

## **To All Club Presidents and District Executive, Officers, Directors and Assistant Governors**

August 18, 2021

The purpose of this message is to provide guidance to clubs with our District recommendation regarding the requirement to be vaccinated to attend in-person indoor club meetings. I want to be clear that this is the recommendation of the district and is not a requirement. Clubs, based on consultation with their members are encouraged to decide what is in the best interest of their club members. There should be ongoing dialogue as the situation evolves. Above all the health and safety of our members has to come first.

Lately we have seen that governments, organizations, and businesses are implementing strict vaccine requirements. The federal government intends to make COVID-19 vaccines mandatory across the federal public service, and will require that all commercial air, interprovincial train, and cruise ship passengers be fully vaccinated no later than October. Crown corporations and federally regulated agencies such as the Bank of Canada and Canada Post are expected to follow suit.

Rotary has been working to eradicate polio for more than 35 years, and we've made incredible progress in the fight to rid the world of it forever. As a founding partner of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), we've helped to reduced polio cases by more than 99.9 percent. The GPEI in total has funded over \$18 billion over the 35 years. Rotary has made a clear statement with their commitment to eradicate polio that vaccines work.

By getting vaccinated you are not only protecting yourself, but others. All of our clubs have members who are older and therefore are at a higher level of risk. Through vaccinations you are also doing service to these members and others by protecting them.

We recommend that, like our District conference, for in-person indoor club meetings that attendees be double vaccinated. We also suggest that clubs err on the side of caution.

Vaccinations are critical in order to ensure a safe reopening, prevent additional outbreaks, prevent more economic damage to vulnerable businesses, and above all, save lives.

We recognize that vulnerable and marginalized populations may be impacted by vaccine requirements, and every effort must be made to reach out to

these groups, allay their concerns, and ensure that each person has the support and opportunity to receive the vaccine. Also, the decision to get vaccinated is a personal and emotional one and we need to respect every person's decision.

This recommendation is effective now, and until such time as our province reaches herd immunity as determined by Public Health Ontario.

We also strongly recommend that you consider conducting hybrid meetings to allow an option for those who are unvaccinated or not comfortable attending in person. We currently have a project underway to provide clubs with information on how to best host hybrid meetings. We expect that this will be available in the next few weeks.

Please stay safe.

Steve Meadley  
Rotary District Governor 2021-2022  
705 645-7086