

COVID-19 Update for Partners

October 28, 2020

[Key messages from Dr. Gardner](#)

[Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Case Status](#)

[Local Media Updates](#)

[Provincial, National and Global COVID-19 Case Status](#)

[Provincial, National and Global Updates](#)

[SMDHU Resources](#)

[Credible Sources of Information](#)

Key messages from Dr. Gardner, Medical Officer of Health

1. **Local COVID-19 Trends**

- There has been a pattern of exposure by some healthcare providers not wearing full PPE. As a cautionary note we are putting out communications for all healthcare providers to wear full PPE. Those working in personal service settings should also be wearing a mask and visor as they are exposed to many people through their work.
- In light of increased workplace exposures, it is important to remind employees to continue to implement public health measures. In particular, employees need to wear a face covering and/or maintain physical distance:
 - During breaks and at lunch,
 - When travelling in cars with others,
 - In change rooms.
- Increases in numbers of cases and high risk contacts since Thanksgiving continue to indicate we need to stick to immediate household contacts with upcoming holiday celebrations. 15% of cases can be attributed to 21 separate Thanksgiving gatherings which included immediate family members and extended family.

2. **Local Impact Survey COVID-19 now live on COVID-19 page**

We know the pandemic has been very difficult on all residents. Freedoms have been curtailed, we've been unable to gather with friends and family, many have had employment and pay cheques cut back, visits to healthcare providers have been delayed/postponed as has treatment they need.

We are asking all local residents 18+ years about their experiences during the pandemic. The survey is designed to gather this information from our local community members. We will use the data to identify where there are gaps or hardships that need to be addressed. This might mean adapting or improving services the health unit offers or advocating to political decision makers at different levels of government for changes that address the gaps.

We want to ensure we hear from a diverse range of community voices and hope our partners will help us spread the word and encourage people to complete the survey. No identifying information will be collected from participants. Here is a [link to the Local Impact COVID-19 survey](#) you can share.

3. What if someone in your household has symptoms?

There is confusion among families and employers as to what it means for other people in the household if someone has COVID-19 symptoms. All household members can continue to go to child care, school or work as long as they have not developed symptoms themselves and as long as the ill household member has not been diagnosed with COVID-19. All household members **NEED TO SELF-MONITOR for 14 days**. If they develop symptoms they should seek testing.

4. Ski and Snow Resort Guidance shared with local operators

We have provided guidance for Ski and Snow resorts to ensure public safety during the pandemic. The letter is on our website under [COVID Reopening and operating your business safely](#) and includes information and links to both provincial requirements and recommended safety precautions so people can get outdoors and be physically active safely.

5. Municipal restrictions on the use of premises by people out of jurisdiction

Some southern municipalities are considering prohibiting individuals from out of the municipality (specifically those to the south) from using their facilities at this time (given an influx of such for their services and venues that have been closed in their own municipality, and the increased risk of transmission from these areas).

I support the province's recommendation that people limit themselves to essential travel and thus not attend services (including municipal venues) outside of their community at this time, in order to reduce transmission between districts, similar to my advice during the first pandemic wave.

6. SMDHU young adults communication strategy

The second wave of COVID-19 in Canada began with younger people. We have now begun targeted advertising to increase the use of protective measures by young adults (ages 18-34 years) to stop the spread of COVID-19. Key messages are being conveyed using a variety of communications channels, including but not limited to radio, social media and digital media. This advertising will be enhanced with non-paid advertising (on our social media platforms) with similar key messages geared to the general population.

7. Congratulations extended to the Couchiching Ontario Health Team

This local health team was recognized with an Association of Family Health Teams Bright Lights Award in the category of Social Determinants of Health Award for its creation of a community-wide COVID-19 response strategy. Agency partners of the health team created a COVID-19 response working group that adopted a response strategy and working collaboratively, the partners' response resulted in zero cases of COVID-19 in congregate living settings in the Couchiching area.

8. COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard

The current overall status of the COVID-19 pandemic in our area as depicted by the [COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard \(on our HealthSTATS pages\)](#) is **YELLOW**

- Virus spread and containment: **yellow**
- Laboratory testing: **yellow**
- Health system capacity: **yellow**
- Public health system capacity: **red**

Previous media briefings can be found on the [SMDHU Facebook](#) page and [YouTube](#) channel.

Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Case Status *(As of Oct 28, 2020, 13:00)*

Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
1,326	160	1,111	49

Highlights:

- For the current week beginning October 25, there have already been 95 new cases reported by the health unit. There were 111 new cases reported in the previous week, which was the highest number of cases reported in a single week since the start of the pandemic. There have been more than 400 new cases reported in October, which is more than double what was reported in September. The previous high was in April where 221 cases were reported.
- Since the last update there have been 119 people who have become infected with COVID-19 and two people have died.
- In the last day there have been 22 new cases, no new deaths and 22 recoveries reported.
- There are currently six people hospitalized.
- There are currently six ongoing outbreaks in Simcoe Muskoka, three in workplaces, and one each in long-term care, retirement homes and congregating settings.
- Young adults between the ages of 18 and 34 years have accounted for the highest proportion of COVID-19 cases in Simcoe Muskoka since June; however, now approximately half of all active cases are among those 45 years of age and older.
- Of cases that are currently active
 - 32.5% are in people under 35 years of age (decrease from 35% from the previous week);
 - 40% are in people 35 to 64 years of age (increase from 35% from the previous week); and
 - 27% are in 65 years of age and older (a slight decrease from 30% from the previous week).

SMDHU [COVID-19 HealthSTATS page](#) and the [COVID-19 Case Explorer](#)

Local Media Updates *(October 22-28, 2020)*

- Fatigue from prolonged pandemic 'is hard on people,' Gardner says ([article](#))
- False or remote positives test triggers brief COVID outbreak at Roberta Place ([article](#))
- On Remembrance Day, city urges people to pay their respects from home ([article](#))
- Remembrance Day ceremony cancelled at OSMH due to COVID ([article](#))
- How has COVID-19 impacted you? Health unit wants to know ([article](#))
- Local parent 'at wit's end' over remote learning options ([article](#))
- Despite dozens of local schools impacted by COVID-19, Health unit isn't seeing spread in the classroom ([article](#))
- Queen's Park funding 766 new hospital beds, unknown yet if RVH will benefit ([article](#))
- Drive-through flu clinics start November 2 in South Georgian Bay ([article](#))
- Patios in November get green light from Barrie City Council ([article](#))
- County of Simcoe getting millions of dollars from the Province to protect region's most vulnerable ([article](#))
- Pandemic driving remote working and transition to digital services in the town of Innisfil ([article](#))
- City applying for second phase of Safe ReStart funding ([article](#))
- Social isolation impacts care home residents in Barrie ([article](#))
- How Barrie's Youth Haven adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic ([article](#))
- Alliston families not scared to stray from Halloween traditions during pandemic ([article](#))
- Resident says Georgian Bay Seniors Lodge skirts COVID safety rules ([article](#))
- Are workers in danger if they're not told about COVID-19 in the workplace ([article](#))
- City, RVH, health unit, county and police join forces with 'landmark agreement' ([news release](#))

- Health unit offering catch-up vaccine clinic for Grade 8 students ([article](#))
- Gravenhurst YMCA plans to reopen in 2021 with financial support from the town ([article](#))
- Collingwood applying for second round of COVID relief funding ([article](#))

Provincial, National and Global COVID-19 Case Status			
Ontario (As of October 28, 2020, 10:30)			
Total cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
72,885	7,474	62,303	3,108
Highlights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the last week there have been over 6,000 people infected with COVID-19 and almost 50 people have died. • There are almost 1,200 more active cases today than there were on the same day last week. • In the last day there has been: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An increase of 834 confirmed cases (0.8% increase from previous day) ○ An increase of 773 resolved cases (11.9% increase from previous day) ○ An increase of 5 deaths (25% increase from previous day) • There are currently 312 people hospitalized, with 71 in ICU and 51 in ICU on a ventilator. • There are currently 153 ongoing outbreaks in health care facilities in Ontario, an increase of 10 (long-term care homes = 83, retirement homes = 51, hospitals = 19). • Highlights from the last reporting week (Oct. 11-17): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The weekly number of reported cases continued to increase, with 16 public health units reporting increases in their regions; ○ Although the 20-39 year old age group had the highest proportion of cases, cases in this group are dropping while cases are increasing in people 40-59 and 60-79 years of age, with those in the 40-59 year old age group seeing the largest increase in the proportion of cases; ○ 65.8% of cases contracted COVID-19 through a known case or outbreak; ○ There were 423 ongoing outbreaks in Ontario with workplaces, long-term care homes/retirement homes and other non-congregate settings representing almost 70% of all ongoing outbreaks in the province. <p>For more provincial data see: Province of Ontario COVID-19 case data and Public Health Ontario Data Tool, Public Health Ontario Daily Epidemiologic Summaries, Public Health Ontario Weekly Epidemiologic Summaries</p>			
Canada (As of Oct. 27, 2020 at 19:00 EDT)			
Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
222,887	26,422	186,464	10,001
Highlights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the last week, almost 20,000 people in Canada have contracted COVID-19 and over 200 people have died. • On October 27th: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ there were 2,674 new cases reported in QC (963), ON (827), AB (422), BC (217), MB (183), SK (58), NB (3) and NS (1) ○ 28 new deaths were reported in QC (19), ON (4), MB (3), and AB (2) ○ The total percent positivity rate is 2.2% with over 250,000 people tested per million. <p>The following are national highlights from the last published reporting week of Oct. 11-17:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lowest weekly percent increase in cases observed since mid-August occurred with an average of 2,248 new daily cases reported, representing a 2% increase in comparison to the previous week. 			

- The average number of daily reported deaths (20) was slightly lower than the average from the previous week (21).
- 56% of reported cases were exposed to COVID-19 by an unknown source.
- The daily number of reported hospitalizations and people with COVID-19 in ICU steadily increasing since mid-September, with an increase of 20% and 28% respectively over the last reporting week.
- The incidence rate of those under 20 years of age continues to increase (37.0 per 100 000 from 31.0 per 100 000 in the previous week).
- Of the 292 active outbreaks during this reporting week, the largest proportion were reported in long-term care/retirement residences (30%), schools and childcare centres (27%) and food/drink/retail settings (14%)
- Case rates for those 20 to 39 years of age have continued increasing at a higher rate since late August and have remained consistently higher than all the other age groups throughout this time.
- The average number of people tested daily decreased from the previous week, however, the average percent positivity has increased to 3.1% of people tested compared to 2.6% of people tested in the previous week. Quebec reported the highest percent positivity nationally at 8.6%.
- According to forecasting, between 229,500 to 239,150 cumulative cases and 9,990 to 10,100 cumulative deaths are expected by November 1, 2020.

National [daily epidemiology updates](#); [National weekly epidemiology report](#)

Global (As of October 28, 2020 at 9:41 CET)	
Confirmed Cases	Confirmed Deaths
43,540,739	1,160,650

- Yesterday, 359,108 new cases of COVID-19 and 4,660 new COVID-19 related deaths were reported around the world, with the highest number of new cases in USA, India, France, UK and Switzerland and the highest number of deaths in India, USA, Argentina, Iran and Russia.
- In the last week:
 - The incidence of new COVID-19 cases continues to accelerate with the shortest. intervals of exponential increase since the start of the pandemic, while the incidence of new deaths remains relatively stable.
 - The highest number of people have contracted COVID-19 since the pandemic began, with over 3 million cases reported.
 - Over 40,000 people have died of COVID-19.
 - The highest number of daily cases reported occurred Oct. 24 with over 480,000 cases occurring in one day.
 - USA, India, France, Brazil, and the UK had the most new cases and USA, India, Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina had the most new deaths.
 - For the second week in a row, the European Region accounts for the greatest proportion of reported new cases (over 1.3 million), accounting for nearly half of all cases globally and reflecting a 33% increase in Region cases compared to the previous week.
 - Increases in cases were also reported in the Region of the Americas, Eastern-Mediterranean and African regions.
 - Declines in cases and deaths continued to be reported in the South-East Asia and Western Pacific region.
- The Region of the Americas, USA, and Brazil continue to report the highest number of new cases and deaths.
- In the USA the number of new weekly cases has continued to rise since September 7, 2020, with cases now approaching the previous epidemic peak experienced by the country in July.

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

Weekly Epidemiological Update ([October 27](#)); [Previous Situation Reports](#)

Provincial, National and Global Updates

Provincial Updates (since Oct. 21, 2020 Partner Update)

The Ontario government:

- Adding over 760 hospital beds across the province ([news release](#))
- Takes steps to ensure surplus food does not go to waste ([news release](#))

Other Provincial News:

- Ontario dog first in Canada to test positive for COVID-19 but researchers says there are likely more ([article](#))
- Unions call on province to create more full-time nursing jobs in long-term care ([article](#))
- Ontario's daily COVID case count jumps above 1,000 for the first time ([article](#))
- COVID-19: Break from exams offers chance to change the way we test ([article](#))
- Ontario hits highest seven-day average of COVID-19 cases since pandemic began ([article](#))
- Halton, Durham regions not moving into modified Stage 2 as of now ([article](#))
- Ontario ordered enough flu shots for a third of the population ([article](#))
- Changes in the air as pandemic's 2nd wave takes hold ([article](#))
- Hospitals, long-term care homes have little room for second-wave surge, inquiry hears ([article](#))
- School re-openings have avoided 'catastrophe,' says Ontario doctor ([article](#))

National Updates (since Oct. 21, 2020 Partner Update)

The Government of Canada:

- Remarks from Chief Public Officer/Deputy Chief Public Health Officer of Canada: [October 27, 2020](#), [October 26, 2020](#), [October 25, 2020](#), [October 24, 2020](#), [October 23, 2020](#), [October 22, 2020](#), [October 21, 2020](#)
- Invests in regenerative medicine, genomics research to support Canadians' health ([news release](#))
- Announces funding to advance the development of Canadian COVID-19 vaccine technologies ([news release](#))
- Plans new COVID-19 pilot for international travelers ([news release](#))
- Releases COVID-19 update for Indigenous Peoples and communities ([news release](#))

Other National News:

- Coronavirus: What's happening in Canada and around the world on Wednesday ([article](#))
- Trudeau says pandemic 'sucks' as COVID-19 compliance slips and cases spike ([article](#))
- Canada's top doctor calls for 'structural change' to address COVID-19 inequities ([article](#))
- Feds launch new ad campaign reminding Canadians of COVID-19 basics ([article](#))
- Is more testing behind the record numbers of COVID-19 cases in Canada? Your testing questions answered ([article](#))
- COVID-19 has exposed the need for better supports for families, parents ([article](#))
- Feds begin consultations to improve conditions for foreign workers ([video](#))
- Teachers say return to school this fall has left them with overwhelming stress and a never-ending workload ([article](#))
- Feds urged to act as data suggests COVID-19 making it hard for veterans to get help ([article](#))
- Thanksgiving, fewer restrictions contributing to Canada's surge in COVID-19 cases ([article](#))
- COVID-19: When did you last work? 1.3M jobless Canadians have passed six month mark ([article](#))
- COVID-19 cases spike, Canada's top doctor fears an increase in hospitalizations and deaths ([article](#))
- Why lockdowns alone won't save us from the pandemic ([article](#))
- This Instagram account helps people process grief after loved ones die of COVID-19 ([article](#))

- First shipment of 100,000 rapid COVID-19 tests arrived in Canada ([article](#))
- Trudeau announces plan to purchase 76 million doses of Canadian-made COVID-19 vaccine ([article](#))
- Canada: Study says mothers are taking on ‘shocking’ number of hours caring for children during COVID-19 ([article](#))
- Why deliberately infecting healthy young volunteers with COVID-19 virus can be done ethically ([article](#))
- Canada breaks record for number of COVID-19 cases in a single day ([article](#))
- Large class sizes pose bigger problems during the coronavirus pandemic, prof says ([article](#))
- Tam cites evolving science as reason for inconsistent public-health messaging ([article](#))

International Updates (since Oct. 21, 2020 Partner Update)

The World Health Organization (WHO):

- Director-General communicated during the [Oct. 23 press briefing](#) that, “We are at a critical juncture in this pandemic, particularly in the northern hemisphere. The next few months are going to be very tough and some countries are on a dangerous track. We urge leaders to take immediate action, to prevent further unnecessary deaths, essential health services from collapsing and schools shutting again.”
- As part of the [Global Media and Information Literacy Week](#) “Resisting Disinformation: Media and Information Literacy for everyone”, WHO has joined with UNESCO and the Wikimedia Foundation to expand the public’s access to the latest and most reliable information about COVID-19.
- Launched a new book “[Health: A Political Choice – Act Now, Together](#)” as part of the World Health Summit. The book calls on world leaders and politicians to unite in their response to the COVID-19 pandemic and other threats to health and the global economy

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](#). Updates have been made to:
 - [Main COVID page](#)
 - **New** expander bar [COVID-19 Impact Study](#)
 - **Updated FAQ - Wearing masks or face coverings within enclosed public spaces**
 - [Assessment Centres and Testing](#)
 - **Revised** information about [Barrie](#) - The assessment centre at 490 Huronia Road now has on-line booking as well as accommodating walk-ins.
 - [Reopening and Operating Your Business Safely:](#)
 - **New Expander Bar – Ski and Snow Resort Facilities**
- 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](#)