

COVID-19 Update for Partners

February 17, 2021

[Key messages from Dr. Gardner](#)

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

[Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Vaccine Data](#)

[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

Simcoe Muskoka is in RED – CONTROL level classification

- Even though the stay-at-home order has been lifted, our messaging has not changed. Staying home is still the best way to protect yourself and others. Simcoe Muskoka residents are strongly advised to:
 - Stay home as much as possible except for essential reasons;
 - Avoid social gatherings and limit close contacts to your household;
 - Screen daily for COVID-19 symptoms if attending school, childcare, or work;
 - Work from home if possible, and allow your employees to work from home if they can, and;
 - Avoid all travel except for essential reasons.
- We strongly encourage Simcoe Muskoka businesses to remain vigilant in your efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- Employers should continue to consult with the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) and their local municipality to ensure familiarity with the current laws and recommendations.
- Our [Operating Businesses Safely](#) webpage is continuously being updated to reflect current information and guidance regulations.

Revised Class Section 22 to regional Long-Term Care (LTC) Homes

- [Class Section 22 Order](#) has been updated requiring additional screening to be completed by essential visitors and staff at LTC homes upon entry to the facility.
- Additional screening required includes an assessment of whether any members of the same household are symptomatic with COVID-19 compatible signs and symptoms.
- If active screening identifies any current household members as symptomatic, the staff or essential visitor shall be excluded from the facility until the symptomatic household member(s) has provided proof of negative COVID-19 test results to the facility. If a test is not taken, staff or essential visitors cannot enter facility until 24 days have passed from the onset of symptoms in the household member.

Vaccine rollout update

- We continue to provide immunization to priority populations in Simcoe Muskoka in collaboration with local partners.
- The priority populations we have focused on vaccinating during Phase 1 include: residents, staff and essential caregivers in LTC, retirement homes, and First Nations elder care homes as well as healthcare staff in hospitals.
- First-dose immunizations for remaining retirement homes and the four First Nations communities in Simcoe Muskoka will be completed during the week of February 21.

Next priority populations for first-dose vaccination

- We are actively planning for mass immunization clinics in collaboration with local partners in anticipation of receiving more vaccine supply in March.
- Community vaccination clinics will be ready to open March 1 in six regional areas: Barrie, Orillia, North Simcoe, Muskoka, South Simcoe, and South Georgian Bay.
- Community clinics will begin by focusing on vaccinating individuals remaining in the Phase 1 priority populations outlined above, as well as those in the following groups:
 - Adults 80 years of age and older;
 - Staff, residents and caregivers in other congregate care settings for seniors (e.g., assisted living);
 - All Indigenous adults;
 - Adult recipients of chronic home care, and;
 - Healthcare workers in the high priority level, in accordance with the Ministry of Health's [Guidance on Health Care Worker Prioritization](#).

Guidance on the use of masks

- Our guidance on masking has not changed. We continue to align with the recommendations from Public Health Ontario and the Public Health Agency of Canada:
 - To be effective, masks should be tightly fitting over the nose and under the chin.
 - It is recommended that masks have three layers to provide good protection.
 - Always wear a mask in indoor public settings and anytime you cannot maintain a two metres distance from others.
- It is important to continue with all other precautions such as regular handwashing, avoiding public settings, monitoring symptoms and staying home if you are unwell, self-isolating and assessing symptoms to determine if you need to be tested.

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

Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Case Status <i>(As of February 17, 2021 14:00)</i>			
Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
6,028	650	5,156	180
<u>In the last day:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 34 people tested positive, 50 people recovered, and there was 1 new death.			
<u>Since the last Partner Update:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We have reported 218 new cases, 11 new deaths, and 300 recoveries.• So far this week there have been 80 new cases reported to the health unit.• There are 94 fewer active cases.			
<u>There are currently:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 25 people hospitalized.			

- 19 ongoing outbreaks (institutional settings: 11, workplace settings: 6, educational settings: 1, community settings: 1).
- The current percent positivity rate in Simcoe County is 2.0% and 0.3% in the District of Muskoka compared to the provincial percent positivity rate of 2.3%.
- The weekly percent positivity is currently highest among those 10-19 years of age, at 4.2% the week of February 7, down from 6.6% the week of January 31.
- To date, 160 local cases have tested positive for the UK B.1.1.7 variant (with 7 new cases since yesterday) and an additional 154 cases have screened positive (awaiting confirmatory testing).
- Because variants of concern are more contagious, we need to be even more vigilant in our measures against COVID-19. The measures are the same: physical distancing, mask wearing, daily screening of symptoms, testing and self-isolation when one has symptoms, and staying home at this time except for essential activities.

For more local data, see: SMDHU [COVID-19 HealthSTATS page](#) and the [COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard](#).

Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Vaccine* Data *(As of February 17, 2021 14:00)*

Total doses administered	Doses administered previous day
28,485	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,419 immunizations have been provided since the last Partner Update. • 2,942 (92%) LTC residents and 2,516 (69%) retirement home residents have received their first dose. • More than 12,000 individuals have received both of the required doses of the vaccine, mainly healthcare workers in local hospitals, LTC and retirement homes. 	
<small>* Vaccine administration data is for North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN area only (which does not include Bradford, Adjala-Tosorontio, and New Tecumseth). Vaccinations in South Simcoe area are being administered by Southlake Regional Health Centre.</small>	

Local Media Updates *(Since February 10, 2021 Partner Update)*

- Workshop to help employers support employee mental health during COVID ([article](#))
- County of Simcoe paramedics on frontlines of emergency response ([press release](#))
- Ingenuity overshadows pandemic at Collingwood Youth Centre ([article](#))
- How COVID-19 is shaping mental health in Barrie, Simcoe County ([article](#))
- Muskoka on alert as first probable COVID-19 variant of concern case detected ([article](#))
- Mental strain from Roberta Place causes PSW to recall 'the moment I fell apart' ([article](#))
- One week in: COVID-19 confirmed in two Simcoe County schools ([article](#))
- Grey Bruce proposes hockey rinks for mass vaccination hubs ([article](#))
- Almost \$1.4 million in funding to transform public spaces into COVID-safe places ([article](#))
- Local union official says March break delay is 'heartbreaking' ([article](#))
- Two staff test positive for COVID-19 at Bayshore HealthCare facility in Barrie ([article](#))
- Vaccine shortages 'scary for all of us,' says frustrated Orillia senior ([article](#))
- Lessons local health care providers can learn from the Roberta Place outbreak ([article](#))

Provincial, National and Global COVID-19 Case Status

Ontario (As of February 17, 2021, 10:30)

Total cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
288,583	10,985	270,869	6,729

As of today:

- There were 847 new cases, 1,456 resolved cases, and 10 deaths in the last day.
- There are a total of 338 confirmed cases of the UK variant, 6 cases of the South African variant, and 1 case of the Brazilian variant.
- A total of 719 people are hospitalized for COVID-19, 298 people are in intensive care units (ICU) and 211 people are on ventilators.
- There are 295 ongoing outbreaks in health care settings (156 in LTC, 92 in retirement homes, and 47 in hospitals).
- The current effective reproduction number is 0.83.

In the last week:

- There have been 7,017 new cases, 9,169 recoveries, and 133 deaths.
- There are 2,285 fewer active cases compared to the same day last week.
- The average number of weekly cases is 1,002.

Vaccines:

- A total of 489,484 vaccines doses have been administered to date, with 9,107 doses administered yesterday.
- 195,366 people in Ontario have been fully vaccinated.

Regional updates:

Areas with the highest number of active cases per 100,000 population:

- Peel (178.69), Toronto (139.00), York (85.50), and Brant (84.48).

Areas with the highest number of active cases:

- Toronto (3,797), Peel (2,469), York (949), Ottawa (485), and Halton (402).

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

Canada (As of February 16, 2021 at 19:00 EDT)

Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
831,577	35,669	774,511	21,397

Yesterday:

- Canada reported 2,388 new cases and 54 deaths.
- New cases were reported in all provinces and territories except PEI, YT, and NWT.
- Deaths were reported in BC, AB, SK, MB, ON, QC, and NB.

Since the last Partner Update:

- In the last week 20,780 people tested positive for COVID-19, 488 people died and 23,802 people recovered.
- There are 3,510 less people with active cases of COVID-19 in the country than there was a week ago.

Between February 2 and February 9:

- The number of COVID-19 patients hospitalized decreased from 2,808 to 2,304.

- The number of COVID-19 patients in ICU beds decreased from 751 to 657.
- The number of COVID-19 patients mechanically vented decreased from 437 to 373.

Weekly epidemiology update: January 31-February 6:

- New cases decreased by 20% compared to the previous week, with an average of 3,718 new cases every day.
- New deaths decreased by 21% compared to the previous week, with an average of 109 new deaths every day.
- Daily case rates are highest among those 20-29 and 30-39 years of age.
- The number of hospitalizations has decreased, while ICU admissions have remained stable since early January 2021.
- According to forecasting, between 821,500 to 868,910 cumulative reported cases and 21,350 to 22,200 deaths are expected by February 21, 2021.

Key vaccine updates: As of February 6, 2021

- 2.43% of the population has received at least one dose, including:
 - 11.57% of adults 80 or older who have received at least one dose;
 - 55.35% of health care workers targeted for priority vaccination who have received at least one dose, and;
 - 52.74% of adults living in group living settings for seniors who have received at least one dose.
- 0.46% of population have received both required doses of the vaccine.

For more national data, see: National [daily epidemiology updates](#) and National [weekly epidemiology report](#)

Global (As of February 17, 2021 at 11:03 CET)	
Confirmed Cases	Confirmed Deaths
109,068,745	2,409,011

In the last day:

- There were 304,596 new cases and 7,218 deaths.
- The U.S., Brazil, Russia, India, and Indonesia reported the most new cases and the U.S., Germany, Brazil, Russia, and Mexico reported the most deaths.

In the past week:

- Over 2.7 million new cases and 83,729 deaths were reported.
- The U.S., Brazil, France, Russia, and the U.K. reported the most new cases and the U.S., Mexico, Brazil, the U.K., and Germany reported the most new deaths.

Highlights from Weekly Epidemiological Summary as of February 14, 2021:

- The number of global new cases continues to fall. Last week, five WHO regions reported a 10% or greater decline in new cases, while one region, the Eastern Mediterranean, reported a 7% increase in new cases.
- The number of new deaths declined globally by 10% compared to the previous week. New deaths declined in all six WHO regions.

For more international data, see: [WHO COVID-19 Disease Dashboard](#) and [Weekly Epidemiological and Operational Updates](#)

Provincial Updates

The Ontario Government:

- Expands eligibility for Main Street Relief Grant ([news release](#))
- Improves farm safety for agri-food workers during COVID-19 ([news release](#))
- Continues unprecedented COVID-19 response during legislative sitting ([news release](#))
- Returns 27 public health regions to COVID-19 response framework ([news release](#))
- Deploys rapid tests to more essential workplaces and settings ([news release](#))
- Prioritizes health care workers for COVID-19 vaccination ([guidance document](#))
- Retailers show improvement in complying with public health guidelines ([news release](#))

Public Health Ontario published:

- Factors Affecting COVID-19 Communicability – What We Know So Far ([synthesis](#))
- COVID-19 B.1.351 (501Y.V2) Variant of Concern – What We Know So Far ([synthesis](#))
- COVID-19 P.1 Variant of Concern – What We Know So Far ([synthesis](#))
- Evidence on Public Health Measures for Rapid Control of Variants of Concern ([synthesis](#))
- SARS-CoV-2 Variants of Concern: Results of Point Prevalence Study ([summary report](#))
- Using COVID-19 Data to Inform Reopening Decision-making in the Context of Variants of Concern ([evidence brief](#))
- Trends of COVID-19 Incidence in Ontario ([surveillance report](#))
- COVID-19 in Ontario: January 31 to February 6, 2021 ([weekly epidemiological summary](#))
- Adverse Events Following Immunization for COVID-19 in Ontario ([summary report](#))

Other Provincial News:

- Health minister says Ontario not ready to release more detailed vaccine timeline ([article](#))
- Government working on ‘triggers’ for emergency brake as businesses reopen ([article](#))
- Ontario’s hospitals saw more patients, death during second wave of COVID-19 ([article](#))
- New test detects COVID-19 variants in Ontario ([article](#))
- Ford defends Ontario’s reopening plan as stay-at-home order lifts for 27 regions ([article](#))
- Web portal in the works for Ontario COVID-19 vaccine appointments ([article](#))
- Adults 80 and over among next priority groups for vaccination in Ontario ([article](#))
- Ontario governments partly at fault for ‘heartbreaking’ Roberta Place outbreak ([article](#))
- Ontario to increase use of rapid COVID-19 testing in schools and LTC homes ([article](#))
- Complaints grow of ‘disturbing’ queue jumping for vaccines in care homes ([article](#))
- Teachers, education unions criticize government’s move to delay March break ([article](#))
- Delays in COVID-19 vaccination exacted a toll on nursing home residents ([article](#))
- Finance minister projects deficits for the foreseeable future due to COVID-19 ([article](#))
- All Ontario’s local medical officers ask government to reinstate paid sick leave ([article](#))

National Updates

The Government of Canada:

- COVID-19 Update for Indigenous Peoples and communities ([news release](#))
- International Monetary Fund praises Canada’s COVID-19 economic response plan ([news release](#))
- Negotiates accelerated delivery schedule for Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine ([news release](#))
- Invests \$53 million to address COVID-19 virus variants of concern ([news release](#))
- Expands restrictions to international travel by land and air ([news release](#)). See also the [backgrounder](#) on additional testing and quarantine requirements for travel to Canada.
- To invest \$100 million to support women impacted by pandemic ([news release](#))

- Statements from the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada: [February 12](#), [February 13](#), [February 14](#), [February 15](#), [February 17](#)

Other National News:

- Politicians point fingers over lack of vaccine, experts say problem is long-term ([article](#))
- Racialized adults should be prioritized for COVID-19 vaccination ([article](#))
- Frustrated with government efforts, businesses push plan to avoid lockdowns ([article](#))
- Reports of domestic, intimate partner violence continue to rise during pandemic ([article](#))
- Pharmacies ready to help administer COVID-19 vaccines across Canada ([article](#))
- Pandemic has affected the mental health of 76% of Canadians, survey suggests ([article](#))
- The daunting math of goal to have all Canadians vaccinated by September ([article](#))
- New rules in effect for travelers entering Canada at land border crossings ([article](#))
- Patients receiving treatment abroad exempt from testing, quarantine rules ([article](#))
- Hotel quarantine measures for air travelers come into effect February 22 ([article](#))
- Increased cases of COVID variants spell potential third wave, Tam warns ([article](#))
- Government missed out on an offer of N95 masks at start of pandemic ([article](#))
- Canadian scientists' quest to develop vaccine that fights all types of coronavirus ([article](#))
- Provinces to boost COVID vaccination as Pfizer deliveries expected to ramp up ([article](#))
- Contagious variant of COVID-19 now identified in all 10 provinces ([article](#))
- Nearly two-thirds of Canadians trust COVID-19 vaccines to be safe and effective ([article](#))

Global Updates

The World Health Organization (WHO):

- Statement on emergency use listing for AstraZeneca/Oxford vaccine ([news release](#))
- Director General continues to emphasize that “we need to scale up [vaccine] production... rapid and equitable rollout of vaccines globally is essential for saving lives and stabilizing health systems.” ([Remarks at February 15 media briefing](#))
- Stresses the need for improved response to mental health impact of public health emergencies ([feature story](#))
- Director General notes that the WHO is working to “advance our understanding of what is officially called post-COVID-19 condition, or ‘long COVID.’ We expect many people to be affected by post-COVID-19 condition.” ([Remarks at February 12 media briefing](#))
- Special Focus: Global influenza surveillance and response system ([Weekly Epidemiological Update p.4-5](#))
- Special Focus: Update on SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern ([Weekly Epidemiological Update p.6-8](#))
- The Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine: what you need to know ([feature story](#))

Other International News:

- Experts caution against Moderna study that suggests half doses effective ([article](#))
- Inequality of vaccine access to be debated by G7 and UN Security Council ([article](#))
- Global COVID-19 cases have dropped by half, experts looking for explanations ([article](#))
- How Britain became a world leader in COVID-19 vaccine distribution ([article](#))
- When the next pandemic hits, scientists aim to have a vaccine ready ([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](#). Recent changes include:

- [Main COVID](#) - Added information on Simcoe Muskoka being in the Red – Control zone and linked to [Ontario's COVID-19 Response Framework](#)
 - Updated content in expander bar “[Close contact, gatherings and events](#)”
 - Updated “[Local example of COVID-19 spread](#)”
 - [Stop the Spread](#)
 - Updated content in expander bar “[How to attend a wedding, funeral or religious ceremony safely](#)”
 - [Assessment Centres and Testing](#)
 - Updated [Midland assessment centre](#) hours of operation
 - [Operating your Business Safely](#) - Added information on Simcoe Muskoka being in the Red – Control zone and linked to [Ontario's COVID-19 Response Framework](#)
 - Updated the following expander bars to include new Red – Control guidance documents: [Resources for All Employers and Workplaces](#), [Curling Clubs](#), [Day Camps](#), [Food Operators](#), [Ice Hut Operators](#), [Licensed Child Care](#), [Personal Service Settings](#), and [Recreational Water Facilities](#)
 - Updated document “[FAQ - Wearing masks or face coverings within enclosed public spaces](#)”
 - [Partners and Municipalities](#) - Added information on Simcoe Muskoka being in the Red – Control zone and linked to [Ontario's COVID-19 Response Framework](#)
 - Added new expander bar “[Outdoor Recreational Amenities \(including ski hills and trails\)](#)”
 - Updated the following expander bars to include new Red – Control guidance documents: [Day Camps](#), [Farmers' Markets](#), [Food Banks and Donation Centres](#), [Outdoor Ice Surfaces/Rinks and Outdoor Skating Trails](#), [Places of Worship](#), [Shelter Services](#), and [Warming Centres](#)
 - [Enforcement and Complaints](#)
 - Two business charges added to the “Summary of SMDHU Enforcement Actions” table
 - Updated content in expander bar “[Complaints about gatherings](#)”
 - New HealthFAXes:
 - [COVID-19 Vaccine: Update #6 – Updated Vaccination Sequencing for Phase One Priority Populations](#)
 - [COVID-19: Update #29 – UK Variant: Revised Mitigation Strategies for Community Spread](#)
 - 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](#)