

LATEST UPDATE – April 13, 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 3,289 new cases during the weekend reporting period.

The total number of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 in B.C. now stands at 112,829 since the start of the pandemic. Of the new cases, 740 people were in the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) region.

Across the province, there were 18 new COVID-19 related deaths, while 368 people are currently hospitalized, with 121 of these cases receiving treatment in ICU/critical care. The total number of individuals who have passed away due to COVID-19 is 1,513. There are 9,937 active cases of COVID-19 across B.C. currently. Roughly 50 per cent of the new cases are believed to be from one of the three variants of concern, though predominantly the B.1.1.7 (U.K.) variant.

Dr. Henry says to get to the end of pandemic as quickly as possible; there are steps everyone must take, urging residents to stay home and stay in their immediate neighbourhood as much as possible. She says if you live in North Van, you should not be travelling to Langley or to Richmond. If you live in the Lower Mainland, you should not be travelling to Vancouver Island. Any travel should be essential, and nothing more.

Starting Monday, the new provincial health officer Expedited Workplace Closure order program began allowing WorkSafeBC inspectors to support the work of public health and to support businesses when a COVID-19 outbreak occurs at the worksite. When the public health investigation determines that transmission has occurred at the workplace, an order may be issued closing the workplace for 10 days or longer to stop the transmission. In the case of complex workplaces (e.g., large construction sites), the closure may be restricted to those parts of the workplace where transmission has occurred. When a closure is ordered, WorkSafeBC will serve the closure notice and will then support the workplace to review and enhance safety plans, as needed.

COVID-19 hospitalization data

Minister Dix provided an update on the overall bed capacity in the province. Currently, there are a total 11,934 beds, both base beds and COVID-19 surge beds, with 3,314 vacant, for an occupancy rate of 72.2 per cent.

Of the total base beds across the hospital system, 876 of the 9,394 beds are vacant, for a base bed occupancy rate of 90.7 per cent. In terms of critical care, the total occupancy rate, including base and surge beds, is 54.5 per cent. The total number of vacant beds in critical care is 353. The occupancy rate of base beds in critical care is 77.3 per cent, or 122 vacant base beds.

Minister Dix said there is a concern with occupancy close to 100 per cent in a number of hospitals in Metro Vancouver, including Vancouver General Hospital, Lions Gate Hospital, and Surrey Memorial Hospital. The province will continue to monitor the daily occupancy rate and take specific actions to reduce stress on the health system as needed through redeployment of staff. Minister Dix says it will not be like last year when surgeries were cancelled on a large scale, but rather targeted and for as short of a period as possible.

COVID-19 vaccine update

Since the start of immunizations, 1,112,101 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and AstraZeneca-SII COVID-19 vaccines have been administered in B.C. In total, 24 per cent of all eligible British Columbians have been vaccinated while nearly 50 per cent of people over the age of 65 have been vaccinated. Meanwhile, more than 80 per cent of people over the age of 80 have been vaccinated. This week, the province is expected to receive 138,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine.

Dr. Henry reiterated that while the AstraZeneca vaccine is on pause for people under the age of 55, it is a safe and effective vaccine that has been used in millions of people around the world. People over the age of 55, are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

The vaccination program continues to focus on transmission hotspots, or high-risk workplaces in the highest spread locations in the province. The program will continue to use vaccines to help put the brakes on transmission including in places like Prince Rupert, Terrace, and recently Whistler, where ongoing transmission

occurred despite efforts at outbreak management. The program will also target specific neighbourhoods as more information is available on where vaccine is needed most.

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

Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) invites Whistler adults 18 years of age and older who have not yet been vaccinated, and who have a primary residence in Whistler or who work in the Whistler community, to receive a COVID-19 vaccination over a two-week period. This includes the following:

- Eligible Whistler adults between 18 – 54 years of age (born between 1967 – 2003) will receive a vaccination at the Whistler Conference Centre, by appointment only at www.vchcovid19vaccine.com. The link to appointment bookings opened at 1 p.m. yesterday.
- Whistler adults 55 – 65 years of age (born between 1957 – 1966) can receive the AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD vaccine at a local pharmacy now, by appointment at the [B.C. Pharmacy Association scheduling systems](#). Whistler adults 55 to 65 years of age who prefer to wait to receive a Pfizer or Moderna vaccine will be invited to be vaccinated at the Whistler Conference Centre during the week of Apr. 19.
- Whistler adults 65 years of age and older (born in 1956 and earlier) have already been invited to register and book a vaccination through the B.C. Ministry of Health’s age-based cohort system at www.gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated. These vaccinations will begin on Apr. 14 at the Whistler Clinic. Residents who were not able to receive an appointment at this clinic will be eligible for vaccination the week of Apr. 19.

All eligible residents are advised to visit www.vch.ca/whistler for further information about how to get vaccinated and for guidance on how to prepare for their vaccination appointment.

People aged 55+ invited to register for COVID-19 vaccine

A new vaccine registration schedule will provide certainty for more than 1.3 million British Columbians aged 40 and older, as B.C.’s Get Vaccinated program moves forward.

Age/Group	How to register	Date eligibility starts
55+ (born 1966 or earlier)	Online, by phone or in-person at a Service BC office	Monday, April 12 at 12PM
50+ (born 1971 or earlier)	Online, by phone or in-person at a Service BC office	Wednesday, April 14, at 12PM
45+ (born 1976 or earlier)	Online, by phone or in-person at a Service BC office	Friday, April 16 at 12PM
40+ (born 1981 or earlier)	Online, by phone or in-person at a Service BC office	Monday, April 19 at 12PM
Indigenous peoples 18+ (born 2003 or earlier)	Online, by phone or in-person at a Service BC office	Ongoing
55 to 65 (born 1956-1966)	Contact a participating pharmacy near you (Dependent on supply)	Ongoing
People who are clinically extremely vulnerable 16+ (born 2005 or earlier)	Must have an invitation letter to book	Ongoing

*There can be a wait time between when you [register](#) and when you are invited to [book](#) your appointment. Wait times vary depending on your age and vaccine supply.

The fastest and most effective way to register is online at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated.html>

Registration is the first step. Once registered, people will be contacted when it is their turn to book a vaccine appointment. To preserve system capacity, wait until your age cohort is called to register.

People born in 1966 and earlier (55 and older), Indigenous peoples 18 and older, and those who are clinically extremely vulnerable are already invited to register through B.C.'s new Get Vaccinated system in one of three ways:

- Quickly online, 24/7, at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated.html>
- Through a provincial call centre between 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. (Pacific time) at 1 833 838-2323
- In person at the nearest Service BC location.

Throne Speech focuses on health care

Monday's Throne Speech spent time outlining the final push in the fight to end the COVID-19 pandemic, with a pledge that everyone in B.C. will be able to receive a vaccination by the end of June, if supplies are delivered as scheduled. In the year ahead, the provincial government will hire thousands of new workers for long-term care and reduce wait times by permanently changing the way surgeries are delivered in B.C. to get more patients their surgery faster. The province will build more hospitals and urgent primary care centres to ensure quality health care including an expanded Richmond tower to deliver more services in fast-growing communities.

VCH COVID-19 vaccination survey

VCH has also launched a brief survey asking people in our communities about the COVID-19 vaccine information they need most as they book a vaccine appointment and receive their vaccine at a clinic, as well as whether they plan to get a COVID-19 vaccine. The survey consists of only five questions and takes up to five minutes to complete. It is currently available in English, traditional Chinese, simplified Chinese and Punjabi: <https://engage.vch.ca/covid-19-vaccination-survey>.

• Vaccine safety information:

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

• 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:

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

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/>