

## COVID-19 Update for Partners

May 12, 2021

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

#### **This week is National Nursing Week**

- May 10-16 is National Nursing week and the theme this year is #WeAnswerTheCall. Over the past year, we have seen Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) nurses and our health unit colleagues continue to *answer the call* to help prevent and mitigate the impacts of this pandemic and other critical public health issues.
- Since the start of the pandemic, we have onboarded over 100 new nurses and we now have 228 nurses employed with SMDHU to support our COVID-19 response.
- Though many of our usual programs are on hold, nurses at SMDHU continue to work in a variety of activities including:
  - Case and contact investigation, outbreak management, and infection prevention and control;
  - Supporting our COVID-19 immunization program;
  - In-home and virtual visiting to support vulnerable families;
  - Supporting parents with early postpartum phone calls and breastfeeding clinics;
  - Sexual health clinics;
  - Supporting schools and school boards to implement COVID-19 public health measures;
  - Working to prevent or decrease the use of substances; and,
  - Assessing the impacts of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations and engaging stakeholders in mitigating the effects of the pandemic for these populations.
- We are honoured to work with a group of passionate and dedicated nurses and SMDHU colleagues who have continued to work above and beyond during this pandemic.

#### **Additional groups eligible for COVID-19 vaccination this week**

- With growing vaccine supply, the provincial rollout of COVID-19 vaccination is being accelerated over the next few weeks, with a target of everyone in Ontario 18 years and older able to book their appointment by the end of May.
- **As of May 11, individuals with [at-risk health conditions](#) and the [second group of essential workers](#) who cannot work from home are now eligible to book a COVID-19 vaccination appointment through the provincial [online booking system](#) or Provincial Vaccine Booking Line at 1-833-943-3900.**

- **Beginning Thursday, May 13, individuals turning 40 and over in 2021 will also be eligible** to book their appointment through the provincial booking system.
- A detailed overview of all eligible groups and how to book an appointment is available on the health unit [website](#).

#### **Shortened second dose interval for select groups**

- The province has recently announced that several groups will become eligible to receive their second vaccine dose earlier than the extended 16-week interval, including:
  - **Dialysis patients** will be able to get vaccinated through their hospital programs. This group can also register for an appointment on the SMDHU [website](#).
  - **Urban Indigenous adults and their household members.** We will be reaching out to those who identified as Indigenous when they received their first dose and our Indigenous partners will also be communicating this to their members.
  - **Highest Priority Health Care Workers** who are working in frontline roles with COVID-19 patients or who have a high-risk of exposure to COVID-19 in their work. This group is expected to become eligible later this week. We will provide an update once we receive further details from the province on this.
- It is important to note that, although these groups are now or will soon become eligible to receive an early second dose, **this does not mean that we will be able to vaccinate these groups right away.** We are working on a plan to provide immunization to these groups based on our capacity and vaccine supply.

#### **Standby list for same-day appointments is now opening at 8am each morning**

- The health unit recently launched a standby list for same-day vaccination appointments as a new way to use up any remaining vaccine doses at the end of each clinic day.
- Individuals who meet current eligibility criteria, have not yet received their first vaccine dose, and can make it to an appointment clinic location within 45 minutes of receiving a call can sign up to be on the list through the health unit [website](#). Please note that **the standby list will now be opening each morning at 8am**, instead of 7am. The list closes every day at 8pm, so people are encouraged to sign up each day that they are available.

#### **Expanded COVID-19 vaccine rollout in local pharmacies and primary care settings**

- Some pharmacies in our region will be receiving Pfizer or Moderna vaccine later this week. We are awaiting further details on participating locations. Once available, this vaccine can be given to anyone who is currently eligible. Appointments must be booked directly at [participating pharmacies](#).
- Thanks to the hard work of our staff and partners in making the AstraZeneca primary care pilot a success, our area has been selected as a pilot site to provide Moderna vaccine through primary care offices. This vaccine can be given to anyone who is currently eligible. **Please do not contact your primary care provider to inquire about this.** Providers will be reaching out to eligible patients directly to book immunization appointments based on limited vaccine supply.

#### **Simcoe Muskoka education and enforcement initiative**

- I'm pleased to report that a high level of compliance (~70%) was observed during the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development's education and enforcement initiative conducted in Simcoe Muskoka on April 30 and May 1.
- 173 businesses were visited in this combined agency effort that included the Ministry of Labour and other provincial Ministries, along with local police officers and public health and municipal bylaw enforcement staff. It was a great collaboration by all of the participating agencies and services.

- In total, four provincial offence notices were issued. Three of the tickets were issued by SMDHU and are posted on our website's [COVID-19 Enforcement page](#).
  - The most common offences were related to safety plans, screening requirements and adhering to capacity limits.
  - There were also some issues noted in lunch/break rooms. As a reminder, all workers in such settings are required to be at least 2 metres apart and/or there must be an impermeable barrier separating staff in break rooms.
- Businesses are encouraged to visit the SMDHU [website](#) often for information and resources to support them in operating in compliance with COVID-19 public health measures. SMDHU's Health Connection line is also available at 1-877-721-7520.

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

<b>Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Case Status</b> (As of May 12, 2021 14:00)			
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>Active Cases</b>	<b>Recovered</b>	<b>Deaths</b>
11,171	822	9,571	235
<p><u>In the last day:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 72 people tested positive, 173 people recovered, and there were 2 new deaths.</li> <li>• There were 27 new variant cases* identified.</li> </ul> <p><u>Currently:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There have been 139 new cases reported to the health unit for the current week.</li> <li>• 30 Simcoe Muskoka residents are hospitalized with COVID-19.</li> <li>• There are 563 active variant cases*.</li> <li>• There are 12 ongoing outbreaks (workplaces: 7, congregate settings: 2, educational settings: 2, institutions: 1), including 7 active outbreaks with known variant cases.</li> </ul> <p><u>Since the last Partner Update:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have reported 398 new cases, 891 recoveries, and 5 new deaths.</li> <li>• There are 559 fewer active cases compared to the same day last week.</li> <li>• There are 3 fewer active outbreaks compared to the same day last week.</li> <li>• During the week of May 2, there were 442 cases reported to the health unit which was 21% lower than the 558 cases reported the week prior.</li> </ul> <p>For more local data, see: SMDHU <a href="#">COVID-19 HealthSTATS page</a>, <a href="#">COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard</a>, <a href="#">Provincial COVID-19 Response Framework – Status of Simcoe Muskoka</a></p> <p><small>*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.</small></p>			

<b>Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Vaccine Data</b> (As of May 12, 2021 14:00)	
<b>Total first doses administered</b>	<b>Total second doses administered</b>
229,233	21,189
<p><u>Highlights:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 23,589 immunizations have been provided since the last Partner Update.</li> <li>• Over 229,200 people have received their first dose, representing 36.8% of the population in Simcoe Muskoka. This includes:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ 26,134 adults 80 years of age and older (88%);</li> <li>◦ 46,329 adults 70-79 years of age (84%);</li> <li>◦ 29,303 adults 65-69 years of age (76%); and,</li> <li>◦ 32,762 adults 60-64 years of age (71%).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

- Nearly 21,200 people have received both required doses of the vaccine, representing 3.4% of the population in Simcoe Muskoka.

## Local Media Updates *(Since May 5, 2021 Partner Update)*

- Vaccines starting to help turn the tide of COVID-19, says Gardner ([article](#))
- Gardner wants longer stay-at-home order, cautious reopening ([article](#))
- Federal Court cites Roberta Place tragedy as reason travellers must quarantine ([article](#))
- Barrie police stand by ticketing approach at 'freedom' rallies ([article](#))
- Five tickets issued at anti-lockdown rally in Sadlon Arena parking lot ([article](#))
- Multiple tickets, compliance orders issued during business inspection blitz ([article](#))
- 95 people vaccinated amid 'smiles and cheers' at The Sharing Place ([article](#))
- Midland CAO urges residents to keep vigilant against COVID-19 ([article](#))
- National procurement minister talks topics of interest with Barrie, Simcoe County ([article](#))

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

### Ontario *(As of May 12, 2021, 10:30)*

Total cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
499,412	29,962	461,076	8,374

#### As of today:

- There were 2,320 new cases, 3,477 resolved cases, and 32 deaths in the last day.
- There is a total of 98,945 confirmed cases of the U.K. variant, 568 cases of the South African variant, and 1,683 cases of the Brazilian variant.
- A total of 1,673 people are hospitalized for COVID-19, 776 people are in intensive care units (ICU) and 559 people are on ventilators.
- There are 678 ongoing outbreaks (workplaces: 277, schools and childcares: 134, other settings: 99, health care settings: 94, congregate living: 74).

#### Since the last Partner Update:

- There have been 19,779 new cases, 24,606 recoveries, and 187 deaths.
- There are 5,014 fewer active cases compared to the same day last week.
- There are 402 fewer people hospitalized, 106 fewer people in the ICU, and 61 fewer people on ventilators compared to the same day last week.
- The 7-day average number of new daily cases is 2,826.

#### Vaccine status:

- A total of 6,491,666 vaccine doses have been administered to date, with 140,785 doses administered yesterday. 402,258 people in Ontario have been fully vaccinated.

#### Regional updates:

- Areas with the highest number of active cases per 100,000 population: Peel (515.65), Toronto (371.14), Durham (241.85), Niagara (224.61), and Halton (220.27).
- Areas with the highest number of active cases: Toronto (10,138), Peel (7,125), York (2,089), Durham (1,562), and Ottawa (1,357).

#### Weekly Epidemiological Summary highlights: April 25-May 1, 2021:

- During the week of April 25, there were 24,679 cases reported, representing a decrease compared to 28,098 cases reported the week prior.
- Over 90% of COVID-19 cases among vaccinated residents and staff in long-term care homes have occurred in individuals only partially vaccinated (22.5%) or not yet protected (70.8%).

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 May 11, 2021 at 19:00 EDT)

Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
1,299,572	78,039	1,196,819	24,714

#### Yesterday:

- Canada reported 5,373 new cases and 32 deaths.
- New cases were reported in all provinces and territories except PEI.
- New deaths were reported in BC, AB, SK, ON, and QC.

#### Since the last Partner Update:

- In the last week, 49,622 people tested positive for COVID-19, 318 people died, and 53,965 people recovered.
- There are 4,661 fewer active cases of COVID-19 than there was a week ago.

#### Between April 27 and May 4, 2021:

- The number of COVID-19 patients hospitalized decreased from 3,005 to 2,186.
- The number of COVID-19 patients in ICU beds increased from 1,326 to 1,366.
- The number of COVID-19 patients mechanically vented increased from 772 to 809.

#### Weekly epidemiology update: April 25-May 1, 2021:

- New cases decreased by 5% compared to the previous week, with an average of 7,855 new cases reported every day.
- New deaths decreased by 6% compared to the previous week, with an average of 46 deaths reported every day.
- The number of weekly hospitalizations and ICU admissions continued to increase, with a 1% increase in hospitalized cases and a 9% increase in ICU admissions compared to the week prior. There was a record-high of 1,472 cases in the ICU this week.
- Daily case rates remain highest among those 20-39 years of age and lowest among those 80 years and older.
- According to forecasting, between 1,319,040 to 1,351,100 cumulative reported cases and 24,640 to 25,280 deaths are expected by May 16, 2021.

#### Key vaccine updates as of May 1, 2021:

- 33.67% of the population has received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, including: 89.23% of adults aged 80 or older and 86.90% of adults 70-79 years of age.
- 2.68% of population have received both required doses of the vaccine.

For more national data, see: [Daily epidemiology updates](#) and [Weekly epidemiology report](#)

### Global (As of May 12, 2021 at 12:16 CET)

Confirmed Cases	Confirmed Deaths
159,188,745	3,308,588

#### In the last day:

- There were 603,436 new cases and 11,466 deaths.
- India, Brazil, the U.S., Iran, and Argentina reported the most new cases and India, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, and the U.S. reported the most deaths.

#### In the past week:

- Over 5.4 million new cases and 91,307 deaths were reported.
- India, Brazil, the U.S., Turkey, and Argentina reported the most new cases and India, Brazil, the U.S., Colombia, and Argentina reported the most new deaths.

#### Highlights from Weekly Epidemiological Summary as of May 9, 2021:

- The number of new COVID-19 cases and deaths decreased slightly this week, with over 5.5 million cases and over 90,000 deaths reported. However, case and death incidence remain at the highest level since the beginning of the pandemic.
- India accounted for 50% of global cases and 30% of global deaths reported this week and worrying trends have been observed in neighbouring countries.

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

## **Provincial, National and Global Updates** *(Since May 5, 2021 Partner Update)*

### ***Provincial Updates***

#### The Ontario Government:

- Over 50 percent of Ontario adults receive first dose of COVID-19 vaccine ([news release](#))
- Continues to expand access to rapid testing for workplaces ([news release](#))
- Pauses administration of AstraZeneca vaccine ([statement](#))
- Continues to expand booking eligibility for vaccines to more Ontarians ([news release](#))
- High-risk health workers eligible to receive second dose at early interval ([backgrounder](#))
- Supports families, businesses, and workers during COVID-19 ([news release](#))

#### Public Health Ontario published:

- Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 Following Vaccination in Ontario ([epi summary](#))
- Updated: COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake in Ontario ([surveillance report](#))
- Updated: COVID-19 Regional Incidence and Time to Case Notification ([epi summary](#))
- Updated: COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake in Ontario ([surveillance report](#))
- Updated: Adverse Events Following Immunization for COVID-19 ([summary report](#))

#### Other Provincial News:

- Ford government prepares to extend Ontario's stay-at-home order until June 2 ([article](#))
- Pfizer, Moderna to be offered in more pharmacies after AstraZeneca halted ([article](#))
- ON to receive 250k doses AstraZeneca, but still working on plan for how to use it ([article](#))
- Increased vaccine supply to hot spots stops, city staff urge province to reconsider ([article](#))
- Ontario likely to mix first and second COVID-19 vaccine doses ([article](#))
- Ontarians who got first AstraZeneca shot 'did the right thing': health minister ([article](#))
- No lifting restrictions until cases 'well below' 1,000 a day: Ontario's top doctor ([article](#))
- ON hasn't ruled out reopening schools where cases low, but concerns remain ([article](#))
- Ontario could reopen more outdoor spaces, science adviser table says ([article](#))
- Ontario's surgical backlog will take more than 3.5 years to clear ([article](#))
- Developers wrestle with COVID-19 outbreaks on construction sites ([article](#))
- Toronto Board of Health urges Ford government to reopen outdoor amenities ([article](#))
- Peel to offer thousands of overnight vaccinations as part of 'marathon' clinic ([article](#))
- Over 1,000 patients were transferred from GTA to hospitals across ON in April ([article](#))

### ***National Updates***

#### The Government of Canada:

- Legislation for critical pandemic support receives royal assent ([news release](#))



- Announces support for equitable access to COVID-19 medical solutions ([news release](#))
- Increases access to COVID-19 rapid testing for workers ([news release](#))
- Minister Miller talks about mental wellness during the pandemic ([statement](#))
- COVID-19 update for Indigenous Peoples and communities ([news release](#))
- Is sending medical supplies to support COVID-19 response in India ([news release](#))
- Health Canada authorizes use of Pfizer vaccine in children 12 to 15 years old ([statement](#))
- Statements from the Chief Public Health Officer: [May 6](#), [May 8](#), [May 9](#), [May 10](#), [May 12](#)

#### Other National News:

- Future of AstraZeneca vaccine in question over blood clots, supply issues ([article](#))
- Neighbouring provinces looking at SK's plan to tie vaccination rates to reopening ([article](#))
- Trudeau says pandemic restrictions should remain until case counts 'way down' ([article](#))
- Ottawa responds to ON call for enhanced border measures to reduce spread ([article](#))
- Experts divided on urgency to vaccinate teens from COVID-19 before September ([article](#))
- B.C. the first province to promise permanent paid sick leave in time of COVID-19 ([article](#))
- These people were vaccine hesitant. Here's why they changed their minds ([article](#))
- PM says Canada will have enough COVID-19 vaccines for a 'one dose summer' ([article](#))
- Most flights carrying COVID-19 positive passengers in Canada were domestic ([article](#))
- What happens when people get two different COVID-19 vaccines? ([article](#))
- Tam warns that full vaccination does not equal full protection from COVID-19 ([article](#))
- Efficacy of first Pfizer shot in new study doesn't refute Canada's dosing strategy ([article](#))
- AB physician offers glimpse inside COVID-19 wards with pandemic photography ([article](#))
- Canada approves Pfizer for children 12 and up; AB, MB to offer vaccine to kids ([article](#))
- More Canadians hospitalized from substance use since pandemic started ([article](#))

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

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

- The Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine: What you need to know ([feature story](#))
- Special Focus: Update on SARS-CoV-2 variants ([Weekly epidemiological update](#) p.4-10)
- Lists another vaccine for emergency use, issues policy recommendations ([news release](#))
- Director General emphasizes the need for both equitable vaccine distribution and public health measures: "We are now seeing a plateau in the number of COVID-19 cases and deaths... but it's an unacceptably high plateau... How quickly we end the pandemic, and how many sisters and brothers we lose along the way, depends on how quickly and how fairly we vaccinate a significant proportion of the global population, and how consistently we all follow proven public health measures." ([Remarks at May 10 media briefing](#))
- Partnership for Healthy Cities supports vaccine outreach in 18 cities ([departmental news](#))
- Commends U.S. decision to support temporary waiver on intellectual property rights for COVID-19 vaccines ([news release](#))

##### Other International News:

- COVID-19 death toll surpasses 250k in India as virus ravages rural communities ([article](#))
- WHO classifies variant first associated with India as being of global concern ([article](#))
- World could have prevented COVID-19 catastrophe: pandemic panel ([article](#))
- Britons have bought into the AstraZeneca plan without hesitation ([article](#))
- WHO approves emergency use of vaccine manufactured by China's Sinopharm ([article](#))
- India's tide of COVID deaths leave huge number of orphaned children in its wake ([article](#))
- What Canada can learn from U.S., U.K. about vaccinations and reopening ([article](#))

## SMDHU Resources

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

### Stop the Spread

- Added new expander bar with information and guidance on [hunting and fishing](#)

### Getting your Vaccination

- Updated main content to reflect newly eligible groups for vaccination this week
- Updated main content to reflect that eligible groups who were previously only able to book via the Provincial Vaccine Booking Line can now book via the [provincial site](#)
- Updated content to indicate that [pre-registration is closed](#) and all groups who were previously eligible to pre-register can now book directly through the provincial system
- Added information about the [shortened second dose interval for dialysis patients](#)
- Updated information on [pharmacy or health care provider second dose appointments](#)

### Operating your Business Safely

- Added new expander bar with information on the [provincial antigen testing program](#)

### Our Response

- Updated main content with information on SMDHU's vaccination program rollout
- Updated statistics on [Our Activities](#) throughout the COVID-19 pandemic

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

- **May 10, 2021:** [COVID-19 Vaccine: Update #21: Dialysis and Urban Indigenous 2<sup>nd</sup> Dose Interval Changed, Eligibility Update, AEFI Reporting and School Immunization Program Catch Up](#)
- **May 11, 2021:** [COVID-19 Vaccine: Update #22: AstraZeneca Vaccine On Hold Effective Immediately](#)

### **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](#)