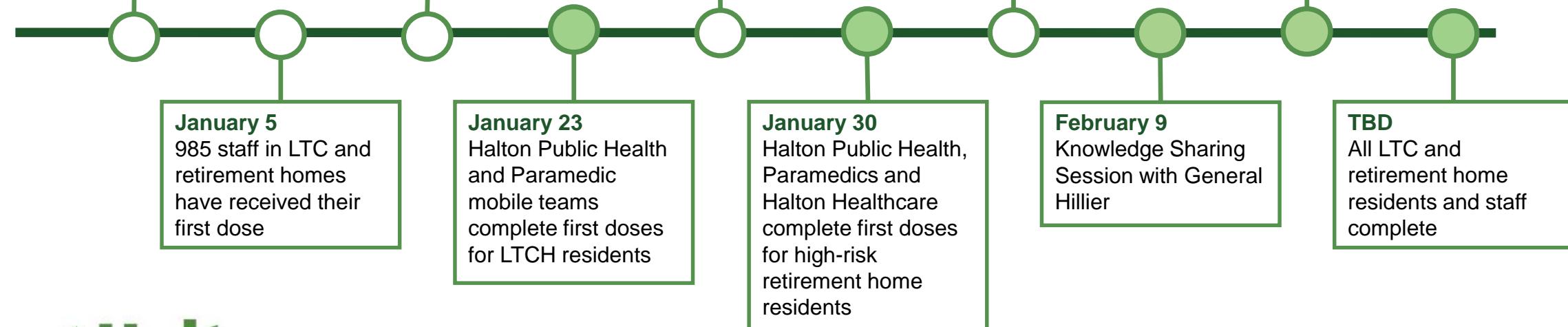
**January 23**  
Halton Public Health and Paramedic mobile teams complete first doses for LTCH residents

**January 30**  
Halton Public Health, Paramedics and Halton Healthcare complete first doses for high-risk retirement home residents

## FEBRUARY

**February 1**  
Halton Public Health, Paramedics and Halton Healthcare begin second doses for LTC and high-risk retirement home residents

**February 21**  
Halton Public Health, Paramedics and Halton Healthcare complete second doses for LTC and high-risk retirement home residents

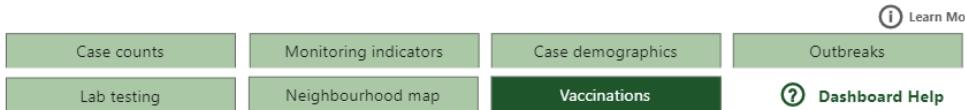


# COVID-19 dashboard updates

## Vaccinations tab

### Dashboard

Having trouble loading the dashboard? [View in fullscreen](#).



Halton is currently focused on vaccinating priority populations as identified by the Province, including recent Provincial direction to accelerate vaccinations for residents in long-term care and high-risk retirement homes and second doses for prioritized healthcare workers.

- Mobile teams of Halton Region Public Health and Halton Region Paramedic Services staff began vaccinations for residents, staff and essential caregivers at long-term care and high-risk retirement homes on January 11, 2021.
- Halton Healthcare established a COVID-19 Vaccination Centre at Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital and began vaccinating long term care and high-risk retirement home staff and prioritized healthcare workers on December 22, 2020 and essential caregivers in early January.

Halton's COVID-19 vaccination program remains contingent on supply. As more vaccine becomes available, we will continue to roll out the vaccine to priority populations as quickly as possible.

### Our progress so far

18,714  
Doses

Doses given by

All doses  
administered

Halton Region Public  
Health and  
Paramedic Mobile  
Teams

Halton Healthcare  
COVID-19  
Vaccination Centre

Data are refreshed weekly.

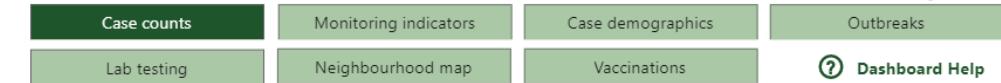
Data last updated on Friday, February 12, 2021, for doses administered up to and including Thursday, February 11, 2021

What does this mean?

## Dashboard

Having trouble loading the dashboard? [View in fullscreen](#).

Dashboard numbers dynamically updated between 12 and 2 p.m. everyday. Numbers will not match estimates provided by other sources, due to different data extraction times. [Learn More](#)



### Halton Cases

Halton Region	Burlington	Halton Hills	Milton	Oakville
Total *	Active	Resolved	Deceased	
9073 (↑66)	= 259 + 8629 + 185			

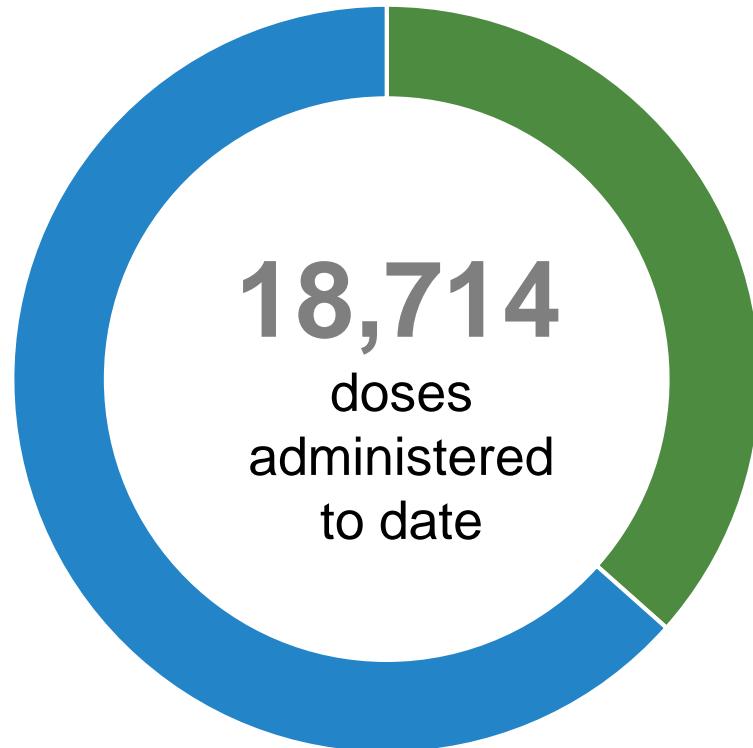
\* Of the 9073 total cases in Halton Region, 8795 were confirmed cases and 278 were probable cases. 3 cases had a confirmed variant of concern.  
Data last updated on Tuesday, February 16, 2021.

The net case change since the last update (the previous day) is shown using an arrow: ↑



# COVID-19 Vaccines: Our progress to date

As of February 11, 2021:



- Halton Region Public Health and Paramedic Mobile Teams (6,493 doses)
- Halton Healthcare Vaccination Centre (12,221 doses)

# Planning for Vaccine Distribution

- Federal guidance
  - National Advisory Committee on Immunization
- Provincial Direction:
  - Three-phase vaccination plan
  - Ontario COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force
  - Recently released Healthcare Worker Prioritization
- Local surveillance data



# Vaccine Roll-out: Halton COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan

Timing	December 2020 – Spring 2021	Spring-Summer 2021	Beginning Summer 2021
Phase	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
Priority Populations	<b>13,860</b> <b>Congregate living for seniors (residents, staff and essential caregivers)</b>	<b>95,840</b> <b>Adults (65+)</b>	<b>400,000</b> <b>Remaining eligible residents in Halton (aged 16-64)</b>
	<b>2,906</b> <b>Adult chronic home care recipients</b>	<b>&gt;200,000</b> <b>People with chronic conditions</b>	
	<b>24,705</b> <b>Health care workers</b>	<b>24,810</b> <b>Essential workers</b>	
	<b>4,080 – 16,320</b> <b>Adults in First Nations, Métis and Inuit populations</b>	<b>?</b> <b>Other at risk populations</b>	
Possible Vaccination Models (TBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mass Immunization Clinics (hospital-led)</li> <li>Mobile/On-site Immunization Clinics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mass Immunization Clinics (hospital-led)</li> <li>Mass Immunization Clinics (PHU-led)</li> <li>Mobile/On-site Immunization Clinics</li> <li>Other Clinics (Pharmacy, Healthcare Partners)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other Clinics (Pharmacy, Healthcare Partners)</li> <li>Mass Immunization Clinics (PHU-led)</li> </ul>

# Planning for Vaccination Clinics

- Clinic models
- Site selection
  - Maintain health and safety measures
  - Accessibility
  - Sufficient amenities
  - Availability
- Staffing



Photo Credit: The Canadian Press / Frank Gunn

# Planning for Vaccination Clinics

Initiation to steady state: 3 weeks												
Dose	Week Number											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1 <sup>st</sup> dose		Cohort 1		Cohort 2			Cohort 3			Cohort 4		
2 <sup>nd</sup> dose				Cohort 1			Cohort 2			Cohort 3		

# COVID-19 Vaccine Communications

## Phase 1

- Messages to priority populations
- Local partnerships to provide consistent messaging to community
- New COVID-19 vaccine webpage

## Phase 2 and 3

- Environment scan
- Development of detailed vaccine communication strategy



# Risk Management

Risk	Mitigation
Vaccine supply and delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Follow vaccine distribution plan</li></ul>
Vaccine prioritization and allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Further Provincial guidance on prioritization</li><li>Local planning and outreach</li></ul>
Surge capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Business Continuity Plans</li><li>Support from other Health Units</li></ul>
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Increased hiring</li><li>Employee wellness</li></ul>



# Risk Management - Continued

Risk	Mitigation
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consistent and centralized provincial messaging</li></ul>
Technology – COVax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• COVax training for vaccine providers</li><li>• Develop parallel tools locally</li></ul>
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase allocations of PPE supplies for clinic operations</li></ul>
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adequate provincial funding to support vaccine rollout</li></ul>
Reopening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No mitigation strategies</li></ul>



# History of Mass Vaccinations in Halton

- Vaccination is a core activity of public health
- Experience with other large scale vaccination clinics:
  - H1N1
  - Hepatitis A vaccine clinic at the end of 2019
  - Grade 7 clinics in community centres



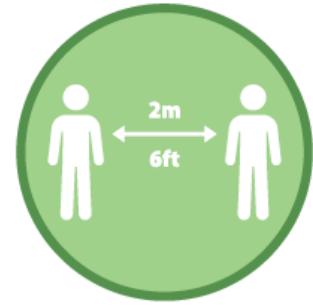
# Ongoing need for public health measures



**Stay home** if you are not feeling well, only go out for essential trips



**Wash your hands** with soap and water for at least 15 seconds

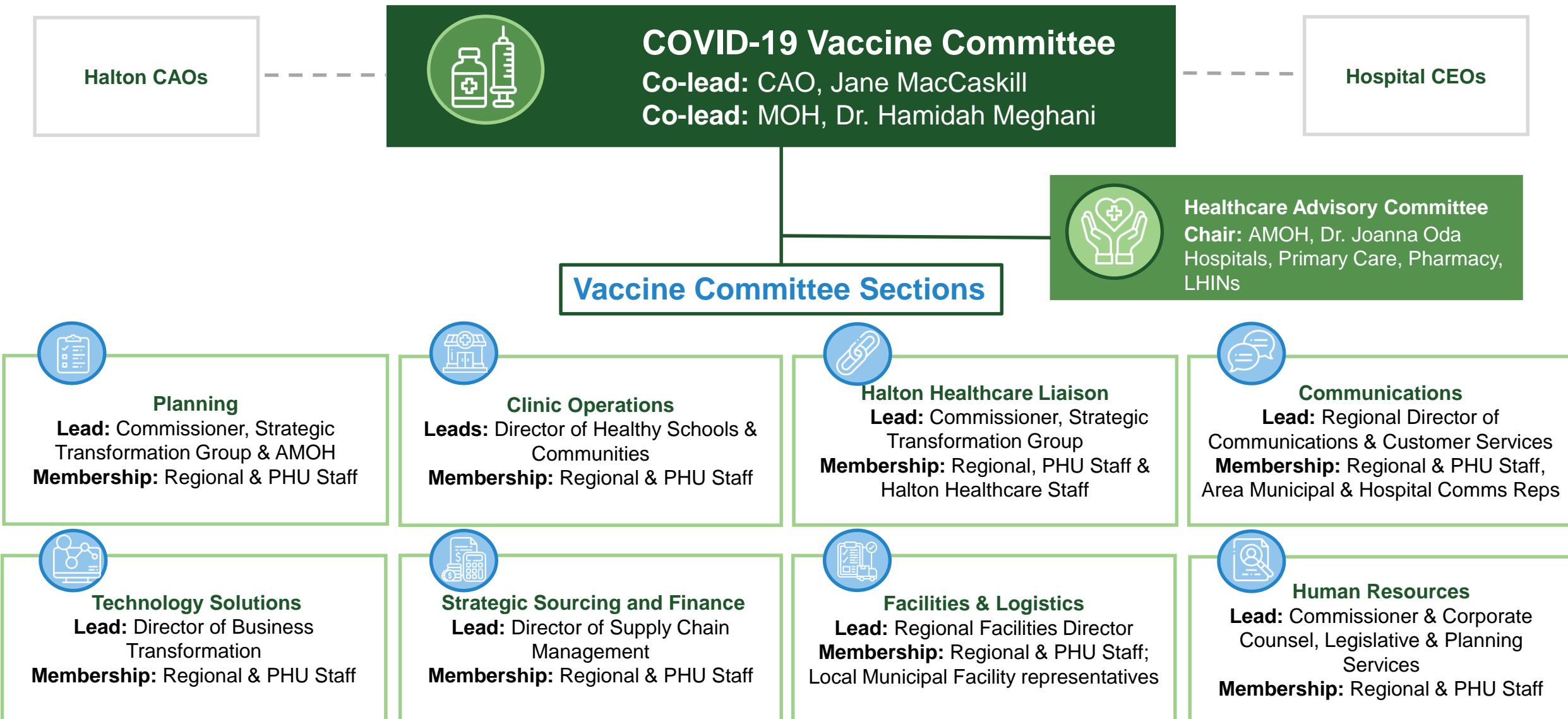


Maintain a **physical distance** of at least 2 metres from others



**Wear a mask** when physical distancing is not possible

# COVID-19 Vaccines: Halton Region Vaccine Committee



# Recipe for a successful clinic



# Questions?



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