

Update for Partners

COVID-19

September 2, 2020

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Current Situation

Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Case Status (As of September 1, 2020, 13:00)			
Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
713	31	642	37
Highlights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compared to the previous day, the total case count represents: five new cases, four recovered cases, and no new hospitalizations or deaths, and one new outbreak. There are two ongoing outbreaks in long-term care homes in Simcoe Muskoka. There is currently one person hospitalized with COVID-19 in Simcoe Muskoka. There were 90 new tests per 10,000 population in Simcoe County and 50 tests per 10,000 population in Muskoka in the most recent reporting week. This is in comparison to a provincial testing rate of 121 tests per 10,000 population. Percent positivity rate in Simcoe County is 0.2% and 0% in Muskoka compared to a provincial average of 0.4%. The percent positivity rate among males aged 30-49 is twice as high as females of the same age, as is the percent positivity rate for male children under 10 years of age compared to females of the same age. Over 60% of current active cases are people under 35 years of age, double the rate of infection compared to any other age group. There has been an increase in the number of cases reported in Barrie since late August and more than half of all currently active cases reside in Barrie. Cases continue to decline in most other municipalities. The seven-day moving average of new COVID-19 cases has been above one case per day since mid-August. <p>SMDHU COVID-19 HealthSTATS page and the COVID-19 Case Explorer</p>			
Ontario COVID-19 Case Status (As of September 1, 2020, 10:30)			
Total cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
42,421	1,240	38,369	2,812
Highlights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the last day there has been: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase of 112 confirmed cases (percent change of -1.8%) 			

- An increase of one death (percent change of 0.0%)
- An increase of 92 resolved cases (percent change of 26%)
- Of those active cases 60% are in people under 40 years of age; 44% in people under 30 years of age; those aged 20-29 years have the most active cases of all age groups (323).
- A total of 2,966,343 tests have been completed with 23,545 tests completed yesterday.
- There are currently 65 people hospitalized with 17 in the ICU and five on ventilators.
- In the last day the Central East region of Ontario which includes Simcoe Muskoka has had the largest increase in COVID-19 cases (46) compared to other areas in the province.
- There are currently 40 ongoing outbreaks in health care facilities in Ontario (retirement homes = 19, long-term care homes = 18, hospitals = 3).

For more provincial data see: [Province of Ontario COVID-19 case data](#) and [Public Health Ontario Data Tool, Public Health Ontario Daily Epidemiologic Summary, Public Health Ontario Weekly Epidemiologic Summaries](#)

Canada COVID-19 Case Status (As of August 31, 2020 at 19:00 EDT)

Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
128,948	5,604	114,218	9,126

Highlights:

- There has been an increase of 1,008 new cases in the last 24 hours.
- Of the jurisdictions reporting updates in the last day, seven provinces have reported new cases with Alberta reporting 426, BC reporting 294 and Quebec reporting 140. New cases were also reported in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia.
- Nine new deaths were reported in Canada in the last day with deaths reported in BC (4), Alberta (2), Quebec (2), and Ontario (1).
- During the month of August there was an increase in food/drink/retail associated outbreaks.
- Since late July, incidence rates have declined across all age groups however, those 20-39 years of age remain consistently higher compared to all other age groups, accounting for 54% of all cases from August 16-22.
- Since early May there has been a sharp decline in reported deaths and the number of daily deaths remains low.
- Over 5.5 million people have been tested for COVID-19 in Canada. This equates to a rate of 146,435 people tested per one million population. Of all people tested, 2.2% have been found to be positive. According to forecasting, Canada will have 127,770 - 133,190 cumulative cases and 9,120-9,200 cumulative deaths by September 6, 2020.
- In the last two weeks there have been 25 flights within Canada and 34 flights coming into Canada from international locations on which people may have been exposed to COVID-19. See specific information about these flights [here](#).

National [daily epidemiology updates](#); National [weekly epidemiology report](#)
[Update on COVID-19 in Canada: Epidemiology and Modelling](#) (August 14, 2020)

Global Situation (As of September 1, 2020 at 14:48 CEST)

Confirmed Cases	Confirmed Deaths
25,327,098	848,255

- Yesterday 262,299 new cases and 5,375 new deaths were reported around the world, with the highest number of new cases in India, USA, Brazil, Colombia and Peru and the highest number of deaths in India, USA, Brazil, Mexico and Colombia.
- For August 24-30, there were almost 1.8 million new cases and just over 38,000 new deaths reported. This is a 1% increase in cases and a 3% decrease in deaths compared to the previous week.

- In the last week, India, USA, Brazil, Colombia and Argentina had the most new cases and India, USA, Brazil, Mexico and Colombia had the most new deaths.
- Overall the Region of the Americas accounts for nearly half of all cases globally in the last week.
- The South East Asia Region showed the highest rise in cases in the past week.
- New cases and deaths have continued to increase in the European Region over the last week.

[WHO COVID-19 Disease Dashboard](#);

Weekly Epidemiological Update ([August 30](#)); [Previous Situation Reports](#)

Updates

SMDHU Medical Officer of Health - Key Messages from Tues., Sept. 1, 2020

Dr. Gardner's Facebook live media briefings take place on Tuesdays. They can be found on the [SMDHU Facebook page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#).

Key Messages

1. Return to school outbreak management

Screening before going to school: All individuals including students, staff and essential visitors must self-screen each day before going to school using the Ontario self-assessment online tool, or other tools as identified by the Ministry of Health or SMDHU. SMDHU will provide a checklist version for families who prefer that to using the online tool.

- Students or staff who have any symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19 persisting for more than a few hours, and for whom the symptom is new and not related to seasonal allergies or pre-existing medical conditions, must stay home from school and should be [tested for COVID-19](#).
- If results are returned as negative, students, staff and essential visitors are able to return 24 hours after their symptoms resolve.
- On occasion, a parent/guardian or staff/visitor may feel there is another explanation for the new symptom(s), requiring medical assessment rather than a COVID-19 test. In that case, they should contact their health care provider as usual. If the health care provider makes an alternative diagnosis and determines that the condition is not COVID-19, they may indicate that the individual can return to school when free of symptoms for 24 hours.
- If the individual is not tested for COVID-19 and there is not a clear alternative diagnosis, then they will need to self-isolate at home for 14 days.
- Medical notes or proof of negative tests should not be required for staff or students to return to school.

What will happen to a student who is ill at school?

Students who start to show symptoms of COVID-19 must be promptly separated from others, ideally into a designated room, while waiting to be picked up by a parent or guardian.

- Note: All siblings, or parents who may be staff members of an ill child, or children of an ill staff member, should also be sent home immediately.

What will happen if a student or staff test positive for COVID-19?

The health unit will manage individual cases and outbreaks of COVID-19 in school settings including providing direction on communications with staff, visitors, students and families.

- Management of an individual case or an outbreak in a school will be based on an individual risk assessment by SMDHU at the time, and informed by the Ministry of Health's COVID 19 Guidance: School Outbreak Management. Control measures could include:
 - Identification and exclusion (if applicable) of contacts
 - Dismissal of case's cohort (e.g. classroom, school bus, before/after program) or multiple cohorts as needed for various lengths of time
 - Recommendations for increasing environmental cleaning and further limiting of activities
 - Recommendations for testing of contacts (staff and students), including those with no symptoms
 - Enhanced surveillance recommendations
 - An outbreak in a school is defined as two or more lab-confirmed COVID-19 cases in students and/or staff (or other visitors) with an epidemiological link, within a 14-day period, where at least one case could have reasonably acquired their infection* in the school (including transportation and before/after school care). * Important to note that there needs to be an epi link so that just because we have one Grade 1 student and one Grade 5 student with COVID, it is not necessarily an outbreak unless they had close contact with each other.
- *Examples of reasonably having acquired infection in school include:
- No obvious source of infection outside of the school setting; OR
 - Known exposure in the school setting

2. Non-medical masks for students and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for staff/visitors.

- A number of school boards in the province (including some in Simcoe Muskoka) have chosen to require the use of masks, differing from Ministry of Education direction (mandatory for Grades 4 and above, and encouraged for Kindergarten to Grade 3). Dr. Gardner has gone on public record supporting the provincial direction regarding mask use in schools.
- The Ministry of Education has directed that all staff in a school are required to wear medical masks while inside the school, including in hallways. SMDHU also recommends the wearing of eye protection (e.g. face shield) in addition to medical masks; it provides fuller protection for staff, and lessens the likelihood of a staff member needing to be off work in the event of exposure to a COVID-19 case. Reasonable exceptions to the requirement to wear masks will be put in place by administrators.
- The use of masks is not required outdoors for adults or students, and this is an important opportunity for periodic mask breaks. *During mask breaks, it is important for adults and older children/youth to maintain physical distancing, and for younger children to be encouraged to do so.*

3. Important time for compassion and support

- It is important to acknowledge that this is a new phase that we are entering into as our children, teachers and school staff have not been at school since March break. There are many protocols and practices in place to protect the school community and everyone is doing their best every day to prevent the spread of COVID-19. It's important that we are patient and kind to school and community members. Anxiety is high, many are overwhelmed and worried and that's to be expected. Information is changing and being updated regularly as school grows closer. It is likely that there will be cases of COVID-19 in our schools. Parents will be notified if there are risks for their children. It is important we do not let our fears divide us or treat others unfairly. It's a time to support each other and to help, the health unit has [information for parents and administrators on our website](#), links to school boards, and we will continue to update questions and answers on our website about the return to school to help keep you informed.

Local Media (August 27 – September 1, 2020)

- Randy Boyagoda: What my 7-year-old daughter taught me about freedom, imagination and writing during the pandemic ([article](#))
- Local non-profits struggling amid shifting pandemic landscape ([article](#))
- Catholic board delays school start date ([article](#))
- Small Bracebridge protest calls out province's return-to-school plan ([article](#))
- Staff member at the Pines in Bracebridge tests positive for COVID-19 ([article](#))
- 'Nothing flu-like about it': Huntsville COVID-19 patient calls for action ([article](#))
- How to help your child with the back to school transition ([article](#))

Provincial Updates since the August 26th Partner Update

The Ontario government:

The Province of Ontario:

- Released Premier Ford's remarks for: [August 28](#), [August 31](#)
- Released the following update on COVID-19 [August 31](#)
- Released new directives enable day trip and overnight absences for long-term care home residents ([news release](#))
- Released a letter to Ontario's parents from the Minister of Education ([English](#), [French](#))

Other Provincial News:

- Slapping down farmers' objections, court restores public health order protecting exceptionally vulnerable migrant workers ([article](#))
- Ottawa Public Health released many multilingual resources including: [mask videos](#), [staying safe videos](#), [wearing a mask factsheets](#) and [mental health videos](#). They have also collated many more [multilingual resources from other sources](#).
- Teachers' unions file labour complaint over Ontario's school reopening plan ([article](#))
- International student numbers down sharply in GTA ([article](#))
- Ontario universities to teach COVID-19 related courses this fall ([article](#))
- Elders on Facetime, virtual feast help First Nations students during pandemic ([article](#))
- Sunnybrook Hospital declares COVID-19 outbreak ([article](#))
- Ontario researchers make strides in predicting severity of coronavirus in patients ([article](#))

National Updates since the August 26th Partner Update

The Government of Canada:

- Announced travel restrictions to Canada remain in place for September long weekend ([news release](#))
- Announced greater flexibility and extension of Canada Emergency Business Account ([news release](#))
- Released the following statements from the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada: [August 31](#), [August 30](#), [August 29](#)

Other National News:

- Canada's bank regulator rolls back initiatives that eased mortgage payments ([article](#))
- Ottawa to extend business-loan programs, but not commercial rent relief ([article](#))
- Canada secures two new deals for possible COVID-19 vaccines ([article](#))
- Canada's active COVID-19 case number is rising shortly before most schools reopen ([article](#))
- 81 Quebec City students in isolation after COVID-19 cases ([article](#))
- CRA's handling of COVID-19 benefit cyberattacks 'reprehensible,' alleges proposed class-action lawsuit ([article](#))
- COVID-19 health measures exacerbated opioid crisis ([article](#))
- Northern Manitoba travel restrictions to return ([article](#))
- Canadian COVID-19 clinical trial scrapped after China wouldn't ship vaccine ([article](#))
- Access to housing is not just a political issue, COVID-19 has made it a matter of life and death ([article](#))
- Small business fund now open for COVID-19 relief ([article](#))
- Positive COVID-19 tests at two Calgary-area schools derail start of year for some ([article](#))
- Survey says COVID-19 is taking a financial toll on Canadians with disabilities ([article](#))

International Updates since the August 26th Partner Update

The World Health Organization (WHO):

- Issued updated [interim guidance on hotels and other accommodations](#) to help the sector protect the safety of staff and clients. See also the [Q&A's on Staying at hotels and accommodation establishments and COVID-19](#) and [Working in hotels and COVID-19](#).
- Released guidance for ship owners, seafarers, unions and associations and associated authorities for promoting [public health measures on cargo ships and fishing vessels](#). This complements guidance for employers to make sure they implement containment measures at [workplaces](#) and the related [Q&A](#).
- Released results from a [survey assessing the impact of COVID-19 on up to 25 essential health services](#) which showed disruptions in nearly all countries. Although the majority of service disruptions were partial, lower-income countries were more impacted than higher-income countries.
- Published an [overview of the structure, methodology, and assumptions used by the COVID-19 Essential Supplies Forecasting Tool](#) (ESFT). The ESFT is designed to help governments, partners, and other stakeholders to estimate potential requirements for essential supplies to respond to the current pandemic of COVID-19. See also the [ESFT Frequently Asked Questions](#).

SMDHU Resources

- SMDHU [COVID-19 HealthSTATS page](#) and the [COVID-19 Case Explorer](#).
- [SMDHU Vulnerable Populations for COVID-19 Response Interactive Map](#) highlights vulnerable populations in Simcoe Muskoka.
- Current COVID-19 information is available on our [website](#). We are always keeping our website up to date, the following are:

NEW - [Information et ressources en français/French information and resources](#)

- SMDHU Health Connection responds to calls and emails about COVID-19. Contact Health Connection at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 ext. 5829 or via [email](#).

Health Connection Hours:

- Monday-Friday - 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday - 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Credible Sources of Information

- [Ontario Ministry of Health](#)
- [Public Health Ontario](#)
- [Government of Canada](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)