

February 17, 2021

To the Honourable Minister, Sylvia Jones,

The DCCBA Executive Team with the support of Shelburne Deputy Mayor, Steve Anderson is urgently writing to you on behalf of the Black and racialized community as it pertains to the vaccine roll-out. As your government knows, these communities are disproportionately affected by Covid-19 not only in Ontario but across Canada.

For example, Toronto Public Health found that 79 per cent of people who contracted Covid-19 in the city between mid-May and the end of November 2020 identified as racialized - the majority Black or South Asian. Among those who spent time in the hospital for Covid-19, 71 per cent were racialized. It is no secret that many advocates including DCCBA have identified them as priority groups when it comes to rolling out the vaccine to the wider population.

On Thursday, February 11th Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health and CEO of Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health told County Council that Black and other racialized groups in Dufferin County are 5 times more likely to contract Covid-19 and suffer the horrific impacts compared to their White counterparts!

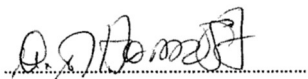
Dr. Mercer stated that this is something we need to consider when we are looking at vaccine roll-out.

It is clear that we need to take action now! As such, we are imploring the Ontario Government to elevate the Black and other racialized groups as priority candidates for the vaccine and that plans be made to address this inequity as soon as possible.

It is important to note that based on the 2020 COVID-19 Impact Assessment survey that was conducted by the Hills of Headwaters team that over 30% of the survey respondents stated that they require additional Emotional/Mental Health Support. As such we are asking for additional resources and supports for the community.

We look forward to the opportunity to speak to you on this issue.

Sincerely,



Alethia O'Hara Stephenson, President, Dufferin County Canadian Black Association



Steve Anderson, Deputy Mayor Town of Shelburne, Regional Councillor Dufferin County.