

COVID-19 Update for Partners

January 6, 2021

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Key messages from Dr. Gardner, Medical Officer of Health

Vaccine and immunization update

- The COVID-19 Immunization Clinic has been operational since December 22. The clinic is open 7-days a week by invitation only for those with appointments. The clinic is a partnership of the health unit, Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre and the City of Barrie.
- Initial appointments were offered to all long-term care staff. Last week, appointments were opened to all retirement homes (RH) for up to 40% of their staff and we have now opened up appointments for up to two designated essential caregivers of each long-term care/retirement home resident.
- The administration of immunizations for hospital staff (based on internal hospital prioritization) has also started.
- At this time, the Barrie clinic is the *fourth busiest immunization clinic in the province*, in terms of the number of doses administered.
- By Sunday, January 10, we expect over 5,200 hospital workers in Simcoe Muskoka will have received their first dose of the vaccine.
- Distribution and administration of the Moderna vaccine (approved by Health Canada Dec. 23, 2020) will be led by SMDHU. This vaccine is more easily transportable and will be transported to LTC & RH homes for residents who will be vaccinated where they live by facility staff. Administration of immunizations to residents will begin as soon as it is received.
- As of January 5, 3,109 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine had been administered to staff from hospital, long-term care, and retirement homes.

Trends in COVID-19 cases locally

- Incidence rate of COVID-19 in Simcoe Muskoka has reached 60/100,000 population for the first time since the start of the pandemic, 16% higher than the previous week.
- Several communities within Simcoe County have rates above 100/100,000: Midland, New Tecumseh, Bradford-West Gwillimbury, and Penetanguishene.
- In Muskoka, all communities experienced their highest number of cases in December since the beginning of the pandemic.

- At this time we are experiencing a level of growth of 1.6%. If this rate of growth continues we will see 85 cases per day or about 600 per week by the end of January. We await the impact of holiday gatherings on this rate as we continue into January.

New strains of COVID-19

- A limited number of cases have been found in Ontario of the new strain of the COVID-19 virus from the United Kingdom that may be 70% more transmissible.
- Concerns over increased transmissibility of this new variant means I cannot stress enough the importance of following all public health precautions to reduce the risk:
 - Wear a mask
 - Physical distance
 - Have close contact with only those from your immediate household
 - Only go into public settings when necessary (e.g. groceries, medical appointments)
 - Wash hands/sanitize hands frequently
 - Monitor health for symptoms of COVID-19
 - Travel ONLY if absolutely necessary and quarantine for 14 days when you return to Canada.

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

Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Case Status (As of January 6, 2021 13:00)			
Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
3,973	1,251	2,631	70
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the last day there have been 87 new cases reported and 102 recovered cases. • Today there are 309 more active cases in Simcoe Muskoka than one week ago. • In the last week there have been 454 new cases, 135 recovered cases, and six additional deaths. • There are currently 24 people hospitalized in Simcoe Muskoka. • There are currently 21 ongoing outbreaks (6 in long-term care settings, 6 in retirement homes, 1 in hospital, 5 in congregate settings, 2 in educational settings, and 1 in a community setting). • There were 190 new COVID-19 tests per 10,000 population in Simcoe County and 124 tests per 10,000 population in Muskoka District for the most recent week. In comparison the provincial testing rate was 238 tests per 10,000 population. • The current percent positivity rate is 3.3% for Simcoe which is the highest it has been since April and 1% for Muskoka. • Over 30% of all active cases are among young adults 18-34 years. This age group has had the highest rate of infection since June and the rate for this age group was 74% higher in December when compared with November. <p>SMDHU COVID-19 HealthSTATS page and the COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard</p>			

Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Vaccine* Data (As of January 6, 2021 13:00)	
Total doses administered	Doses administered previous day
3,722	599
<p>* Vaccine administration data is for North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN area only (which does not include Bradford, Adjala Tosorontio, Alliston and New Tecumseth). Vaccinations in South Simcoe area are being administered by Southlake Regional Health Centre.</p>	

Local Media Updates *(Since Dec. 23, 2020 Partner Update)*

- Single mom's access to child care during lockdown depends on definition of 'essential worker' ([article](#))
- Local retailer calls out government after making lockdown purchase at Walmart she couldn't make in her own store ([article](#))
- COVID control measures cleave influenza rates... ([article](#))
- Simcoe Muskoka's vaccination clinic among the busiest in the province ([article](#))
- RVH has plan to immunize 1,200 people daily against COVID-19 ([article](#))
- 'Light at the end of the tunnel' for Muskoka but COVID-19 vigilance vital ([article](#))
- 'Into arms and out of the freezer,' Gardner says vaccine rush is on ([article](#))

Provincial, National and Global COVID-19 Case Status

Ontario (As of January 6, 2021, 10:30)			
Total cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
200,626	26,064	169,795	4,767

Highlights:

- In the last day there were:
 - 3,266 new cases and 3,005 resolved cases
 - 37 deaths
 - 51,045 tests completed (8.5% positive)
 - 10,350 doses of vaccine administered, with a total of 60,380 doses administered and 860 vaccinations completed
- In the last week there were:
 - Almost 22,000 new cases and almost 16,000 recoveries
 - Almost 300 deaths
- Today there are 5500 more active cases compared to the same day last week.

Since the last update:

- Almost 38,000 people have been infected with COVID-19, approximately 31,000 people have recovered and 538 people have died.
- Of those 26,064 active cases of COVID-19, adults aged 20-29 have the most active cases, followed by people 30-39 years of age and 50-59 years of age. Individuals under 40 years of age account for almost 50% of active infections.
- Positive tests were highest in children under 18 years of age and young adults 18 to 24 years of age.
- Areas with the highest number of active cases per 100,000 population: Windsor-Essex (433.89), Peel (359.98), Toronto (258.24), Hamilton (215.59) and York (216.77).
- Areas with the highest increase in cases per 100,000 population: Windsor-Essex (52.14), Niagara Region (42.87), Region of Waterloo (38.49), Peel (37.85), York Region (31.44).
- There are currently:
 - 1,463 people hospitalized (25% increase in one week, 50% increase in 2 weeks)
 - 361 people in ICU (12% increase in one week, 30% increase in 2 weeks)
 - 246 are on ventilators (20% increase in one week, 30% in 2 weeks).
- There are currently 428 ongoing outbreaks in health care settings.

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

Canada (As of January 5, 2021 at 19:00 EDT)			
Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
618,646	78,849	523,564	16,233
<p>Highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On January 5th, Canada reported a previous day increase of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7,222 new cases 159 deaths New daily cases were reported in every province: ON (3,128), QC (2,508), AB (843), BC (428) SK (153), MB (130), NB (27), NS (3), New deaths were reported in QC (62), ON (51), AB (26), BC (8), MB (7), and SK (5). In the last week there were over 53,000 new cases and over 850 additional deaths. Highlights from December 20-26, 2020: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of hospital beds occupied by COVID-19 patients increased from 2,426 to 2,715 beds. The number of ICU beds occupied by COVID-19 patients increased from 683 to 690 beds. The number of COVID-19 patients who were mechanically vented increased from 303 to 330 beds. Highlights from the last published epidemiological report (Dec. 13-19, 2020): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average number new cases reported daily increased 2% to 6,690 cases. The average number of daily deaths increased 5% from 110 to 115 deaths. Alberta reported the highest age-standardized incidence rate (192.7 cases per 100,000 population). Those aged 80+ years and 20-29 years of age continue to have the highest age specific incidence rates. According to forecasting, between 620,000 and 666,300 cumulative reported cases and 16,150 and 17,360 cumulative numbers of deaths are expected by January 8. <p>National daily epidemiology updates; National weekly epidemiology report</p>			
Global (As of January 6, 2021 at 9:26 am CET)			
Confirmed Cases		Confirmed Deaths	
84,780,171		1,853,525	
<p>In the last day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were over 500,000 new cases and over 8,000 deaths. The USA, UK, Russia, Brazil, and India had the most new cases and the USA, Germany, Mexico, Brazil, and Russia had the most new deaths. <p>In the past week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the third week in a row over 4 million new cases were reported globally and deaths surpassed 70,000, with over 4.3 million new cases and over 77,000 new deaths in the last week. The USA, UK, Brazil, Russia, and India, and the countries with the most new deaths were: USA, Brazil, Mexico, Germany, and the UK. <p>Highlights from Weekly Epidemiological Summary as of January 3, 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Region of the Americas accounted for 47% of all new cases and 42% of all new deaths globally in the past week. The European Region saw new cases and deaths remain high, accounting for 38% and 43% of global cases and deaths respectively. 			

- The South-East Asia and Eastern Mediterranean Regions saw new cases and deaths continue to decline.
- The African Region experienced the largest percentage increase globally in weekly reported case numbers for the fourth week in a row, with a further 13% increase in new cases and 28% increase in new deaths.
- The Western Pacific Region saw new cases remain comparable to the previous week, while new deaths rose by 10%.
- As of January 5, the virus variant initially detected in the UK had been detected in a small number of cases in 40 other countries/territories/areas in five of the six WHO regions, and the other variant initially detected in South Africa has been detected in six other countries/territories/areas.
 - Preliminary research suggests the variant detected in the UK is more easily transmitted but there is no change in disease severity or occurrence of reinfection.
 - Research continues to assess the transmissibility, severity, risk of reinfection and antibody response as well as potential impact on countermeasures, including diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines.

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

Provincial, National and Global Updates *(Since Dec. 23, 2020 Partner Update)*

Provincial Updates

The Ontario Government:

- Ontario launches innovative testing program at Pearson airport ([news release](#))
- Ontario supporting forestry jobs and worker safety ([news release](#))
- Ontario accelerates COVID-19 vaccinations for long-term care homes in priority regions ([news release](#))
- Ontario supporting home-based food businesses during COVID-19 ([news release](#))
- Ontario releases ethical framework for COVID-19 vaccine distribution ([news release](#))

Other Provincial News:

- Field hospitals and cancelled surgeries; health-care system under siege by rising COVID-19 cases ([article](#))
- Ontario hospital CEO who vacationed in Dominican Republic resigns... ([article](#))
- Ontario hospital network morgue reaches capacity, bodies moved to mobile unit ([article](#))

National Updates

From the Government of Canada:

- Pre-departure COVID-19 testing and negative results for air travelers coming to Canada ([backgrounder](#))
- Government of Canada COVID-19 update for Indigenous Peoples and communities ([news release](#))
- [Statement](#) on the variants of COVID-19 virus found in Ontario
- Statement from the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada on [Jan. 5, 2021, Dec. 31, 30, 24, 2020.](#)

Other National News:

- Coronavirus: What's happening in Canada and around the world on Wednesday ([article](#))
- Trudeau says he's 'frustrated' with the pace of vaccine rollout ([article](#))
- Vacationers will not be able to claim sickness benefit to quarantine: PM ([article](#))
- Why Canada's vaccine rollout is slower than other countries... ([article](#))
- New COVID-19 boarding rules for airlines will be tighter than expected... ([article](#))

- Long pandemic could add to extremism, decline in democracy... ([article](#))
- Global economy faces fears of a 'lost decade' as COVID-19 cases surge ([article](#))
- With COVID-19 cases soaring, Quebec government considers imposing curfew ([article](#))

Global Updates

The World Health Organization (WHO):

- Signed a [memorandum of understanding](#) with Red Cross/Red Crescent to cooperate on implementing the Emergency Medical Team Initiative and bring more synergies to emergency response between the two international organizations.
- Is accepting submissions for the ["Health for All" Film Festival](#), with submissions open until January 30, 2021. Categories for submissions include: universal health coverage, health emergencies, and better health and well-being.
- Observed the first [International Day of Epidemic Preparedness](#) with a message from the Director-General and a video about epidemic preparedness noting that the world remains dangerously unprepared for global pandemics.

WHO published:

- Additional ["Science in 5" video episodes](#) addressing topics from herd immunity to COVID-19 myths and science to how vaccines work.
- A year without precedent: WHO's COVID-19 response ([webpage](#))
- Draft landscape of COVID-19 candidate vaccines ([document](#)).
- Rational use of personal protective equipment for COVID-19 and considerations during severe shortages ([document](#)).
- Considerations for implementing a risk-based approach to international travel in the context of COVID-19 ([document](#)).
- Public health surveillance for COVID-19: interim guidance ([document](#)).
- WHO COVID-19 case definition ([document](#)).
- Therapeutics and COVID-19: living guideline ([document](#)).

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:
 - [Vaccine and Immunization](#)
 - [FAQ for the public](#)
 - [Moderna COVID-19 vaccine: What you should know](#)
 - [FAQ Before you get vaccinated](#)
- 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](#)