

LATEST UPDATE – April 20, 2021

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

Ministry of Health update

In yesterday's joint statement on B.C.'s COVID-19 response, Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer, and Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, reported 2,960 new cases over the weekend three-day reporting period. Of the new cases, 696 people were in the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) region.

The total number of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 in B.C. now stands at 120,040 since the start of the pandemic. There are 9,353 active cases of COVID-19 across B.C. currently.

Across the province, there were eight new COVID-19 related deaths, while 441 people are currently hospitalized, with 138 of these cases receiving treatment in ICU/critical care. The total number of individuals who have passed away due to COVID-19 is 1,538.

Minister Dix provided an update on COVID-19 hospitalizations and capacity. Overall hospital occupancy rates remain below, but close to, bed-base capacity, compared to pre-COVID years. There are several critical care units in hospitals within VCH operating with a base-bed capacity at 95 per cent, including Lions Gate Hospital, Richmond Hospital and Vancouver General Hospital. Minister Dix noted capacity of hospitals to manage the demand has been helped by a zero level of influenza. Between March 17 and April 16, medical bed occupancy increased to 298 patients from 220. Critical care-bed occupancy in that same time frame increased to 127 patients from 87, while ventilated patients increased to 65 from 37.

A comparison of data between December 2020 and March 2021 shows an increase in the number of hospitalized cases in people aged 20 to 29 to five per cent from 3.7 per cent. The most notable increase in hospitalizations was among 50 to 59 year old men and 55 to 59-year-old women, while there was a steady decline among those over the age of 70 with some recent surge in March.

Three-week circuit breaker to bend COVID-19 curve extended and new travel restrictions

B.C. Premier John Horgan announced the amended orders and guidelines announced in late March by the provincial health officer have been extended until after the May long weekend. On Friday, the province will also be issuing orders under the Emergency Program Act to restrict people's ability to leave their health authority. More details regarding this change will be provided later in the week. BC Ferries will stop accepting bookings for recreational vehicles like campers and trailers. BC Ferries will also be contacting their passengers who have booked reservations to make sure their travel is essential and not for leisure. Premier Horgan also says non-essential travel should be confined to local travel only, adding the province has been working with the tourism industry to eliminate bookings from people outside of a particular area.

Update on Astra-Zeneca vaccine

As of April 14, 114,171 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine have been administered (91,000 through pharmacies). Approximately 88,000 remain in the system across 604 pharmacies in B.C. Based on increased risk of hospitalization in high risk communities, starting later this week, B.C. will set up targeted AstraZeneca clinics directed at 40-plus in those communities to compliment the province wide pharmacy-based program and the Pfizer/BioNTech. This targeted use of AstraZeneca will provide an additional and safe route to earlier vaccination and protection from serious illness and hospitalization for the 40-plus age cohort in these communities. The two communities within VCH identified for these new clinics are Squamish and the Kensington area in Vancouver.

Updated information on who should get a COVID-19 vaccine can be found [here](#) and there is more information about vaccine aftercare [here](#). More information and immunization data is available through this page: [BCCDC](#).

Get registered for COVID-19 vaccine

Registration for a COVID-19 vaccine is now open to those born in 1981 or earlier (age 40+). People born in 1958 or earlier (63+), Indigenous people born in 2002 or earlier and people who are clinically extremely vulnerable are currently being invited to book an appointment to be vaccinated as part of B.C.'s Immunization Plan. Information on how to book an appointment for vaccination is available on the [Ministry of Health's website](#).

Please check your scheduled appointment date, time and location; arrive on time for your appointment and avoid arriving early. Wear a short-sleeve shirt as the vaccine will be delivered to your upper arm. You will be monitored after receiving your vaccine for 15 minutes. Please refer to the VCH website for the list of available clinics for residents on the Sunshine Coast, in Powell River and other communities across the VCH region. This page is updated as further clinic dates are confirmed.

Updates to VCH's implementation of B.C.'s immunization plan

Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) is adding additional COVID-19 vaccination clinics to the following communities:

- Sechelt: April 28
- Gibsons: April 29
- Powell River: April 28

VCH regularly monitors and adjusts clinic dates and hours of operation based on appointments, vaccine availability and the age demographics of the community. VCH is committed to ensuring those who are eligible for vaccination and live on the Sunshine Coast and Powell River will have the opportunity to get their vaccine.

COVID-19 vaccine update

Since the start of immunizations, 1,380,160 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and AstraZeneca-SII COVID-19 vaccines have been administered in B.C. In total, 30 per cent of all eligible British Columbians have been vaccinated. The province is on track for dose one being available to all residents in B.C. by the end of June.

Dr. Henry says that by the end of April, we are going to start seeing a decrease in transmission and hospitalization for those most at risk – people over the age of 65. This is expected because it takes two to three weeks after reaching a level of community immunization to have an incremental impact on transmission in communities and on hospitalizations.

Health-care in the federal budget

On Monday, the federal government announced Budget 2021 with several health-care initiatives. There's a new excise duty coming on all vaping products as of next year. The budget also hikes the tax on cigarettes by another \$4 per carton. Budget 2021 proposes to provide \$3 billion over five years, starting in 2022-23, to Health Canada to support provinces and territories in ensuring standards for long-term care are applied and permanent changes are made. Budget 2021 proposes to provide \$41.3 million over six years, and \$7.7 million ongoing, starting in 2021-22, for Statistics Canada to improve data infrastructure and data collection on supportive care, primary care, and pharmaceuticals.

Resource toolkit:

- **Vaccine safety information:**

[\[English\]](#) | [\[简体中文 Chinese Simplified\]](#) | [\[繁體中文 Chinese Traditional\]](#) | [\[한국어 Korean\]](#) | [\[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ Punjabi\]](#) | [\[Tagalog\]](#)

- **Bilingual COVID-19 vaccine safety posters:**

[\[简体中文 Chinese Simplified\]](#) | [\[繁體中文 Chinese Traditional\]](#) | [\[فارسی Farsi\]](#) | [\[한국어 Korean\]](#) | [\[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ Punjabi\]](#) | [\[Tagalog\]](#)

- **Aftercare information:**

[\[English\]](#) | [\[العربية Arabic\]](#) | [\[American Sign Language - ASL\]](#) | [\[简体中文 Chinese Simplified\]](#) | [\[繁體中文 Chinese Traditional\]](#) | [\[فارسی Farsi\]](#) | [\[Français French\]](#) | [\[한국어 Korean\]](#) | [\[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ Punjabi\]](#) | [\[Español Spanish\]](#) | [\[Tigrinya\]](#) | [\[Tiếng Việt Vietnamese\]](#)

- **COVID-19 vaccine posters:**

[\[English\]](#) | [\[简体中文 Chinese Simplified\]](#) | [\[繁體中文 Chinese Traditional\]](#) | [\[فارسی Farsi\]](#) | [\[한국어 Korean\]](#) | [\[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ Punjabi\]](#) | [\[Tiếng Việt Vietnamese\]](#)

- **VCH website information and Questions & Answers:**

[\[English\]](#) | [\[العربية Arabic\]](#) | [\[简体中文 Chinese Simplified\]](#) | [\[繁體中文 Chinese Traditional\]](#) | [\[فارسی Farsi\]](#) | [\[Français French\]](#) | [\[한국어 Korean\]](#) | [\[Español Spanish\]](#) | [\[Tagalog\]](#) | [\[Tiếng Việt Vietnamese\]](#)

- **COVID-19 vaccine information sessions hosted by S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and VCH (Cantonese and Mandarin)**
[\[Cantonese\]](#) | [\[Mandarin\]](#)
- **COVID-19 vaccine Q&A with Dr. Ray Chaboyer**
[\[English\]](#)

Advance Care Planning virtual workshops 網上預先安排護理計劃講座(普通話)

This is an award-winning program led by a group of CEAN volunteers. They are organizing three FREE Zoom workshops in English and Mandarin for anyone wishing to learn more about advance care planning. [Register here](#) and learn more.

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

Find the Provincial Health Officer's orders [here](#).

To see a map of **COVID-19 cases by local health area**, [visit here](#).

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

For **community engagement opportunities** at VCH, see: <https://engage.vch.ca/>