

LATEST UPDATE – Jan. 26, 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 from:

- January 22 to 23 there were 527 new cases of COVID-19 diagnosed in BC,
- January 23 to 24 an additional 471 new cases,
- and in the last 24 hours 346 new cases.

Over the three day period there were a total of 1,344 new cases diagnosed with COVID-19 in BC. The total number of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 in B.C. now stands at 64,828 since the start of the pandemic. Of the new cases, 314 people were in the Vancouver Coastal Health region.

Across the province, there have been 26 new COVID-19 related deaths, while 328 people are currently hospitalized, with 68 of these cases receiving treatment in ICU/critical care. The total number of individuals who have passed away due to COVID-19 is 1,154. There are now 4,392 active cases of COVID-19 across B.C. currently.

COVID-19 Vaccination Update, Second Doses and Vaccine Supply

Since the start of immunizations, 119,850 doses of COVID-19 vaccine in BC have been delivered (not including today), of which 3,193 are second doses. More information and immunization data is available through this page: [BCCDC](#)

Dr. Bonnie Henry said BC will not receive Pfizer vaccine this week and that the amounts we were expecting to receive in the first week of February will be dramatically reduced. And at this point, there will be limited supply for the following two weeks. She said the province is not scheduled to receive Moderna vaccines this week, either. Dr. Henry said the Federal Government is working to secure the vaccine supply.

As a result of the limited supply of vaccine in the next two weeks, second doses will be delayed until day 42. BC will catch up on the immunizations as soon as the supply is restored. The focus will be to finish long-term care home immunizations and to address the outbreaks that are happening in our hospitals and in our communities. Dr. Henry said this is about doing our best to give as many people as possible the protection of a first dose and it's about putting out fires before it gets out of control. To date, over 60% of the vaccine that we have has gone to protecting those who are the most vulnerable in long-term care and assisted living and that includes all of the long-term care and assisted living facilities in Vancouver Coastal Health, Island Health and Fraser Health.

COVID-19 Variants

There are now a number of variants of COVID-19 circulating worldwide and we have seen five cases of the UK variant in BC. All five cases can be linked to travel and so far we have not seen any transmission from these cases.

The province has also seen three cases of the South African variant, which were community acquired. Two of the cases in the VCH-region and one in Fraser Health. Contact tracing is working to track the origins of these cases and the province continues to monitor for COVID-19 variants through genome sequencing. So far there has not been wide-spread transmission of the variants, but we must be vigilant.

A Strong Request to Limit Social Interactions

Dr. Henry said that while the numbers of daily new cases have plateaued in BC, the number of new cases each day is too high and we still face the risk of cases dramatically increasing. She said we can't rely on the vaccine to protect us right now and with the emergence of more-easily transmitted variants, we are on a precipice.

During the next two weeks, we need to bend the curve down. Dr. Henry made a serious plea asking every British Columbian to take a step back, to stay home, stop social interactions and to work from home if we can. And she says we need to do this more than at any time before. We need to focus on making sure children can go to school and our health-care system can continue to function. Dr. Henry said this is a challenging time and not a time to falter. We need to hang in there and we need to do this now. With your help, we can get there.

VCH Website and Translation Engagement

Many thanks to everyone who has been involved in our two important projects – the redesign of the VCH website and review of VCH translation practices. Your input in the web design project and 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 have launched a survey for the two projects, and would like to receive input from the diverse communities we serve. Please, feel free to distribute widely. The survey is also available in Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Punjabi and Farsi. To complete the survey, go to:

<https://survey.givingopinions.ca/vch>

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/>