

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **CONFUSED ABOUT COVID?**

#### **Family Doctors Launch ConfusedAboutCOVID.ca to Answer Pandemic Questions**

January 19, 2022 (TORONTO) – As many struggle with information overload about the quickly changing COVID-19 landscape, a new digital tool launched by family doctors aims to help Ontarians cut through the confusion.

The University of Toronto Temerty Faculty of Medicine's Department of Family and Community Medicine (DFCM) and the Ontario College of Family Physicians (OCFP) have come together to launch [ConfusedAboutCOVID.ca](https://www.confusedaboutcovid.ca), a resource to provide Ontarians with a reliable source of information on common worries, potential health impacts and the latest guidance to curb COVID's spread.

With the rapid spread of the Omicron variant, the COVID environment is continuously shifting, causing confusion and worry for many. Ontarians are looking for reliable information they can trust on isolation periods, testing and overall management of the virus.

That is why a team of family doctors, led by Dr. Tara Kiran, a family doctor at St. Michael's Academic Family Health Team, Unity Health Toronto, and Vice-Chair Quality and Innovation at DFCM, have launched ConfusedAboutCOVID.ca. The plain-language online guide helps members of the public understand current COVID-19 realities and guidance, answering questions such as:

- What do I do about my symptoms?
- Can I see my relatives, or do I need to self-isolate?
- When should I call my doctor?

The first six questions are now available online, and will be updated with more common questions as the Omicron situation evolves. The resource is currently available in English, with more languages coming soon.

**Dr. Danielle Martin, Chair of the Department of Family and Community Medicine and a family doctor at Women’s College Hospital,** said “As family doctors we are constantly fielding questions and trying to help our patients make sense of the latest guidance around COVID-19 and Omicron. These resources answer some of the most common questions from our patients, families and caregivers.”

**Dr. Liz Muggah, President of the Ontario College of Family Physicians and a family doctor at Bruyère Family Medicine Centre,** said “The COVID-19 pandemic is rapidly evolving, and Ontarians are increasingly confused and anxious about how they should respond if they have been exposed to or tested positive for COVID-19. Throughout the pandemic family doctors have been a reliable resource for Ontarians and now Ontario’s family doctors are making it even easier for Ontarians to access reliable information to their questions with ConfusedAboutCOVID.ca.”

**Dr. Navsheer Gill** is one of those family physicians keen to use this information. She plans to get the Q&As into the hands, inboxes and social media feeds of her patients. Practising in Newmarket, Dr. Gill said “Patients are frustrated by the time spent going click to click to click and still not finding what they need to know, and elderly patients face particular barriers.”

Dr. Gill says high quality, accurate information exists, but it often is not user friendly: “Much of the current guidance tends to be long-winded, not written in clear terms and spread over many different places, making it hard for patients to get the answers they need. With these documents, patients finally have a one-stop resource where they can find answers to questions most relevant to their lives.”

**A patient advisor from Toronto** who read the resources shares that enthusiasm: “These questions and answers really hit the spot! They are simple and give patients answers that seem so hard to get, about basic things. Where to go, what to do, and how to do it. When can I be reasonably confident that I’m safe? Here’s what I need to know if anyone in my family, or someone I was with recently, might have COVID. THANK YOU for making it simple for us!!”

### **About the Ontario College of Family Physicians**

The OCFP represents more than 15,000 family physicians across the province. OCFP supports our members by providing evidence-based education and professional development, promoting and recognizing leadership excellence in family medicine, and advocating for the vital role family physicians play in delivering the highest quality care to patients and families across Ontario. A not-for-profit and voluntary organization, the OCFP was established in 1954 and is the provincial chapter of the College of Family Physicians of Canada.

For more information visit <https://ontariofamilyphysicians.ca>.

### **About the University of Toronto Department of Family and Community Medicine**

The University of Toronto Department of Family and Community Medicine (DFCM) in the Temerty Faculty of Medicine is the largest academic department of family medicine in the world and home to the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre on Family Medicine and Primary Care. With over 1,900 faculty, 14 hospital sites, 40+ teaching practices and 1,000+ learners at all levels, DFCM is recognized internationally for excellence in teaching, research and clinical care. Our faculty members are family medicine care providers, teachers and researchers who train the next generation of family doctors and work to improve primary care in Canada and internationally.

For more information visit <https://dfcm.utoronto.ca>.

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