

## COVID-19 Update for Partners

April 21, 2021

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

#### **Pre-registration is now open for those in the high-risk health conditions category**

- Individuals with high-risk health conditions who have not already been contacted by their hospital or primary care provider can now pre-register on our [website](#) to receive their COVID-19 vaccine. These conditions include:
  - Obesity ([Body Mass Index](#) over 40);
  - Treatments causing immunosuppression (e.g., chemotherapy, immunity-weakening medications); and,
  - Intellectual or developmental disabilities (e.g., Down Syndrome).
- One essential caregiver is also eligible for those with high-risk health conditions who require regular and sustained assistance with personal care and/or daily living activities.

#### **AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine availability expanded to adults 40+**

- As of April 20, the eligibility for the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine was expanded to individuals aged 40 and over at pharmacy and primary care settings across the province.
- Pharmacy locations continue to be added, so for up-to-date information on participating pharmacies and how to book an appointment, please visit the province's [website](#).
- Family Health Teams, Community Health Centres, and other participating primary care providers are reaching out to eligible patients directly to book immunization appointments based on vaccine supply.
- There has been a delay for two upcoming shipments of the COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccine. It is unclear at this time whether this will impact local appointment availability.

#### **Bradford West Gwillimbury (BWG) hot spot update**

- **As of today, residents 40 years and older** living in the “hot spot” L3Z postal code area of BWG **or in Bond Head** are now eligible for vaccination. Residents ages 40 and up can book through the Town of BWG [website](#) and residents ages 50 and up can book via the [provincial system](#).
- Local health and community partners, including Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) and the Town of BWG, quickly collaborated to put plans in place to immunize this group. Last week, through hosting two extra clinics and adding extra appointments to regularly scheduled clinics, **more than 1,900 eligible residents were vaccinated**. We

have two extra clinics planned this week and will continue to add clinics and appointments as we work through this priority group.

- As a reminder, **these appointments are only for residents aged 40 and older who live in the L3Z area postal code or in Bond Head**, or those who are otherwise eligible for vaccination. Those who are not eligible will be turned away.
- Please do not book more than one appointment at these clinics. If you have already booked an appointment via the provincial system and have then booked an appointment at one of our extra clinics, please remember to cancel your provincial appointment.
- We are also working to provide vaccination to agricultural workers in BWG. Last week, we immunized 106 agricultural workers in BWG, including 66 general workers and 40 temporary foreign workers. Two clinics are planned for this group this week, including one which took place yesterday, which will provide vaccination to about 600 workers.

#### **April 18-24 is National Volunteer Appreciation Week**

- This week, we are celebrating National Volunteer Week. We want to recognize the 260 individuals who are volunteering their time and effort to support the COVID-19 vaccine clinic operations throughout Simcoe Muskoka.
- **Our clinic volunteers have one thing in common – they want to help and serve others.** Clinic volunteers enhance our ability to provide an excellent client experience by monitoring waiting areas, assisting and directing clients, and disinfecting and cleaning surfaces at the community clinics across our district.
- We also appreciate the valuable contributions of our community partners who are providing support with volunteer coordination. This includes Georgian Bay General Hospital, Matthews House Hospice, and Orillia Soldiers' Memorial Hospital.
- SMDHU is grateful for the support of each volunteer and our many community partners as we work together to protect the health of Simcoe Muskoka residents.

#### **Update to our [HealthSTATS](#) webpages**

- We recently revamped the format of our COVID-19 HealthSTATS pages. In particular, we have now transitioned to a multi-paged format whereas, previously, all information was posted on one page.
- With this new format, each topic heading now links to a separate webpage. This helps to cut down on the length of the content presented on each webpage. Overall, this multi-paged format is more user-friendly and is easier to navigate.

#### **Results of Local Impact Survey**

- Detailed results from our November COVID-19 Local Impact Survey are now available on the new [COVID-19 Local Impact Survey page](#). It is reaffirming to see that most local residents have responded favourably to the work of SMDHU during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional highlights of the results tell us that:
  - Most residents (95%) think the pandemic is very serious or somewhat serious.
  - Most residents follow public health recommendations, especially in indoor public spaces compared to private gatherings.
  - People are as concerned about the indirect impacts of the pandemic (e.g., to children, the economy, personal income, mental health, social/recreational activities) as they are about direct impacts of the pandemic.
  - Many residents have experienced worsening mental health and physical health behaviours (e.g., substance use, sleep, physical activity).
  - Many individuals and families have had more difficulty meeting their basic needs.
  - 68% of residents said they will probably or definitely get vaccinated. Nearly one-in-three adults (28%) said they would probably not get the vaccine or were unsure whether they would get the vaccine.

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

## Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Case Status *(As of April 21, 2021 14:00)*

Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
9,654	1,104	7,922	218

### In the last day:

- 101 people tested positive, 128 people recovered, and there were no new deaths.
- There were 138 new variant cases\* identified.

### Currently:

- There have been 261 new cases reported to the health unit for the current week.
- 45 people are hospitalized for COVID-19.
- There are 611 active variant cases\*.
- There are 23 ongoing outbreaks (workplaces: 13, educational settings: 4, congregate settings: 4, institutions: 2), including 13 active outbreaks with known variant cases.

### Since the last Partner Update:

- We have reported 717 new cases, 321 recoveries, and 3 new deaths.
- There are 133 more active cases compared to the same day last week.
- There are 3 more active outbreaks compared to the same day last week.
- During the week of April 11, there were 712 cases reported to SMDHU, which was 7% higher than the 666 cases reported the week prior.

For more local data, see: SMDHU [COVID-19 HealthSTATS page](#), [COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard](#), [Provincial COVID-19 Response Framework – Status of Simcoe Muskoka](#)

\*Variant cases encompass confirmed VOC cases and positive screens for a VOC. Caution should be taken when interpreting these data due to potential sampling biases and delay between sample collection and sequencing in recent weeks.

## Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Vaccine Data *(As of April 21, 2021 14:00)*

Total first doses administered	Total second doses administered
147,970	19,815

### Highlights:

- 26,609 immunizations have been provided since the last Partner Update.
- Nearly 148,000 people have received their first dose, representing 23.7% of the population in Simcoe Muskoka. This includes:
  - 25,093 adults 80 years of age and older (84%);
  - 18,151 adults 75-79 years of age (81%);
  - 23,712 adults 70-74 years of age (73%); and,
  - Over 75% of long-term care and retirement home staff and essential caregivers.
- Nearly 22,500 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine have been administered by primary care settings and pharmacies in Simcoe Muskoka.
- Over 19,800 people have received both required doses of the vaccine, representing 3.2% of the population in Simcoe Muskoka.

## Local Media Updates *(Since April 14, 2021 Partner Update)*

- Bradford, Bond Head residents age 40+ now eligible for vaccine appointment ([article](#))
- Scientists endorse outdoor gatherings, Gardner warns they're hard to manage ([article](#))
- Controlling COVID limited by vaccine supply, says local medical officer of health ([article](#))
- Freedom rally organizers aren't helping merchants, says downtown business ([article](#))
- Council pushes to lower vaccine eligibility to 18+ for Bradford ([article](#))
- Barrie staff face 'harsh words and confrontations' over COVID-19 restrictions ([article](#))

- Muskoka COVID-19 positivity rate higher than Simcoe for first time in pandemic ([article](#))
- Childcare staff should have vaccine priority, says local daycare director ([article](#))
- Law-abiding citizens frustrated with illegal COVID-19 protests, Barrie police told ([article](#))
- Rapid testing helping County screen for COVID-19 in long-term care homes ([article](#))
- Orillia mayor hopes new orders send message that 'this is serious' ([article](#))
- Collingwood police responding to altercations over COVID restrictions ([article](#))
- 'Hot spot' vaccination clinics see over 500 locals get vaccinated ([article](#))
- 'It seems like a minor thing... but it's very appreciated,' says local clinic volunteer ([article](#))
- 'Clearly, we need new restrictions,' Gardner supports stricter stay-at-home order ([article](#))
- 'This third wave is nothing like we've seen before,' says Barrie hospital CEO ([article](#))

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

<b>Ontario</b> (As of April 21, 2021, 10:30)			
<b>Total cases</b>	<b>Active Cases</b>	<b>Recovered</b>	<b>Deaths</b>
429,123	42,917	378,417	7,789

### As of today:

- There were 4,212 new cases, 4,204 resolved cases, and 32 deaths in the last day.
- There is a total of 41,395 confirmed cases of the U.K. variant, 108 cases of the South African variant, and 212 cases of the Brazilian variant.
- A total of 2,335 people are hospitalized for COVID-19, 790 people are in intensive care units (ICU) and 566 people are on ventilators.
- There are 802 ongoing outbreaks (schools and childcares: 268, workplaces: 215, congregate living: 138, other settings: 93, health care settings: 88).

### Since the last Partner Update:

- There have been 30,288 new cases, 24,000 recoveries, and 179 deaths.
- There are 6,109 more active cases compared to the same day last week.
- There are 458 more people hospitalized, 148 more people in the ICU, and 144 more people on ventilators compared to the same day last week.
- The 7-day average number of new daily cases is 4,327.

### Vaccine status:

- A total of 4,131,882 vaccine doses have been administered to date, with 136,695 doses administered yesterday. 349,396 people in Ontario have been fully vaccinated.

### Regional updates:

- Areas with the highest number of active cases per 100,000 population: Peel (608.72), Toronto (488.58), York (399.94), Ottawa (373.35), and Niagara (339.37).
- Areas with the highest number of active cases: Toronto (13,346), Peel (8,411), York (4,439), Ottawa (3,488), and Durham (2,130).

### Weekly Epidemiological Summary highlights: April 4-10, 2021:

- A total of 25,663 cases were reported this week, representing the largest number of weekly cases reported in Ontario since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- During the first two waves of the pandemic, adults aged 80 and older had the highest rate of cases. This group has had the lowest rate of cases during the third wave, during which time adults 20-39 years of age have had the highest rate of cases.

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 April 20, 2021 at 19:00 EDT)			
Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
1,139,043	87,872	1,027,458	23,713
<u>Yesterday:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Canada reported 7,276 new cases and 46 deaths.</li><li>New cases were reported in all provinces and territories except NB, NWT, and YT.</li><li>Deaths were reported in BC, AB, MB, ON, and QC.</li></ul>			
<u>Since the last Partner Update:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In the last week, 60,481 people tested positive for COVID-19, 321 people died, and 50,581 people recovered.</li><li>There are 9,579 more active cases of COVID-19 than there was a week ago.</li></ul>			
<u>Between April 5 and April 12, 2021:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The number of COVID-19 patients hospitalized increased from 2,182 to 2,741.</li><li>The number of COVID-19 patients in ICU beds increased from 859 to 1,028.</li><li>The number of COVID-19 patients mechanically vented increased from 463 to 599.</li></ul>			
<u>Weekly epidemiology update: April 4-10, 2021:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>New cases increased by 32% compared to the previous week, with an average of 7,452 new cases reported every day.</li><li>New deaths decreased by 26% compared to the previous week, with an average of 35 deaths reported every day.</li><li>The number of weekly hospitalizations and ICU admissions continued to increase, with ICU admissions on April 10 being the highest recorded since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.</li><li>Daily case rates remain highest among those 20-39 years of age and lowest among those 80 years and older.</li><li>According to forecasting, between 1,154,450 to 1,252,640 cumulative reported cases and 23,585 to 24,150 deaths are expected by April 25, 2021.</li></ul>			
<u>Key vaccine updates as of April 10, 2021:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>19.18% of the population has received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>84.62% of adults aged 80 or older;</li><li>89.72% of health care workers targeted for priority vaccination; and,</li><li>96.68% of adults living in group living settings for seniors.</li></ul></li><li>2.13% of population have received both required doses of the vaccine.</li></ul>			
For more national data, see: <a href="#">Daily epidemiology updates</a> and <a href="#">Weekly epidemiology report</a>			
Global (As of April 21, 2021 at 11:51 CET)			
Confirmed Cases		Confirmed Deaths	
142,238,073		3,032,124	
<u>In the last day:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>There were 648,042 new cases and 10,461 deaths.</li><li>India, Turkey, Brazil, Iran, and Germany reported the most new cases and India, Brazil, Poland, France, and Columbia reported the most deaths.</li></ul>			
<u>In the past week:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Over 5.2 million new cases and 80,292 deaths were reported.</li></ul>			



- India, Brazil, Turkey, the U.S., and France reported the most new cases and Brazil, India, the U.S., Poland, and Mexico reported the most new deaths.

#### Highlights from Weekly Epidemiological Summary as of April 11, 2021:

- The number of new global COVID-19 cases continued to increase for the eighth consecutive week, with over 5.2 million new weekly cases reported.
- The number of reported new deaths increased for the fifth consecutive week, increasing by 8% compared to the previous week.
- The pace of deaths is accelerating. It took nine months to reach 1 million deaths, another four to surpass 2 million, and just three months to reach 3 million deaths.

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

## **Provincial, National and Global Updates** *(Since April 14, 2021 Partner Update)*

### ***Provincial Updates***

#### The Ontario Government:

- Select Ontario pharmacies offering 24/7 COVID-19 vaccinations ([news release](#))
- Safely expands age eligibility for AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine to 40+ ([statement](#))
- Strengthens enforcement of stay-at-home order ([news release](#))
- Workplace inspectors to visit 1,300 construction sites beginning this week ([news release](#))
- Announces emergency child care for critical frontline workers ([news release](#))

#### Public Health Ontario published:

- Comparing SARS-CoV-2 Variants of Concern as of March 31, 2021 ([fact sheet](#))
- Companion Guide to Variants of Concern ([companion guide](#))
- Updated: COVID-19 Regional Incidence and Time to Case Notification ([epi summary](#))
- Updated: COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake in Ontario ([surveillance report](#))
- Updated: Trends of COVID-19 Incidence in Ontario ([surveillance report](#))

#### Other Provincial News:

- Premier Doug Ford isolating after close staffer tests positive for COVID-19 ([article](#))
- Peel, Toronto to shutter workplaces with COVID-19 outbreaks ([article](#))
- Ontario says 'enhancements' to paid sick leave are coming ([article](#))
- Ontario urged to hold lottery for key drug used on COVID-19 patients ([article](#))
- Directive allows police to ID children in public gathering, police say after incident ([article](#))
- After outcry, ON backtracks police powers to conduct random COVID-19 stops ([article](#))
- Auditor General to review how COVID-19 hot spot postal codes were chosen ([article](#))
- Two AstraZeneca shipments with nearly 600,000 doses delayed until end of May ([article](#))
- ON hospitals relying on patient transfers to cope with crush of COVID-19 cases ([article](#))
- New Toronto field hospital prepares to accept COVID patients as ICUs overflow ([article](#))
- COVID-19 third wave, staff shortages, take heavy toll on Ontario health workers ([article](#))
- New measures ignore science table advice on stricter lockdown, paid sick days ([article](#))
- Hospitals scramble to redeploy medical staff amid worsening third wave ([article](#))

### ***National Updates***

#### The Government of Canada:

- Budget 2021: A recovery plan for jobs, growth, and resilience ([news release](#))
- Provides additional support for Ontario to fight the COVID-19 outbreak ([news release](#))
- Supports ON COVID response through extension of Mobile Health Units ([news release](#))
- Update for Indigenous Peoples and communities ([news release](#))

- Statements from the Chief Public Health Officer: [April 14](#), [April 15](#), [April 17](#), [April 18](#), [April 19](#), [April 20](#)

#### Other National News:

- National vaccine panel delays briefing where AstraZeneca update was expected ([article](#))
- Moderna slashing vaccine deliveries to Canada, Pfizer to provide 8M more doses ([article](#))
- Nurse begs people to take pandemic seriously after emotional COVID unit shift ([article](#))
- Some front-line hospital workers still haven't been vaccinated for COVID-19 ([article](#))
- Top Canadian WHO adviser under fire for downplaying airborne threat of COVID ([article](#))
- Meet the doctors working to identify, treat rare blood clots linked to vaccines ([article](#))
- As ICUs fill up, doctors confront grim choice of who gets life-saving care ([article](#))
- Health Canada reviewing submission to use Pfizer vaccine on children 12 and up ([article](#))
- Canada's first major workplace vaccine clinic could be model for large employers ([article](#))
- PHAC suspends added screening guidelines for travellers from Brazil ([article](#))
- Health Canada stands by approval of AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson vaccines ([article](#))
- Canada's COVID-19 vaccine lead aims to improve predictability of shipments ([article](#))
- We've lost our ability to put risk in perspective when it comes to vaccines ([article](#))
- Canada negotiating contracts for COVID-19 booster shots in 2022, minister says ([article](#))
- Canada's vaccine hoarding will prolong the pandemic globally, experts say ([article](#))

#### ***Global Updates***

##### The World Health Organization (WHO):

- Global Youth Mobilization funds youth ideas to combat pandemic ([news release](#))
- Director General reinforces that "We have the tools to bring this pandemic under control in a matter of months, if we apply them consistently and equitably." ([Remarks at April 19 media briefing](#))
- Update on WHO COVID-19 global rapid risk assessment ([Weekly epi update p.4-5](#))
- Update on SARS-CoV-2 Variants ([Weekly epi update p.9-11](#))
- Seventh meeting of the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee regarding the COVID-19 pandemic ([statement](#))
- Greta Thunberg, climate activist, joins WHO's call for vaccine equity ([news release](#))
- Review of latest evidence of rare adverse events with AstraZeneca vaccine ([statement](#))

#### Other International News:

- EU Regulator backs J&J vaccine despite finding possible link to rare blood clots ([article](#))
- Pfizer expects COVID-19 vaccine boosters will be necessary within 12 months ([article](#))
- WHO head says global COVID-19 infection rate approaching highest level ever ([article](#))
- Blood clot risk higher for unvaccinated COVID-19 patients, Oxford researchers ([article](#))
- New Delhi running out of medical oxygen as India grapples with COVID 'storm' ([article](#))

## SMDHU Resources

### **SMDHU [website](#) – recent changes include:**

#### **Main COVID**

- Added information about extended stay-at-home order and increased restrictions
- Revised messages of advice from the Chief Medical Officer of Health
- Added new expander bar with [SMDHU guidance on safe protesting and rallies](#)
- Added new expander bar on [Virtual Assistant being used to assist in contact tracing](#)
- Added new expander bar on [Local COVID-19 Impact Survey Results](#)

### **Stop the Spread**

- Updated guidance for [how to attend a wedding, funeral, or religious ceremony safely](#)

### **Vaccine and Immunization**

- Updated information for the [L3Z hot spot](#) to reflect that adults 40 years of age and older can now book a vaccine appointment
- Added those in the [high-risk health condition categories](#) to the list of groups currently eligible for pre-registration
- Posted update for those waiting to book their second dose appointment under “[Interval for second dose extended to 16 weeks](#)” expander bar
- Updated information on the [AstraZeneca pharmacy rollout](#) to reflect that adults 40+ are now eligible for vaccination

### **Operating your Business Safely**

- Revised content and/or guidance documents under the following expander bars to reflect current restrictions:
  - [Resources for all employers and workplaces](#)
  - [Mandatory face covering in indoor public spaces](#)
  - [Food Operators](#)
  - [Indoor and outdoor events and gatherings](#)
  - [Outdoor Recreational Amenities](#)
  - [Retail, shopping malls, discount and big box stores, outdoor garden centres](#)
  - [Marinas and Boat Clubs](#)

### **Partners and Municipalities**

- Updated guidance and information for [Outdoor Recreational Amenities](#) and [Places of Worship](#)

### **New Public Health Alerts:**

- **April 14, 2021:** [COVID-19 Vaccine: Update #14: Clarification about Next Steps for Groups Eligible in Phase 2](#)
- **April 19, 2021:** [COVID-19 Vaccine: Update #15: Appointment Booking Update for Those with Highest and High-Risk Health Conditions](#)

### **Additional SMDHU resources:**

- SMDHU [COVID-19 HealthSTATS page](#)
- [SMDHU Vulnerable Populations for COVID-19 Response Interactive Map](#) highlights vulnerable populations in Simcoe Muskoka.
- 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 - 8:30am-6pm; Saturday - 8:30am-4:30pm

## **Credible Sources of Information**

- [Ontario Ministry of Health](#)
- [Public Health Ontario](#)
- [Centre for Effective Practice COVID-19 Resource Centre](#)
- [Government of Canada](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)