

LATEST UPDATE – October 5th, 2020

In an effort to keep our community partners connected, we are providing you with regular COVID-19 updates.

Ministry of Health Update

In today's Ministry of Health briefing, Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer, reported 358 new cases of COVID-19 over a three-day period, for a total of 9,739 cases in B.C. since the pandemic began. Of those, 3,580 are in the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) region. Currently, 69 individuals are hospitalized with COVID-19, 19 of whom are in intensive care. The remaining people are recovering at home in self-isolation. VCH Assisted living, long-term care homes and seniors' rental buildings with ongoing COVID-19 outbreaks are:

- Point Grey Private Hospital long-term care facility
- Banfield Pavilion (fourth floor west) long-term care facility
- Haro Park Centre (Special Care Unit) long-term care facility.

In today's presentation, Dr. Henry presented the latest epidemiological modelling for the province. Cases continue to occur in all the health authorities, with the Lower Mainland (VCH and Fraser Health) having the majority of cases. Currently, 8% of cases require hospitalizations, a number that is significantly down from 20% requiring hospitalizations earlier in the pandemic. This reflects increased testing and also younger people being diagnosed at higher rates than in the spring. More than 80% of cases are from people who have a known contact who has tested positive, or people part of a known cluster. The majority of COVID-19 cases are in the 20-29 and 30-39 age groups, a demographic that is overrepresented.

Children under 10 and youth ages 10-19 continue to be underrepresented in terms of cases, despite increased testing for school-aged children and youth. This group continues to account for less than 10% of cases, with less than 7/1,000 tests positive for COVID-19. School being back in session has not amplified the number of school-aged children and youth being diagnosed.

The number of COVID-19 tests being administered across B.C. is up 15% from last week, and the positivity rate remains less than 2%. The overall COVID-19 growth rate for the province is decreasing, meaning we are having safer connections in the community. However, with respiratory season around the corner, this is not the time to let our guard down. We need to continue to stay calm, stay safe, and be kind.

Dr. Bonnie Henry's presentation slides can be found here:

https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/COVID19_Going_Forward_Oct_2020.pdf

Federal Government Update

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Minister Marco E. L. Mendicino, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Minister Bill Blair and Health Minister Patty Hajdu today announced on Oct. 2 that, in addition to the border restrictions that remain in place, the Government of Canada is further strengthening the public health presence at the border and enhancing quarantine monitoring. The government is also increasing the use of digital forms and processes to allow critical information to be shared more quickly with provinces and territories. In addition, a process is being introduced to support enhanced family reunification, including those in long-term exclusive relationships, international students and entry for compassionate reasons. More information can be found here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2020/10/government-introduces-new-border-measures-to-protect-canadian-public-health-provides-update-on-travel-restrictions.html>

Community Partner Survey

In August, we launched a survey to hear from our community partners and learn whether you have found our regular COVID-19 Updates informative and timely. Based on the survey responses, most of our community partners found the VCH Covid-19 Updates informative, useful and timely, and we have heard that you have used the updates to plan your programs, build your own response and share accurate information with your staff and clients. We have also heard that most respondents have found the Minister of Health/Provincial Health Officer updates, updates on COVID-19 cases and VCH updates on COVID-19 most useful. Most community partners would like to keep receiving the updates in current format, but around 1/3 of respondents would like to receive only COVID-19 updates in the event of a second wave. Almost half of the respondents

would prefer to hear from us whenever there are significant COVID-19 updates, and around 20% of respondents would like to hear more about VCH community engagement opportunities.

Thank you for taking time to respond to our survey. The input received will inform our planning of future communications.

Testing

Anyone in the VCH region with cold, influenza or COVID-19-like symptoms, however mild, can now be assessed for and get a COVID-19 test. Contact your physician or nurse practitioner's office, or a local community collection centre to arrange for a test. Phone numbers and locations of collection centres can be found by visiting: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/testing> or by calling 8-1-1. For more information and latest updates on COVID-19, follow the BC Centre for Disease Control on Twitter @CDCofBC or visit the website: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>.

Other Resources

To find the Provincial Health Officer's orders, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

To see a map of COVID-19 cases by local health area, visit:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data>

For a listing of the community exposure events, go to BCCDC (flights, work sites,

etc.): <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/public-exposures>

For the latest medical updates, including case counts, prevention, risks and testing, visit: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>