

LATEST UPDATE – April 23, 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 1,006 new cases. Of the new cases, 241 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 122,757 since the start of the pandemic. There are 8,733 active cases of COVID-19 across B.C. currently.

Across the province, there were four new COVID-19 related deaths, while 502 people are currently hospitalized, with 161 of these cases receiving treatment in ICU/critical care. The total number of individuals who have passed away due to COVID-19 is 1,550.

Minister Dix announced that nine hospitals across the Lower Mainland will move to urgent and emergency surgeries for a minimum of two weeks, and this will be evaluated on a week-by-week basis. This is to ensure these hospitals have the critical care staff available to care for patients. In VCH, this affects non-urgent scheduled surgeries at five hospitals: Lions Gate Hospital, Richmond Hospital, St Paul's Hospital, UBC and Vancouver General. It is estimated that in Vancouver Coastal Health approximately 1,000 non-urgent scheduled surgeries will be postponed in the two week period.

Minister Dix assured patients who have already been called or will be called to postpone their surgery that they are part of the province's surgical renewal commitment and they will be called to rebook their surgery as soon as it is possible.

Details of additional travel measures announced

Solicitor General Mike Farnworth announced restrictions on non-essential travel into, or out of, all health authority regions in British Columbia, effective immediately.

This order will remain in place until May 25. This is a legal order under the Emergency Program Act.

For the purposes of this order, Vancouver Coastal Health and Fraser Health authorities will be considered a combined region. The Northern and Interior Health authorities will be considered a combined region as well. The boundaries of the Vancouver Island region will not change. There are some exceptions for the Central Coast, the Bella Coola Valley and Hope.

British Columbians will be able to travel within the region or combined region in which they reside, but not out of their region or combined region. This order is to ensure that people stop traversing large parts of the province. It will not apply to travel within the defined regions. The provisions of this order recognize reasonable exemptions to travel restrictions, such as going to work, going to school, the commercial transportation of goods, returning to a principal residence and obtaining health care.

COVID-19 vaccine update

Since the start of immunizations, 1,500,433 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and AstraZeneca-SII COVID-19 vaccines have been administered in B.C. In total, 32.84 per cent of all eligible British Columbians have been vaccinated.

Dr. Henry is encouraging everybody to get the vaccine when it is available for them, noting it is a benefit to everyone the more people are protected. With each person vaccinated, Dr. Henry says B.C. comes closer to returning to a post-pandemic normalcy. Until then, even those who are vaccinated, must continue to take precautions right now. That means keeping to your own household, keeping your distance from everyone else, wearing a mask if you're inside, and, if you're even outside, if you're less than two metres away from others. Don't travel unless you need to and don't travel outside your health authority. Avoid indoor gatherings. Outdoor gatherings are still risky, but less so than indoors. Stick to your own small group.

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](#).

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

As part of the B.C. COVID-19 Immunization Plan for priority neighbourhoods, Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) will offer targeted vaccinations to people 40 years of age and older who reside in Squamish and the Kensington neighbourhood in Vancouver. Based on recent data, Squamish and Kensington were identified as a high-priority communities and this program will provide additional protection from serious illness and hospitalization for those aged 40 and older in these communities.

Residents in both communities 40 years of age and older (born in 1981 or earlier) are encouraged to register and book their appointment through the [provincial online platform](#) or call centre (1-833-838-2323). Further information can be found at: gov.bc.ca/neighbourhoodplan

For those outside of Whistler and Squamish and Kensington, provincial registration for a COVID-19 vaccine continues for those born in 2003 or earlier (age 18 years of age and older). People born in 1961 or earlier (60 years of age and older), Indigenous people born in 2003 or earlier (18 years of age and older) 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 register for an appointment can be [found here](#).

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.

COVID-19 update for Whistler

Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) has recorded a reduction in COVID-19 transmission in the Whistler community compared to recent weeks.

- From April 12 to April 18, VCH identified 72 new cases of COVID-19 in Whistler. The week prior (April 6 to April 11), VCH identified 179 new cases of COVID-19 in Whistler.
- From Jan. 1 to April 18, there were 1,759 cases* recorded in the Whistler community.
- Of these, 1,688 individuals have recovered from COVID-19.

The reported cases continue to be among young adults who live and work in the Whistler community. The most common site for transmission continues to be in household settings and social gatherings. As the BC Centre for Disease Control has recorded through whole genome sequencing, there are variant of concern cases across B.C., including in Whistler.

All Whistler adults who have a primary residence in Whistler or who work in the Whistler community were eligible for vaccination as part of a one week vaccination clinic ran by VCH last week. To ensure all eligible residents have the opportunity to get vaccinated, an additional clinic day will be held on April 28 at Whistler Conference Centre for those who were unable to get vaccinated last week because they were in self-isolation as contacts of COVID-19 cases.

**Previously reported numbers are not cumulative, due to ongoing data reconciliation.*

VCH opens additional vaccination clinic dates for Sunshine Coast and Powell River

Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) has added 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.

BC COVID-19 Speak Survey

As part of British Columbia's Public Health response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the BCCDC is looking for your support to promote the [BC COVID-19 SPEAK Round 2 Survey](#). We encourage you and those in your networks to participate in this survey to help us examine how British Columbians have been affected one year into the pandemic, and how their

experiences may inform recovery and re-opening. The survey is currently open to all British Columbia residents aged 18 years and older until Sunday, May 9, 2021. You can take the survey [here](#).

Resource toolkit:

- **COVID-19 vaccination update for Kensington neighbourhood residents**

[\[English\]](#) | [\[简体中文 Chinese Simplified\]](#) | [\[繁體中文 Chinese Traditional\]](#) | [\[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ Punjabi\]](#) | [\[Español Spanish\]](#) | [\[Tagalog\]](#) | [\[Tiếng Việt Vietnamese\]](#)

- **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:**

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

- **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**
[\[English\]](#)

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/>