

COVID-19 Update for Partners

May 19, 2021

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Key messages from Dr. Gardner, Medical Officer of Health

Expanded eligibility for COVID-19 vaccination

- The rollout of COVID-19 vaccination continues to accelerate in Simcoe Muskoka and across the province. As of May 18, **anyone turning 18 years of age or older in 2021** is now eligible to book a COVID-19 vaccination appointment through the provincial system. All previously eligible groups can continue to book. Detailed information about how to book an appointment is available on our [website](#).
- Youth between the ages of 12 and 17 will become eligible to book a vaccination appointment through the provincial system beginning the week of May 31, 2021. Locally, we are working with our school board partners to plan for special COVID-19 immunization clinics for youth and their adult family members to take place in mid-late June. We will provide more details on this in the coming weeks.
- Those turning 18 years of age or older in 2021 who live or work anywhere in the hot spot of Bradford West Gwillimbury (BWG) can book an appointment at a BWG-specific clinic through the Town of BWG [website](#).
- While it comes as great news that all adults are now eligible for vaccination, it is important to remember that this does not mean we will be able to vaccinate everyone right away. **It will take time to provide vaccination to all Simcoe Muskoka residents who wish to receive it.** Please be patient and, if appointments do book up, check back regularly for updated availability as we will continue to provide opportunities for vaccination based on our capacity and vaccine supply.

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

- 30 pharmacies in our region now have Pfizer or Moderna vaccine to administer to anyone who meets current provincial eligibility criteria for a first dose appointment. Additional pharmacies will be coming onboard in the coming weeks. Appointments can be booked directly at [participating pharmacies](#).
- Our Moderna vaccination pilot in primary care is now underway and participating providers administered their first allocation of vaccine last week. Participating providers will continue to reach out to eligible patients directly to book appointments based on vaccine supply. **Please do not reach out to your primary care provider to inquire about this.**

Second dose appointments for those who received their first dose before March 17

- The provincial booking system is still not able to accommodate only dose 2 bookings. As such, the health unit is implementing our own dose 2 booking system for those who were immunized prior to the provincial booking system was launched on March 17, 2021. Those who provided an e-mail address to us when receiving their first dose are receiving an e-mail in the coming days with information about how to book, and this information will also be posted on our [website](#) by the end of this week.
- For those who received a COVID-19 vaccine through a pharmacy or health care provider, they will contact you for your second dose appointment. This program rollout is separate from the community clinics and cannot be booked on the provincial site.

Messaging for the upcoming long weekend

- The Victoria Day long weekend marks the unofficial start to summer and, with this, can come the desire to gather with others. However, now is not the time to let down our guards. While it is encouraging to see that local and provincial COVID-19 case numbers have started to go down, overall cases, transmission, and hospitalizations remain high.
- The virus can only move if we do. We are asking that **everyone, regardless of vaccination status, please continue to abide by the stay-at-home order** over the long weekend to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. This means avoiding all non-essential travel, staying home, not gathering with those outside your household, and finding virtual ways to connect with loved ones.
- For those with primary and secondary residences, we are asking that you choose one location as your home and stay there. Please do not travel between residences.
- There is no question that we all want to have a good summer and put the COVID-19 pandemic behind us. But in order to do so, we need to continue to be vigilant in following public health measures as we work toward vaccinating most of our population. Thank you to the many people who continue to abide by the stay-at-home order and public health measures – we know that doing so is not easy and comes at a cost, but your actions have and continue to help prevent cases and save lives. Ultimately, our ability to bring the third wave and the pandemic under control depends on each and every one of us and our individual and collective actions.

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

Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Case Status (As of May 19, 2021 14:00)			
Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
11,493	751	9,953	241
<u>In the last day:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 51 people tested positive, 63 people recovered, and there were no new deaths.• There were 40 new variant cases* identified. <u>Currently:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There have been 115 new cases reported to the health unit for the current week.• 27 Simcoe Muskoka residents are hospitalized with COVID-19.• There are 562 active variant cases*.• There are 13 ongoing outbreaks (workplaces: 10, institutions: 2, educational settings: 1), including 11 active outbreaks with known variant cases. <u>Since the last Partner Update:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We have reported 322 new cases, 382 recoveries, and 6 new deaths.• There are 71 fewer active cases compared to the same day last week.• There are 2 fewer active outbreaks compared to the same day last week.			

- During the week of May 9, there were 340 new cases reported to the health unit which was 23% lower than the 444 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 May 19, 2021 14:00)*

Total first doses administered	Total second doses administered
257,985	23,903
Highlights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31,466 immunizations have been provided since the last Partner Update. • Nearly 258,000 people have received their first dose, representing 42.7% of the population in Simcoe Muskoka. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 26,422 adults 80 years of age and older (93%); ○ 47,300 adults 70-79 years of age (87%); ○ 66,308 adults 60-69 years of age (82%); and, ○ 50,727 adults 50-59 years of age (56%). • Over 23,900 people have received both required doses of the vaccine, representing 4.0% of the population in Simcoe Muskoka. 	

Local Media Updates *(Since May 12, 2021 Partner Update)*

- From outdoor dining to daily cases: SMDHU's top doc has vision for reopening ([article](#))
- Stay close to home this holiday weekend, urges Dr. Gardner ([article](#))
- 'Pick a location and stick with it': Simcoe Muskoka cottagers asked to limit travel ([article](#))
- Letting loose too soon could trigger fourth wave, Dr. Gardner cautions ([article](#))
- Strong response from public for vaccine as top doc continues to preach caution ([article](#))
- New COVID-19 rapid testing for Muskoka and Orillia businesses ([article](#))
- Health-care workers at anti-lockdown events 'extremely concerning' ([article](#))
- COVID vaccine the 'wisest, safest' choice you can make right now: top doc ([article](#))
- 'We aren't superheroes... we're human,' says RVH nurse ([article](#))
- Barrie councillors urge province to lift restrictions on outdoor activity ([article](#))
- Barrie's injunction application to prevent protests still before the courts ([article](#))

Provincial, National and Global COVID-19 Case Status

Ontario <i>(As of May 19, 2021, 10:30)</i>			
Total cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
514,690	23,416	482,749	8,525
As of today: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were 1,588 new cases, 3,119 resolved cases, and 19 deaths in the last day. • There has been a total of 112,759 confirmed cases of the U.K. variant, 683 cases of the South African variant, and 2,059 cases of the Brazilian variant. • A total of 1,401 people are hospitalized for COVID-19, 735 people are in intensive care units (ICU) and 539 people are on ventilators. • There are 598 ongoing outbreaks (workplaces: 250, schools and childcares: 114, other settings: 89, health care settings: 79, congregate living: 66). 			

Since the last Partner Update:

- There have been 15,278 new cases, 21,673 recoveries, and 151 deaths.
- There are 6,546 fewer active cases compared to the same day last week.
- There are 272 fewer people hospitalized, 41 fewer people in the ICU, and 20 fewer people on ventilators compared to the same day last week.
- The 7-day average number of new daily cases is 2,183.

Vaccine status:

- A total of 7,431,638 vaccine doses have been administered to date, with 145,461 doses administered yesterday. 456,784 people in Ontario have been fully vaccinated.

Regional updates:

- Areas with the highest number of active cases per 100,000 population: Peel (422.29), Toronto (273.47), Porcupine (194.77), Durham (180.53), and Brant (171.18).
- Areas with the highest number of active cases: Toronto (7,470), Peel (5,835), York (1,490), Durham (1,166), and Ottawa (1,081).

Weekly Epidemiological Summary highlights: May 2-8, 2021:

- During the week of May 2, there were 20,717 cases reported, representing a 17.1% decrease compared to the 25,001 cases reported the week prior.
- While the rate of cases continues to decrease across all age groups, there was a sharp decrease in cases reported among those aged 40-59 years old this week.
- 75.6% of reported cases this week tested positive for a mutation or variant of concern.

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 18, 2021 at 19:00 EDT)

Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
1,338,141	64,748	1,248,375	25,018

Yesterday:

- Canada reported 4,035 new cases and 37 deaths.
- New cases were reported in all provinces and territories except YT.
- New deaths were reported in BC, AB, SK, MB ON, QC, and NB.

Since the last Partner Update:

- In the last week, 38,569 people tested positive for COVID-19, 304 people died, and 51,556 people recovered.
- There are 13,291 fewer active cases of COVID-19 than there was a week ago.

Between May 3 and May 10, 2021:

- The number of COVID-19 patients hospitalized decreased from 2,946 to 2,594.
- The number of COVID-19 patients in ICU beds decreased from 1,384 to 1,281.
- The number of COVID-19 patients mechanically vented decreased from 799 to 753.

Weekly epidemiology update: May 2-8, 2021:

- New cases decreased by 4% compared to the previous week, with an average of 7,528 new cases reported every day.
- New deaths decreased by 2% compared to the previous week, with an average of 46 deaths reported every day.
- The number of weekly hospitalizations decreased by 4% and the number of weekly cases in the ICU decreased by 5% compared to the week prior.

- Daily case rates remain highest among those 20-39 years of age and lowest among those 80 years and older.
- According to forecasting, between 1,361,725 to 1,397,570 cumulative reported cases and 24,970 to 25,530 deaths are expected by May 23, 2021.

Key vaccine updates as of May 8, 2021:

- 38.87% of the population has received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, including: 90.12% of adults aged 80 or older and 88.58% of adults 70-79 years of age.
- 3.30% 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 19, 2021 at 15:28 CET)	
Confirmed Cases	Confirmed Deaths
163,869,893	3,398,302

In the last day:

- There were 546,512 new cases and 11,335 deaths.
- India, Brazil, Argentina, the U.S., and France reported the most new cases and India, Brazil, the U.S., Colombia, and Argentina reported the most deaths.

In the past week:

- Nearly 4.7 million new cases and 89,714 deaths were reported.
- India, Brazil, the U.S., Argentina, and Colombia 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 16, 2021:

- There were just over 4.8 million new global cases reported this week, representing a 12% decrease from the week prior. There were just under 86,000 new deaths reported, which was a 5% decrease from the week prior.
- Despite the continued downward trend over the past three weeks, the incidence of cases remains at some of the highest levels since the beginning of the pandemic.

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

Provincial, National and Global Updates *(Since May 12, 2021 Partner Update)*

Provincial Updates

The Ontario Government:

- Is carrying out more inspections at workplaces in hot-spot regions ([news release](#))
- Vaccine booking expanding to Ontarians 18+ ahead of schedule ([news release](#))
- Is donating an additional 2,000 ventilators to support India ([statement](#))
- Is providing more relief for the tourism industry ([news release](#))
- Is adding 2,000 nurses to the health care system ([news release](#))
- Is extending stay-at-home order until June 2 ([news release](#))

Public Health Ontario published:

- Public Health Measures to Manage the Spread of Variants ([environmental scan](#))
- COVID-19 Variants of Concern ([webinar](#))
- Evidence on School Reopening in the Context of Variants of Concern ([evidence brief](#))
- 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:

- Falling COVID-19 test numbers pose 'huge problem' for reopening in Ontario ([article](#))
- Some hospitals allowed to resume non-urgent procedures as third wave ebbs ([article](#))
- Ontario will scrap colour-coded framework as it prepares new reopening plan ([article](#))
- Recreational amenities could reopen before stay-at-home order expires: Elliott ([article](#))
- Health units urge patience as vaccination demand surges ([article](#))
- Ontario 'not out of the woods,' according to chief medical officer ([article](#))
- Opioid overdose deaths up 75 percent in Ontario during COVID-19 pandemic ([article](#))
- Workplace inspections show better compliance, experts say requirements too lax ([article](#))
- In one of Ontario's hardest-hit regions, COVID takes a toll on essential workers ([article](#))
- Ontario MPPs vote down NDP motion to open outdoor recreational facilities ([article](#))
- 2,000 patients have been transferred in ON to free up beds – but it's taking a toll ([article](#))
- ON not building mass screening tool for B.1.617 variant; 45 cases now confirmed ([article](#))
- Ontario summer camps 'opening up this year': Ford ([article](#))
- 'We need to be flexible,' warns science table as hot spot vaccine ramp-up ends ([article](#))
- Will Ontario have a 'one-dose' or 'two-dose' summer? Here's what experts say ([article](#))

National Updates

The Government of Canada:

- Health Canada authorizes more flexible storage conditions for Pfizer vaccine ([statement](#))
- Invests in skills training to help get Canadians back to work ([news release](#))
- Statement from the Public Health Agency of Canada ([statement](#))
- Launches "Ripple Effect" campaign to encourage COVID-19 vaccination ([news release](#))
- COVID-19 update for Indigenous Peoples and communities ([news release](#))
- Statements from the Chief Public Health Officer: [May 13](#), [May 15](#), [May 16](#), [May 17](#), [May 19](#)

Other National News:

- Tam expects AstraZeneca recipients will be able to choose second vaccine ([article](#))
- Why Canada's big bets on delaying, mixing doses of vaccines could pay off ([article](#))
- Montreal study shows rapid COVID-19 tests have limited effectiveness in schools ([article](#))
- Canadians who got AstraZeneca vaccine shouldn't regret decision, experts say ([article](#))
- Brig.-Gen. Krista Brodie named new head of Canada's vaccine rollout ([article](#))
- Canadian COVID-19 vaccine shows promise in clinical trials ([article](#))
- Federal government invests \$200M to build mRNA vaccine plant in Ontario ([article](#))
- Trudeau, Ford continue to trade barbs over border restrictions in ongoing feud ([article](#))
- Partially vaccinated Canadians could have small outdoor gatherings this summer ([article](#))
- Alberta and Manitoba ICUs see record patient numbers amid high case counts ([article](#))
- Experts call on Canada to use COVAX doses of AstraZeneca or give them back ([article](#))
- Fewer flights land with COVID-19 since ban on planes from India, Pakistan ([article](#))
- Canada could soon turn the corner in the pandemic – even if it doesn't feel like it ([article](#))
- How Montreal dodged a third wave and what others can learn from its success ([article](#))

Global Updates

The World Health Organization (WHO):

- Special Focus: Update on SARS-CoV-2 variants ([Weekly epidemiological update](#) p.4-8)
- How to talk about vaccines ([feature story](#))
- Director General highlights that "In some countries with the highest vaccination rates, there appears to be a mindset that the pandemic is over, while others are experiencing huge waves of infection... We need high-income countries that have contracted much of

the immediate global supply of vaccines to share them now... No one is safe until we're all safe." ([Remarks at May 17 media briefing](#))

- Safety signals related to the Johnson & Johnson/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine ([statement](#))
- Director General speaks to the growing inequity in global vaccination rollout "In low and lower-middle income countries, vaccine supply has not been enough to even immunize health and care workers, and hospitals are being inundated with people that need lifesaving care urgently... at present, only 0.3% of vaccine supply is going to low-income countries." ([Remarks at May 14 media briefing](#))

Other International News:

- U.S. border says COVID vax not essential; Canadians could be denied entry ([article](#))
- Mixing COVID-19 vaccine doses leads to more reactions, study finds ([article](#))
- CDC mask guidelines: Guidance eased for Americans fully vaccinated ([article](#))
- Britain increasingly confident vaccines work against variant associated with India ([article](#))
- How changing Pfizer storage temperature could completely alter vaccine access ([article](#))
- India reports record number of new deaths as infections surge in rural areas ([article](#))
- In many countries, dissatisfaction with governments' pandemic response grows ([article](#))

SMDHU Resources

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

Main COVID-19

- Updated content to reflect the extended stay-at-home order and provincial shutdown

Stop the Spread

- Added new expander bar with information and guidance for [Marinas and boat launches](#)

Getting your Vaccination

- Updated main content to reflect that all adults turning 18 and older are now eligible
- Added new expander bar with information about vaccination plans for [youth 12-17 years](#)
- Updated information on [AstraZeneca rollout](#)
- Updated early second dose booking information for [Indigenous adults and household members](#) and [Highest Priority Health Care Workers](#)

Learn more about vaccines

- Posted French version of the [Increasing COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence in the Simcoe Muskoka Workforce](#) resource

Operating your Business Safely

- Updated content under [Resources for all employers and workplaces](#) expander bar
- Updated information and guidance for [Marinas and boat launches](#)
- Updated information and posted provincial [guidance document](#) for [Recreational camps](#)

Partners and Municipalities

- Added new expander bars with information and guidance documents for [Cooling Shelters](#) and [Elections](#)

New Public Health Alerts:

- **May 14, 2021:** [COVID-19 Vaccine: Update #23: Dose 2 Booking Update](#)
- **May 18, 2021:** [COVID-19 Vaccine: Update #24: Eligibility Open to 18+ and 2nd Dose Booking Update](#)

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](#)