

## COVID-19 Update for Partners

December 3, 2020

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### Key messages from Dr. Gardner, Medical Officer of Health

Although a media briefing was not held this week the following are current key messages from Dr. Gardner:

#### 1. **Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 transmission continues to grow**

Local data indicates that the transmission of COVID-19 continues to grow within Simcoe Muskoka, with the number of weekly COVID-19 cases reported in the last week at the highest levels to date. Between Nov 22 – Nov 28, 195 new COVID-19 cases were reported to Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU), representing a rate of 32.8 cases/100,000 per week. There have already been 159 new COVID-19 cases reported by SMDHU for the current week, beginning November 29. As case numbers continue to rise, SMDHU will monitor this and other indicators as a result of the potential for our region being placed by the province into the Red/Control (stringent measures) category. One of the thresholds the province considers to shift into stricter controls is exceeding a rate of 40 cases/100,000 people per week. Simcoe Muskoka is approaching this threshold.

#### 2. **Updated letter of instruction to businesses and organizations**

An updated [letter of instruction to businesses and organizations](#), issued yesterday, is providing revised information and clarification for businesses and organizations expected to employ additional precautions to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in work settings. The updated letter, which replaces the original letter released on November 26, is a result of feedback received from various businesses and organizations.

The businesses and organizations listed below will be exempt from the letter of instruction as they are already following provincially mandated sector-specific legislation, directives and guidelines:

- A licensed child care program that is in compliance with guidance issued by the Ministry of Education.

- Health care providers and health care entities as defined in Section 77.7 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act, 1990, who are subject to the Chief Medical Officer of Health's Directives issued thereunder.
- Personal care service providers as described in and regulated by the O. Reg. 364/20.
- Schools and school boards licensed under the Education Act, 1990.
- Schools and Private schools within the meaning of the Education Act, that are operated in accordance with a return to school direction issued by the Ministry of Education and approved by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Details were also added to the updated letter that expand on expectations around active screening of employees; physical distancing expectations and ramifications for close contacts of an employee diagnosed with COVID-19 if precautions have not been followed, and the use of physical barriers in the workplace for infection prevention and control.

The requirement to investigate unplanned absences by workers for a risk of COVID-19 exposure has been removed, and replaced with greater clarity around expectations to exclude workers whose active screening indicates COVID-19 symptoms or close contact.

The updated letter of instruction outlines 15 measures that businesses and organizations are required to comply with as set out in the Regulations under the Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020. Most of these measures are in keeping with workplace safety legislation that is already in place, and should not be new to employers.

### 3. New local COVID-19 sociodemographic data

The Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 HealthSTATS page now includes a revised and expanded section on [COVID-19 cases by sociodemographic characteristics](#), including distribution of cases by visible minority status and household income.

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

## Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Case Status (As of Dec. 2, 2020, 13:00)

Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
2,178	251	1,864	52
<b>Highlights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 733 cases were reported to SMDHU in the month of November. This is a 45% increase from the total number of cases reported in October (n=505).</li> <li>• In the last day an additional 30 new cases and 45 recoveries have been reported.</li> <li>• There have been 159 new cases reported for the current week beginning November 29.</li> <li>• From November 22 to 28, the increasing trend of new cases continued with 195 COVID-19 cases reported to SMDHU, compared to 184 the previous week.</li> <li>• Since the last update there have been 224 new cases, 174 recoveries and no additional deaths.</li> <li>• Of the 251 active cases, increases were seen in adults aged 18-34 years representing 31.5% of all active cases and adults aged 45-64 who now account for 28% of all active cases.</li> <li>• Among those under the age of 35 years, more cases occur among males whereas among cases 45 years of age and older more are female.</li> <li>• There are currently 13 people hospitalized in Simcoe Muskoka.</li> </ul>			

- There are currently 15 ongoing outbreaks in Simcoe Muskoka. Ongoing outbreaks include four each in educational settings and congregate settings, and three each in workplaces and community settings and one in a long-term care home.
- Local data show that unlike other areas in Ontario, those with higher income and those living in areas with less material deprivation (i.e. moderately and well-resourced areas) are more likely to be a COVID-19 case.

SMDHU [COVID-19 HealthSTATS page](#) , [COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard](#)

## Local Media Updates *(Since Nov. 25, 2020 Partner Update)*

- Head health official reminding bosses to actively screen employees at the start of the workday ([article](#))
- Gardner clarifies expectations, exemptions for businesses to reduce COVID transmission ([article](#))
- Schools in Barrie, Alliston and Bradford reporting new COVID cases today ([article](#))
- Grade 8 students can now catch up on missed vaccines ([article](#))
- Huntsville plans winter wonderland to boost business ([article](#))
- 'I want to do what I can': Giving Barrie's Black community support during COVID ([article](#))
- 'Never a point we weren't going': Collingwood snowbirds still head south ([article](#))
- Barrie ends drive-thru COVID-19 testing ([article](#))
- The Barrie Food Bank just wants to say thanks ([article](#))
- 'Our numbers have tripled': How many flu shot doses have been distributed throughout Simcoe-Muskoka this fall ([article](#))
- New COVID-19 Assessment Centre will also handle cold and flu ([article](#))
- Maxing out at 8 passengers: Navigating COVID-19 on Bracebridge transit ([article](#))
- Some local snowbirds take flight to Florida while others stay put ([article](#))
- Ten new COVID cases reported at Simcoe County schools since Friday ([article](#))
- 'We are at the point of no return'; area business owner share impact of relief funding ([article](#))
- Barrie residents account for half of today's new COVID cases in the county ([article](#))
- Substantial increase in workplace COVID-19 transmission in Simcoe-Muskoka ([article](#))
- SMH returns to Phase 1 visitor policy due to increasing COVID-19 cases ([article](#))
- Snow days? Local school boards say no way! ([article](#))
- Deadly outbreak at Simcoe Manor declared over by health unit ([article](#))
- COVID case confirmed at public school board's administration centre ([article](#))
- Barrie 'AAA' organization says two hockey teams affected by eight positive COVID tests ([article](#))

## Provincial, National and Global COVID-19 Case Status

Ontario (As of December 2, 2020, 10:30)			
Total cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
119,922	14,526	101,698	3,698
<b>Highlights:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since the last update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Over 12,000 more people have been infected with COVID-19, over 10,000 people have recovered and almost 150 people have died.</li> <li>○ The number of hospitalizations and ICU admissions have increased, while the number of COVID-19 patients on a ventilator remains the same.</li> <li>○ There are almost 1,750 additional active cases compared to the same day last week.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• In the last day there has been:</li> </ul>			

- an increase of 1,723 new cases;
- an increase of 1,686 resolved cases; and
- an increase of 35 deaths.
- The current effective reproductive number ( $R_e$ ) is 0.98.
- Almost 50% of active cases are in people under 40 years of age (12.1% in children and young adults under 20 years of age, 21% in young adults 20-29 years of age, and 15.5% in adults aged 30-39).
- The source of infection for the majority of cases in the last week is close contact with a known case and community spread.
- There are currently 755 active outbreaks occurring in Ontario, with workplaces (228), health care settings (213), and education settings (169) reporting the highest number of outbreaks.
- Ontario health units experiencing the highest % change from the previous week are:
  - Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit (+152.2%)
  - Hastings Prince Edward Public Health (+131.2%)
  - Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington Public Health (+129.8%)
  - Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District (+91.3%)
  - Huron Perth Public Health (70.7%)
- Almost 45,000 tests were completed yesterday with the current percent positive at 4.7%

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](#)

<b>Canada</b> (As of Dec. 2, 2020 at 19:00 EDT)			
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>Active Cases</b>	<b>Recovered</b>	<b>Deaths</b>
389,775	67,564	309,886	12,325

#### **Highlights:**

- In the last week, over 41,000 people in Canada have tested positive for COVID-19 and almost 600 people have died as a result of COVID-19.
- There are 9,000 more active cases in Canada, compared to one week ago.
- On December 2, Canada reported 6,307 new cases and 114 new deaths:
  - new cases were reported in ON (1,707), AB (1,307), QC (1,177), BC (656) MB (282), SK (181), NS (10), NB (7), NFLD (1), and Nunavut (1); and
  - new deaths were reported in QC (28), BC (16), MB (16), AB (10), ON (7), and SK (4).
- The following are national highlights from the last published reporting week of Nov. 15-21:
  - All provinces and territories with the exception of PEI and Northwest territories reported new cases.
  - There was an 8% increase in the number of new cases over the previous week with a daily average of 4,928 new cases.
  - There was a 28% increase in deaths with 515 deaths reported, with a daily average of 74 deaths reported daily.
  - Similar to the previous week, the highest proportions of cases by age group were observed in the 20-29 year age group followed by those 0-19 years of age (19% and 18% respectively).
  - The age-specific incidence rate increased among all adults 50 years and older with those 80 years and older representing the highest age specific incidence rate of any age groups and the largest increase in incidence rate compared to the previous week.
  - 764 of weekly cases were hospitalized and 426 cases were admitted to ICU, representing a 15% and 24% increase respectively for hospitalizations and ICU admissions from the

previous week. Adults aged 60 -79 years of age and older accounting for the highest proportion of hospitalizations and admissions to ICU.

- According to forecasting, between 402,300 to 414,600 cumulative reported cases and 12,490 to 12,760 cumulative deaths are expected by 6 December.

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

<b>Global</b> (As of December 3, 2020 at 10:13 CET)	
<b>Confirmed Cases</b>	<b>Deaths</b>
63,719,213	1,482,084
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On December 2, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported an additional 582,347 people had a confirmed new case of COVID-19 and 12,682 people died of COVID-19.</li> <li>• Those countries with the most new cases in the past day were the United States, Brazil, India, Russia, and Italy and countries with the most new deaths were the United States, Mexico, Italy, France, and Brazil.</li> <li>• Global weekly case incidence remains high with almost 4 million new cases in the last week and weekly deaths continued to rise with over 70,000 new deaths reported.</li> <li>• In the past week:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The United States, India, Brazil, Russia, and Italy had the highest number of cases and the United States, Italy, Mexico, Brazil, and Russia had the highest number of deaths.</li> <li>○ The Region of the Americas was the largest contributor for new weekly cases last week reporting over 1.6 million case, a 3% increase from the previous week. The United States, Brazil, Mexico, Colombia and Argentina accounted for 93% of all new cases in the region</li> <li>○ The Region of the Americas also reported 22,000 new deaths, representing a 2% increase from the previous week.</li> <li>○ The European Region reported a continued decrease in new weekly cases, while deaths rates have continued to increase and accounted for approximately half of the new global deaths in the past week.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<a href="#">WHO COVID-19 Disease Dashboard</a> ; <a href="#">Previous Situation Reports</a>	

## Provincial, National and Global Updates *(Since Nov. 25, 2020 Partner Update)*

### Provincial Updates

From the Ontario government:

- Ontario expanding innovative home and community care services ([news release](#))
- Ontario providing additional financial support for young learners ([news release](#))
- Ontario collaborates with industry experts to plan vaccine rollout ([news release](#))
- Ontario supports local manufacturers producing masks for adults and children ([news release](#))
- Ontario providing additional financial support for young learners ([news release](#))
- Ontario supports management agreements at two long-term care homes ([news release](#))
- Ontario supporting municipalities as they manage financial pressures from COVID-19 ([news release](#))
- Service Ontario offering appointment booking to help alleviate wait times ([news release](#))
- Ontario calls on Ottawa for certainty as COVID-19 vaccine preparation continues ([news release](#))
- Ontario cancelling road tests for region in Grey (Lockdown) Level ([news release](#))
- Ontario providing additional funding to enhance safety and protection in schools ([news release](#))
- Ontario modernizing application process for social assistance ([news release](#))

Other Provincial News:

- Ontario is at a breaking point ([article](#))

- Retailers ask Ontario government to lift restrictions ([article](#))
- How COVID-19 has changed the way families think about long-term care ([article](#))
- Tougher COVID restrictions enforced for five Ontario regions while outbreak occurs at Toronto school ([article](#))
- Ontario reports 1,746 new COVID-19 cases, 7-day average climbs to new high ([article](#))
- Ontario reports record-high 1,855 new COVID-19 cases ([article](#))
- New provincial COVID-19 modelling indicates we could be turning a corner but remain in a “precarious situation” ([article](#))
- Ontario auditor stands by report on COVID response as Ford government pushes back ([article](#))
- Stick to your own homes for Christmas, Doug Ford tells Ontario residents ([article](#))

### ***National Updates***

#### The Government of Canada:

- Remarks from Chief Public Officer/Deputy Chief Public Health Officer of Canada: [November 29, 2020](#) [November 28, 2020](#) [November 27, 2020](#), [November 26, 2020](#),
- Government of Canada invests to help youth facing barriers to employment ([news release](#))
- Government of Canada COVID-19 [Update](#) for Indigenous Peoples and communities
- Government of Canada announces extension of travel restrictions ([news release](#))
- Prime Minister Justin Trudeau speaks with premiers on continued efforts to address the impacts of COVID-19 ([readout](#))
- Government of Canada announces funding for new COVID-19 safe voluntary isolation centre in Peel, Ontario ([news release](#))

#### Other National News:

- Coronavirus: What’s happening in Canada and around the world on Wednesday ([article](#))
- Most Canadians believe government is ‘making it up as they go’ ([article](#))
- Manitoba top doctor says COVID-19 cases too high for health care systems to maintain ([article](#))
- More than 10,000 people in BC under active monitoring after COVID-19 exposures ([article](#))
- Canada ‘not at the back of the line’ for COVID-19 vaccine, Moderna chairman says ([article](#))
- COVID-19 cases in Canada remain on troubling course Tam says ([article](#))
- Running outside this winter? Experts share hot tips for cool temps ([article](#))
- Universities extend winter break as students deal with online learning burnout ([video](#))
- Using wastewater testing to identify looming COVID-19 outbreaks in nursing homes ([video](#))
- Dangers of sedentary COVID-19 lockdown: Inactivity can take toll on health in just two weeks ([article](#))
- COVID-19 vaccine: A look at how provinces and territories are readying for rollout ([article](#))
- Beyond the numbers: Who is dying of COVID in Canada, and how? ([article](#))
- Most Canadians will have COVID vaccination by next fall, Trudeau says, putting focus on finish line ([article](#))
- Lockdowns mean more violence for women and children ([article](#))
- How do you live with pandemic fatigue ([article](#))
- Coronavirus: What’s happening in Canada and around the world on Friday ([article](#))
- Trudeau turns to the military to help with COVID-19 vaccine distribution ([article](#))
- Health Canada expecting COVID-19 vaccine approval by mid-December ([article](#))
- COVID-19: How universities can improve equity, access for online learners during a pandemic ([article](#))
- Survey of women’s shelters show abuse more severe during pandemic ([article](#))

## International Updates

The World Health Organization (WHO):

- Updated the draft [landscape of COVID-19 candidate vaccines](#), which shows that there are 49 candidate vaccines in clinical evaluation, 11 of which are at phase 3 evaluation.
- Released updated [Guidelines on Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour](#) emphasizing that everyone, of all ages and abilities, can be physically active and that every type of movement counts, especially when people may be homebound due to COVID-19.
- WHO published [a description of the systematic review process](#) it is conducting to synthesize available data on the large-scale impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is having on international travel and trade, particularly in the aviation sector.

Other International News:

- CDC shortens recommended quarantine for people exposed to COVID-19 ([article](#))

## SMDHU Resources

- SMDHU [COVID-19 HealthSTATS page](#)
- [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-19 page**
    - **Revised:** [Fact Sheet: You Are A Close Contact Of A Person Who Tested Positive For Covid-19 Operating your Business Safely](#)
    - **Updated:** [COVID-19 Guidance For Recreational Water Facilities - Orange Restrict Dec 2, 2020](#)
    - **New:** [COVID-19 Guidance For Recreational Water Facilities](#)
    - **Added:** Employers of Temporary Foreign Workers - [COVID-19 Guidance: On-Farm Outbreak Management](#) – version 1- September 21, 2020
    - **Added** French language signs under public signage and [Information Et Ressources En Français](#)
  - Business Self Screen Before Entry:**
    - Français [tout en couleur](#) / [noir et blanc](#) Updated December 1, 2020
  - Physical Distancing:**
    - Français [tout en couleur](#) / [noir et blanc](#) Updated December 1, 2020
  - Do's and Don'ts of Wearing a Face Covering:**
    - Français [tout en couleur](#) / [noir et blanc](#) Updated December 1, 2020
  - **REVISED:** [Letter of Instruction to Businesses and Organizations for Additional Public Health Measures – December 2, 2020](#) (replacing letter dated November 26, 2020)
  - **Updated:** [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance For Food Premises](#)
- Partners and Municipalities** - Events and gatherings
  - **Revised:** [Case and Contact Management](#)
  - **Updated:** [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance For Farmers' Markets](#)
  - **Updated:** [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance For Food Bank And Food Donation Centres](#)
- 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](#)