

COVID-19 Update for Partners

May 26, 2021

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Key messages from Dr. Gardner, Medical Officer of Health

COVID-19 vaccination eligibility expands to youth ages 12-17 years old

- **As of Sunday, May 23, youth ages 12-17 years old** are now eligible to book a vaccination appointment. In Simcoe Muskoka, we have already been providing vaccination to youth who met previous eligibility criteria, such as those with high-risk health conditions. To date, we have provided 2,853 first dose vaccinations and 259 second dose vaccinations to youth 12-17 years of age. Additionally, over 9,000 vaccination appointments have been booked for youth over the next three weeks.
- The Pfizer vaccine is currently the only COVID-19 vaccine that has been approved for use in youth 12-17 years old. Accordingly, youth can book an appointment at any of our community clinics through the provincial system as well as at [select pharmacies](#) administering the Pfizer vaccine. Youth ages 12-17 who live, work, or go to school in the hot spot Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury (BWG) can also book an appointment at a BWG-specific clinic through the Town's [website](#).
- Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) is also working with our school board partners on plans to promote COVID-19 vaccination for youth during the month of June.
- All individuals, including youth, must provide informed consent in order to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. When a young person receives the vaccine, the individual providing immunization will check that they understand the nature of the treatment as well as its risks and benefits. Youth are also encouraged to talk about this decision with a parent, guardian, or adult they trust. Correspondingly, parents and guardians should respect a young person's decision to be vaccinated.

Second dose administration of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine

- In consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and public health experts, the province is moving ahead with second dose administration of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine.
- For a limited time, individuals who received their first dose of AstraZeneca from March 10-19, 2021 may opt to receive their second dose at an early interval of 10 weeks. Those eligible will also have the option to receive their second dose at the recommended dose interval of 12 weeks.
- As a reminder, the AstraZeneca rollout in pharmacy and primary care is separate from our community clinics, so second dose appointments cannot be booked through the

health unit or provincial booking system. Pharmacies and primary care providers will be reaching out to those eligible for a second dose in the coming days. If you have not heard from the pharmacy where you received your first dose after several days, you can contact this location for information on how to book a second dose appointment. Please do not contact your primary care provider to inquire about this.

- The province will provide further guidance with regards to administering doses of two different vaccines in the near future and in advance of when most people will become due to receive their second AstraZeneca dose.

Appointments available for Muskoka residents at Lake of Bays pop-up clinic

- The Township of Lake of Bays, together with SMDHU, is hosting a COVID-19 pop-up vaccination clinic at the Baysville Arena on **Monday, May 31, 2021** from 11am-6pm.
- **Individuals 18 years of age or older who live, work, or go to school anywhere in the District of Muskoka are eligible** to book an appointment to receive their first COVID-19 vaccine dose at this clinic.
- To register, eligible residents can book online through the Township of Lake of Bays [website](#) or by calling the health unit at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 ext. 5997.

Ongoing options for COVID-19 vaccination in Simcoe Muskoka

- There are a number of ways to get vaccinated in Simcoe Muskoka and residents are encouraged to take the first opportunity available to them to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Anyone 12 years and older can book an appointment at one of our community clinics through the provincial [online booking system](#) or Provincial Vaccine Booking Line (1-833-943-3900).
- Those eligible for a first dose appointment can also continue to sign up for our [standby list](#) daily, starting at 8am. Those who are called in for a same-day vaccination appointment will have their eligibility reviewed.
- All individuals 12 years of age or older who live, work, or go to school in the BWG hot spot can book a first dose vaccination appointment at a BWG-specific clinic by visiting the Town's [website](#).
- A number of pharmacies in our region now have Pfizer or Moderna vaccine to administer to individuals eligible to receive their first COVID-19 vaccine dose. Appointments can be booked directly through [participating pharmacies](#).
- Our Moderna vaccination pilot in primary care is now underway. 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.**
- As a reminder, **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.

Provincial roadmap to safely reopen the province

- Last Thursday, the province released its three-step [Roadmap for Reopening](#). Based on current trends in key health system and public health indicators, including the provincial vaccination rate, the government expects to **enter Step One of the Roadmap the week of June 14, 2021**. This will be confirmed closer to the time.
- The province also recently announced the reopening of some outdoor recreational amenities, with public health restrictions in place. These include amenities such as golf courses and driving ranges, soccer and sports fields, tennis and basketball courts, and skate parks. Outdoor team sports and recreational classes are not permitted.

- Outdoor limits for social gatherings and public events have also been expanded to five people. **Masks should still be worn if individuals from different households cannot maintain adequate physical distancing.**
- Please note the province remains under a stay-at-home order until June 2, 2021, and the provincewide shutdown measures also remain in effect. As such, SMDHU continues to advise that residents:
 - Limit trips outside the home to necessities such as food, medication, medical appointments, supporting vulnerable community members, or exercising outdoors.
 - Avoid all non-essential travel – even within the province.
 - Maintain 2-metres physical distance from individuals outside your household, indoors and outdoors, and wear a mask if this distance cannot be maintained.
 - Stay home and get tested if you have symptoms of COVID-19.

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

Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Case Status (As of May 26, 2021 14:00)			
Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
11,751	541	10,405	245
<p><u>In the last day:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 29 people tested positive, 40 people recovered, and there were no new deaths. • There were 18 new variant cases* identified. <p><u>Currently:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been 68 new cases reported to the health unit for the current week. • 23 Simcoe Muskoka residents are hospitalized with COVID-19. • There are 406 active variant cases*. • There are 10 ongoing outbreaks (workplaces: 7, institutions: 2, congregate settings: 1), including 9 active outbreaks with known variant cases. <p><u>Since the last Partner Update:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have reported 258 new cases, 452 recoveries, and 4 new deaths. • There are 210 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 16, there were 302 new cases reported to the health unit which was 12% lower than the 345 cases reported the week prior. <p>For more local data, see: SMDHU COVID-19 HealthSTATS page, COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard, Provincial COVID-19 Response Framework – Status of Simcoe Muskoka</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>			

Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Vaccine Data (As of May 26, 2021 14:00)	
Total first doses administered	Total second doses administered
292,801	31,793
<p><u>Highlights:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 42,886 immunizations have been provided since the last Partner Update. • Over 292,800 people have received their first dose, representing 48.4% of the population in Simcoe Muskoka. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 26,650 adults 80 years of age and older (94%); 	

- 47,991 adults 70-79 years of age (89%);
 - 67,975 adults 60-69 years of age (84%); and,
 - 58,681 adults 50-59 years of age (65%).
- Nearly 31,800 people have received both required doses of the vaccine, representing 5.3% of the population in Simcoe Muskoka.

Local Media Updates *(Since May 19, 2021 Partner Update)*

- Simcoe Muskoka cases continue to drop as nearly half of residents get first dose ([article](#))
- Simcoe County hospitals cautiously tackle surgery backlog ([article](#))
- Gardner supports province's roadmap, encourages safe outdoor enjoyment ([article](#))
- Scaled-back anti-lockdown rally held in downtown Barrie ([article](#))
- Three under-the-radar COVID-19 issues in Simcoe Muskoka ([article](#))
- After challenging year, Simcoe County recognizing Paramedic Services Week ([article](#))
- Local forum to tackle impact of pandemic on women in business ([article](#))

Provincial, National and Global COVID-19 Case Status

Ontario *(As of May 26, 2021, 10:30)*

Total cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
526,045	17,727	499,640	8,678

As of today:

- There were 1,095 new cases, 2,371 resolved cases, and 23 deaths in the last day.
- There has been a total of 121,122 confirmed cases of the U.K. variant, 836 cases of the South African variant, and 2,505 cases of the Brazilian variant.
- A total of 1,073 people are hospitalized for COVID-19, 672 people are in intensive care units (ICU) and 469 people are on ventilators.
- There are 520 ongoing COVID-19 outbreaks (workplaces: 204, other settings: 97, schools and childcares: 91, health care settings: 67, congregate living: 61).

Since the last Partner Update:

- There have been 11,355 new cases, 16,891 recoveries, and 153 deaths.
- There are 5,689 fewer active cases compared to the same day last week.
- There are 328 fewer people hospitalized, 63 fewer people in the ICU, and 70 fewer people on ventilators compared to the same day last week.
- The 7-day average number of new daily cases is 1,622.

Vaccine status:

- A total of 8,386,950 vaccine doses have been administered to date, with 135,308 doses administered yesterday. 569,317 people in Ontario have been fully vaccinated.

Regional updates:

- Areas with the highest number of active cases per 100,000 population: Porcupine (400.23), Peel (303.97), Toronto (198.02), Durham (148.64), and Hamilton (141.55).
- Areas with the highest number of active cases: Toronto (5,409), Peel (4,200), York (1,029), Durham (960), and Ottawa (898).

Weekly Epidemiological Summary highlights: May 9-15, 2021:

- During the week of May 9, there were 16,489 new cases reported, down from the 20,782 cases reported the week prior.

- While the rate of cases continues to decrease across all quintiles of neighbourhood diversity, the largest decrease in cases was seen in the most ethnically diverse neighbourhoods 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 25, 2021 at 19:00 EDT)

Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
1,365,516	47,866	1,292,326	25,324

Yesterday:

- Canada reported 2,506 new cases and 51 deaths.
- New cases were reported in all provinces and territories except PEI, NWT, and YT.
- New deaths were reported in BC, AB, MB ON, and QC.

Since the last Partner Update:

- In the last week, 27,375 people tested positive for COVID-19, 306 people died, and 43,951 people recovered.
- There are 16,882 fewer active cases of COVID-19 than there was a week ago.

Between May 10 and May 17, 2021:

- The number of COVID-19 patients hospitalized decreased from 2,594 to 2,314.
- The number of COVID-19 patients in ICU beds decreased from 1,281 to 1,247.
- The number of COVID-19 patients mechanically vented decreased from 753 to 751.

Weekly epidemiology update: May 9-15, 2021:

- New cases decreased by 17% compared to the previous week, with an average of 6,223 new cases reported every day.
- New deaths increased by 3% compared to the previous week, with an average of 47 deaths reported every day.
- The number of weekly hospitalizations decreased by 9% and the number of weekly cases in the ICU decreased by 6% 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.

Key vaccine updates as of May 15, 2021:

- 45.10% of the population has received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, including: 90.92% of adults aged 80 or older and 88.89% of adults 70-79 years of age.
- 3.99% 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 26, 2021 at 10:39 CET)

Confirmed Cases	Confirmed Deaths
167,423,479	3,480,480

In the last day:

- There were 453,313 new cases and 10,031 deaths.
- India, Brazil, Argentina, the U.S., and Colombia reported the most new cases and India, Brazil, Colombia, the U.S., and Argentina reported the most deaths.

In the past week:

- Over 3.5 million new cases and 82,178 deaths were reported.
- India, Brazil, Argentina, the U.S., and Colombia reported the most new cases and India, Brazil, the U.S., Argentina, and Colombia reported the most new deaths.

Highlights from Weekly Epidemiological Summary as of May 25, 2021:

- There were over 4.1 million new global cases reported this week, representing a 14% decrease from the week prior. There were 84,000 new deaths reported, which was a 2% decrease from the week prior.
- Despite the continued downward trend over the past four weeks, the incidence of cases and deaths remain high, and substantial increases have been reported in many countries.

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

Provincial, National and Global Updates *(Since May 19, 2021 Partner Update)*

Provincial Updates

The Ontario Government:

- Is expanding COVID-19 vaccine booking to youth 12+ ahead of schedule ([news release](#))
- Is opening up outdoor visits for long-term care ([news release](#))
- Is proceeding with second dose administration of AstraZeneca ([news release](#))
- Releases three-step roadmap to safely reopen the province ([news release](#))

Public Health Ontario published:

- COVID-19 Cases After Vaccination in Long-term Care, Retirement Homes ([epi summary](#))
- COVID-19 Transmission through Large Respiratory Droplets and Aerosols ([synthesis](#))
- Updated: COVID-19 Variants of Concern in Ontario ([epi summary](#))
- Updated: COVID-19 Regional Incidence and Time to Case Notification ([epi summary](#))
- Updated: COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake in Ontario ([surveillance report](#))

Other Provincial News:

- Regional approach to reopening schools is 'certainly possible': health minister ([article](#))
- Ontario confirms first blood clot death in man who received AstraZeneca vaccine ([article](#))
- Williams wants students back in classrooms before Ontario reopens ([article](#))
- Solicitor general asks for patience for booking second dose of AstraZeneca ([article](#))
- Vaccine shopping to avoid Moderna is 'alarming,' potentially harmful, doctors say ([article](#))
- People seeking second doses urged to be patient after reports of abuse, bullying ([article](#))
- Ontario's COVID-19 cases are declining, but hospitals are far from normal ([article](#))
- Ontarians share their COVID-19 vaccination stories ([article](#))
- Ontario's 'slow and cautious' reopening plan tied to vaccination rates, Ford says ([article](#))
- COVID-19 in high-rise buildings raises transmission fears for residents ([article](#))
- Ontario's reopening plan will allow patio dining, non-essential retail in mid-June ([article](#))
- Ontario's case count could fall to 500 daily by July under possible reopening plan ([article](#))

National Updates

The Government of Canada:

- Assists Manitoba COVID-19 response ([news release](#))
- Extends quarantine measures and travel restrictions ([news release](#))
- Reducing your risk for infection and spreading the virus ([backgrounder](#))
- COVID-19 update for Indigenous Peoples and communities ([news release](#))

- Statements from the Chief Public Health Officer: [May 20](#), [May 22](#), [May 26](#)

Other National News:

- Provinces move to shorten interval between COVID-19 vaccine doses ([article](#))
- Job losses due to pandemic hit women harder than men, Statscan report says ([article](#))
- Manitoba flies critically ill COVID-19 patients to other provinces ([article](#))
- Don't assume your child wants a COVID-19 vaccine, public health experts warn ([article](#))
- Feds say Canada poised to 'ramp up' second COVID-19 doses starting in June ([article](#))
- Provinces struggle with whether to reopen schools amid evolving data ([article](#))
- Patients suffering, dying waiting for care as MB hospitals overrun by COVID-19 ([article](#))
- Health officials expect half of Canadians to receive second dose by mid-summer ([article](#))
- Canada's vaccination rates have doubled in five weeks as daily cases drop ([article](#))
- Regarding vaccine interchangeability, NACI recommends using the same type ([article](#))
- Public health evaluating how, when Canada can allow fully vaccinated travellers ([article](#))
- As vaccine rollout chugs along, attention turns to borders foreign and domestic ([article](#))
- Youth job options face 'long-term scarring' from pandemic: employment minister ([article](#))
- Federal, provincial privacy watchdogs issue warning about vaccine passports ([article](#))
- Canada to surpass U.S. in share of population with one COVID-19 vaccine dose ([article](#))

Global Updates

The World Health Organization (WHO):

- Special Focus: Update on SARS-CoV-2 variants ([Weekly epidemiological update](#) p.4-10)
- Director General emphasizes the need for vaccine equity: "The ongoing vaccine crisis is a scandalous inequity that is perpetuating the pandemic. More than 75% of all vaccines have been administered in just 10 countries... I understand that every government wants to vaccinate its entire population... but right now, there is not enough supply. Countries that vaccinate children and low-risk groups do so at the expense of health workers and high-risk groups in other countries." ([Remarks at May 24 World Health Assembly](#))
- G20 leaders boost support of the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator, but urgent and immediate action is needed to maintain momentum ([news release](#))
- Support to countries' equitable and resilient recovery from the pandemic ([statement](#))
- World Health Assembly to focus on ending COVID-19 pandemic and preparing for next one ([news release](#))
- Fighting infection with information ([feature story](#))

Other International News:

- U.K. officials say Pfizer, AstraZeneca vaccines effective against India variant ([article](#))
- U.S. study finds tiny number of vaccine 'breakthrough' COVID-19 cases ([article](#))
- COVID-19 death toll could be 'two to three' times above official numbers: WHO ([article](#))
- Two AstraZeneca COVID-19 shots 85-90% effective: U.K. real-world analysis ([article](#))
- As COVID ravages India, one state charted its own course against the pandemic ([article](#))
- Moderna says its COVID-19 shot works in kids as young as 12 ([article](#))

SMDHU Resources

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

Main COVID-19

- Updated main content to reflect the extended stay-at-home order and shutdown
- Added information about the reopening of select outdoor recreational amenities

Stop the Spread

- Updated information and guidance for [close contact, gatherings and events](#) and [how to attend a wedding, funeral or other religious ceremony safely](#)

Getting your Vaccination

- Updated main content to reflect that anyone 12 years and older is now eligible to book a first dose COVID-19 vaccination appointment
- Revised information on vaccination for [youth 12-17 years of age](#)
- Updated information on the provincial rollout of [AstraZeneca](#)
- Posted instructions for how individuals who received their first vaccine dose before March 17 can book their second dose appointment

Operating your Business Safely

- Updated COVID-19 information and guidance for:
 - [Indoor and outdoor events and gatherings](#);
 - [Marinas and boat launches](#), and;
 - [Outdoor recreational amenities](#)

Partners and Municipalities

- Updated COVID-19 information and guidance for [outdoor recreational amenities](#)

Enforcement

- Posted one new charge issued to the 'Summary of Enforcement Actions' table

New Public Health Alerts:

- **May 21, 2021:** [COVID-19 Vaccine: Hot Spot Clinics in Bradford West Gwillimbury and Provision of Vaccine via Health Care Providers](#)

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](#)