

## LATEST UPDATE – Dec. 14, 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 media availability on B.C.'s COVID-19 response, Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer, and Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, reported a total of 2,146 new COVID-19 cases over the weekend to today. The total number of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 in BC now stands at 42,943 since the start of the pandemic, with 10,039 active cases across the province. 300 of the new cases reported were from the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) region.

- Friday Dec. 11-Saturday Dec. 12- 698 new cases
- Saturday Dec. 12-Sunday Dec. 13- 689 cases
- Sunday Dec. 13-Monday Dec. 14- 759 new cases

Across the province, 49 new deaths were confirmed, while 359 people are currently hospitalized, 87 are receiving treatment in ICU/critical care. The total number of deaths due to COVID-19 now stands at 647. There were three additional healthcare facility outbreaks announced and six outbreaks were declared over. There are 55 active outbreaks in long-term care and assisted living facilities, and seven in acute care settings.

### Dr. Bonnie Henry Briefing Vaccine Roll-out

The first doses of Pfizer vaccine have arrived, and teams are planning for the first round of immunizations in clinics tomorrow. It will be administered across two sites initially, and healthcare workers who will receive the initial doses have been notified. Based on the anticipated supply for next week, it will be available across all Health Authorities at that point. A standard protocol will be applied across all sites, and the hope is that it will be available across nine sites in the province shortly. Residents in care homes are a priority population, but because of the logistical challenges associated with the Pfizer vaccine (it is unstable after it is thawed), they need to organize its distribution carefully. The Moderna vaccine has less stringent transport requirements - so as soon one or the other is available in large enough scale, B.C. will look to transport it to long-term care facilities. Dr. Henry referred to this as the start of a new phase of the pandemic here in B.C.

All provinces will administer the first batches of the vaccine to cover as many people as possible - they will not set some of the batch aside for second doses for vaccine recipients. For the Pfizer vaccine, a second dose is recommended between 21-28 days after the first dose. Dr. Henry reiterated that because we are at peak risk at the moment, the priority is to immunize and protect as many people as possible. She doesn't want to leave the vaccine in the fridge unused, particularly when so many people are currently at risk.

### Current Guidelines and the Upcoming Holidays

Dr. Henry reemphasized that chains of transmission are still happening in our community, even with current restrictions. Every time we are together as a group, there is a risk. No event or gathering is completely safe. Our homes don't have the same layers of protection as other locations - we don't tend to wear masks as diligently as when we are in public spaces and it can be more difficult to socially distance. Shopping in local retailers or doing your grocery shopping is different to socializing in our living rooms. Dr. Henry said there are no short-term plans to increase restrictions at this time, but they continue to closely monitor the situation.

She shared tips for how some people are proactively planning alternative ways to come together while staying apart over the holiday season – delivering ready-made breakfasts, having Zoom holiday dinners on big screens, preparing the same meal with the same table decorations in each home, cooking together virtually and creating karaoke playlists for a virtual singing competition. She stressed that we can celebrate at a distance safely but separately, to protect those who are most at risk.

### VCH Website and Translation Engagement

VCH has started two important projects – the redesign of the VCH website and a review of VCH translation practices. Your input in the web design project and the translation needs at VCH for safe care will help us improve our translation tools and ensure our future website is a user-friendly resource that is easy to navigate. We are hosting Zoom focus groups to hear from the diverse communities we serve. To register for our upcoming focus group times and dates, please email [ce@vch.ca](mailto:ce@vch.ca).

### 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: <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/>

For **community engagement opportunities** at VCH, see: <http://cean.vch.ca/members/current-opportunities/>