

## COVID-19 Update for Partners

September 2, 2021

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

#### Letter of Instruction

- Simcoe Muskoka and the province have entered a fourth wave of COVID-19, with most cases caused by the contagious Delta variant.
- On Wednesday Sept 1, 2021, a letter amending my letter of instruction from March 11, 2021 was issued to businesses and organizations within the municipalities serviced by SMDHU, aligned with provincial legislative requirements already in place.
- The amended [letter of instruction](#) applies to all individuals and does not differentiate between fully vaccinated, partially or non-vaccinated persons.
- The requirement to appoint a compliance officer for the implementation of a COVID-19 safety plan is no longer required.
- The letter of instruction instructs all persons responsible for a business or organization in the County of Simcoe, District of Muskoka, City of Barrie, and the City of Orillia to implement a number of measures including:
  - preparing and making safety plans available
  - requiring face coverings and physical distancing
  - requiring certain businesses to collect and keep contact information for 30 days of all staff and patrons
  - requiring active screening of all employees
  - providing greater clarity on HVAC requirements with the overall goal of HVAC system and unit optimization.

#### Recommendations for workplace vaccine policy

- Accompanying the letter of instruction was a second letter regarding [workplace vaccination policies](#).
- It is recommended that all local employers institute and ensure compliance with a workplace COVID-19 vaccination policy to protect workers and the public from COVID-19. This recommendation applies to those employers not included within related provincial policy directives.
- Employers have an obligation to maintain a safe work environment for their workers.

- Along with other public health measures such as COVID-19 screening, physical distancing, masking and hand hygiene, a workplace vaccination policy is an important measure to help reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

### **Pop-up vaccine clinics**

- While our mass immunization clinics closed on Friday, August 27, the clinic at 29 Sperling Drive remains open until Wednesday, September 29, 2021.
- The closure of the mass immunization clinics is an impressive milestone that deserves celebration. Through these efforts, three-quarters of eligible individuals are vaccinated. We can now adapt our approach and provide vaccines to those who didn't attend one of our mass immunization clinics by meeting them where they are.
- Health unit staff are continuing to be out in the community doing pop-up COVID-19 vaccine clinics to make getting the vaccine as easy as possible for those who have not been vaccinated.
- There are also many [local pharmacies](#) and primary care providers who are also offering vaccines.

### **Vaccination program impact**

- Public Health Ontario has been calculating the number of cases and severe outcomes that have been prevented by the direct effects of vaccination. As of August 21, PHO estimates that:
  - Since Dec. 14, 2020, 53,826 cases have been prevented among Ontario individuals 18 years of age and older, and
  - 3,814 severe outcomes (hospitalizations or deaths) have been prevented among individuals 70 years and older.
- The reduction in cases and severe outcomes are likely to be underestimated as only the direct effects of vaccination are estimated in this analysis and indirect efforts are not included.
- Information about PHO's methodology is available on their [website](#).
- At a local level, this translates to the prevention of 1,318 COVID-19 cases prevented among Simcoe Muskoka adults 18 years of age and older since Dec. 22, 2020.
- When looking at these by age groups this translates to:
  - 485 averted among 18-39
  - 669 averted among 40-69
  - 164 averted among 70+

### **School- based COVID-19 vaccine clinics**

- It is important that youth, including those who are turning 12 years before the end of this calendar year, get fully vaccinated with two doses as soon as possible.
- The Delta strain of COVID-19 is more contagious and more severe, even in youth. Also, even if individuals don't have symptoms, they can spread it to others who may be at higher risk of illness.
- All people – including youth – need vaccination, in addition to other practices, such as mask use, physical distancing and frequent hand cleaning, for their own protection and for the protection of those around them.
- In addition to our pop-up vaccination clinics and under the direction of the Ministry of Health, the health unit is offering COVID-19 vaccination clinics in some secondary school locations to protect all students born in 2009 or before and their families, school staff and people in the local community.
- Clinics offering first and second doses will be held from Thursday, September 9 to Friday, September 17.

- The health unit will be using space made available by local school boards and schools to ensure clinics are accessible to students, staff and the school community, while not interfering with academic studies.
- During school hours, the clinics will only be available to students and staff who attend or work at the school clinic location. Members of the school community and the public will be able to access the clinics after school hours on a walk-in basis.
- The schedule is available on the health unit's [website](#) and it is being communicated by the school boards to parents.

#### **COVID-19 LIVE Q&A for parents and students**

- We understand that parents of youth ages 12-17 may have many questions and concerns surrounding consent as we launch COVID-19 vaccine clinics in our school environments.
- Parents and students are invited to join SMDHU's AMOH Dr. Colin Lee and Dr. Laura Barker, a pediatrician at Orillia Soldiers' Memorial Hospital for a live Q&A session on Wednesday, September 8.
- This free webinar will include brief presentations and is an open forum for learning where questions can be asked and answered in real-time.
- Information about this free session will be available on our website in the coming days.

#### **Vaccination certificate – Ford's announcement at 1:00 on September 1, 2021**

- Premier Ford announced that the province will implement a vaccination certificate that will come into force on September 22.
- The rules will apply to anyone who is eligible to be vaccinated and children under the age of 12 and people with medical exemptions are excluded from the requirement.
- The certificate will apply to indoor spaces including restaurants, bars, gyms and theatres.
- The vaccine certificate will be used with government-issued ID.
- The province is developing an app that will combine an individual's ID and the vaccine certification, which they can show if asked for proof.
- Those using the smart phone app will be able to show a QR code on their phone to share their status without sharing any personal health information and businesses will also be provided with an app to read the QR codes. These apps are expected to be available in late October.

*Dr. Gardner's next media briefing will take place on Wednesday, September 8 at 1:30 p.m. Previous SMDHU MOH media briefings are posted on the SMDHU [Facebook](#) page and [YouTube](#) channel.*

<b>Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Case Status (As of Sept 2, 2021)</b>			
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>Active Cases</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Deaths</b>
12,909	218	12,435	256
<p>As of the last update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 34 people became cases, there were 21 newly resolved cases, there was 1 new hospitalization, and there were no new deaths.</li> </ul> <p>Currently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There have been 115 new cases reported to the health unit for the current week. There were 147 new cases reported to the health unit last week (week of August 22nd), 16% higher than the 127 cases reported for the week of August 15th.</li> </ul>			

- 12 Simcoe Muskoka residents are hospitalized with COVID-19.
- There are 132 active variant cases.\*
- There has been a total of 575 confirmed cases of the Delta variant in Simcoe Muskoka.
- There are 3 active COVID-19 outbreaks.

Since the last Partner Update:

- We have reported 183 new cases, 130 resolved cases, and no new deaths.
- There are 53 more active cases compared to the same day last week.
- There is 1 more active COVID-19 outbreak.

For more local data, see: SMDHU COVID-19 HealthSTATS page and COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard

\*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 Sept 2, 2021)*

Total # immunized with first dose	Total # immunized with second dose
434,722	396,795

#### Highlights:

- 11,171 immunizations have been provided since the last Partner Update.
- In total 840,039,824 doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been administered in Simcoe Muskoka, including doses administered by local pharmacies. 72% of the total population of Simcoe Muskoka have received at least one dose of vaccine, and 66% have received two doses.
- Currently 82% of the population 12 years and older living in Simcoe Muskoka have had at least one dose of vaccine and 75% have had two doses.

### Local Media Updates *(Since Aug 25, 2021 Partner Update)*

- Alliston hospital also implementing mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policy ([article](#))
- Rally held outside Barrie hospital against mandatory vaccines for health-care workers ([article](#))
- Collingwood hospital's staff vaccination policy 'likely to shift' in coming weeks, says CEO ([article](#))
- Gardner commends province on COVID vaccine passport plan ([article](#))
- RVH's new vaccination policy responds to delta variant, says hospital president ([article](#))
- Gardner recommending all local employers have COVID vaccination policy ([article](#))
- Barrie hospital implementing mandatory vaccination policy ([article](#))
- Health unit hosting virtual vaccine forum for local parents, students ([article](#))
- Children can consent to their own vaccines: health unit ([article](#))
- Emergency services in the region consider vaccine policies for staff ([article](#))
- Sewage testing shows increased levels of COVID virus in Barrie ([article](#))
- 'I was doing my part': Bradford residents get vaccinated against COVID-19 ([article](#))

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

Ontario <i>(As of Sept 2, 2021 at 10:29)</i>			
Total cases	Active Cases	Resolved	Deaths
567,071	6,031	551,510	9,530

#### As of yesterday:

- There were 865 new cases, 681 resolved cases, and 14 deaths in the last day.

- Of the 865 new cases, 540 are unvaccinated, 88 are partially vaccinated and 173 are fully vaccinated and 64 are status unknown.
- A total of 320 people are hospitalized with COVID-19, 162 people are in intensive care units (ICU) due to COVID-related critical illness, and 105 people are on ventilators.
- A total of 20,827,809 vaccine doses have been administered. 73% of all Ontarians have received their first vaccine dose and 67% have been fully vaccinated.
- Of all eligible Ontarians 12 years of age and older 83% have at least one dose and 77% are fully vaccinated.
- There are currently 145 active COVID-19 outbreaks in Ontario.

Since the last Partner Update:

- There have been 5,744 new cases, 4,825 recoveries, and 58 deaths.
- There are 891 more active cases compared to the same day last week.
- There are 37 more people hospitalized, 1 more person in the ICU, and 13 more people on ventilators compared to the same day last week.
- The 7-day average number of new daily cases is 728.

Regional updates:

- Areas with the highest number of active cases per 100,000 population: Windsor-Essex County (121.93), Hamilton (100.65), Brant County (64.43)

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

<b>Canada (As of September 1, 2021 at 19:00 EDT)</b>			
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>Active Cases</b>	<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Deaths</b>
1,503,018	32,248	1,443,808	26,962

Yesterday:

- Canada reported 3,853 new cases and 30 new deaths.
- Most cases were reported in Alberta, Ontario and B.C.

Since the last Partner Update:

- In the last week, 22,142 people tested positive for COVID-19, 107 people died

Key vaccine updates as of August 13, 2021:

- 73.4% of the population has received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, including 84.3% of those ages 12 and older.
- 66.9% of the population has been fully vaccinated, including 76.9% of those ages 12 and older.

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

<b>Global (As of Sept 1, 2021 at 16:50 CEST)</b>	
<b>Confirmed Cases</b>	<b>Confirmed Deaths</b>
217,558,771	4,517,240

In the last 24 hours:

- There were 527,942 new cases and 7,308 deaths.
- U.S.A, India, United Kingdom Iran and Turkey reported the most new cases and Russia, U.S.A, Iran, India and South Africa reported the most new deaths.

In the past week:

- More than 4.4 million new cases and more than 68,000 deaths were reported.
- U.S.A., India, Iran, United Kingdom and Brazil reported the most new cases and U.S.A, Russia, Mexico and Brazil reported the most new deaths.

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

## Provincial, National and Global Updates *(Since August 25, 2021 Partner Update)*

### **Provincial Updates**

#### The Ontario Government:

- Ontario to Require Proof of Vaccination in Select Settings ([news release](#))
- New Requirement for Proof of Vaccination in Certain Settings: Frequently Asked Questions ([backgrounder](#))
- Ontario Salutes Work of Province's COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force ([news release](#))

#### Public Health Ontario published:

Myocarditis and Pericarditis Following Vaccination with COVID-19 mRNA Vaccines in Ontario: December 13, 2020 to August 7, 2021 ([enhanced epidemiological summary](#))

#### Other Provincial News:

- COVID-19 vaccination rate must rise above 85% to avoid fall lockdown, Ontario modelling shows ([article](#))
- Goal of vaccinating 90% of Ontarians possible with targeted measures, public health officials say ([article](#))
- It may be difficult for employers to uphold vaccine mandates: lawyer ([article](#))
- Ontario is facing 'substantial' fourth wave of COVID-19, first modelling since June suggests ([article](#))
- Restaurant operators have mixed reaction to Ontario's COVID-19 vaccine certificate program ([article](#))
- Ontario reveals vaccine passport system for restaurants, gyms and theatres. Here's what you need to know ([article](#))
- Ontario lifts class size, distancing requirements in indoor post-secondary classrooms ([article](#))
- Ontario should prevent the 'hack' that hit Quebec's vaccine passport app, expert warns ([article](#))
- Ontario modifies screening guidance for schools and childcare centres ([article](#))
- Ontario extends three paid COVID-19 sick days through the end of 2021 ([article](#))
- Ontario reports multi-month high of nearly 900 COVID-19 cases; 14 more deaths ([article](#))
- Windsor, Toronto hospitals opening COVID-19 clinics for children amid surge in cases ([article](#))
- Ford defends delayed Ontario vaccine certificate by blaming 'unnecessary election' called by Justin Trudeau ([article](#))

### **National Updates**

- The Government of Canada:



- Ivermectin not authorized to prevent or treat COVID-19; may cause serious health problems ([recalls and safety alerts](#))
- Statement from the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada on August 27, 2021([statement](#))

#### Other National News:

- Reports of 1 assault, verbal abuse as thousands protest vaccine passports outside hospitals across B.C. ([article](#))
- From mu to C.1.2, here are the latest coronavirus variants scientists are watching closely ([article](#))
- Scenes from Day 1 of Quebec's vaccination passport: confusion, questions and relief ([article](#))
- Western provinces driving Canada's 4th COVID-19 wave as physicians warn cases 'out of control' ([article](#))
- Health Canada authorizes Moderna's COVID-19 vaccines for youth 12 to 17 years old ([article](#))
- Americans should 'reconsider' travel to Canada, U.S. Centers for Disease Control advises ([article](#))
- Alberta to make COVID vaccine confirmation cards available but won't implement passport program ([article](#))
- What school will look like this fall as Canada struggles to bring COVID-19 under control ([article](#))

#### **Global Updates**

- Statement on booster doses and prioritization for vaccination ([news update](#))
- Guidance for issuing digital certificates ([news update](#))

### **SMDHU Resources**

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

- Information about proof of vaccine status ([link](#))
- COVID-19 vaccination information for employers ([link](#))
- Operating your Business Safely page – content updates, including guidance documents ([link](#))
- Partners/Municipalities page – content updates, including guidance documents ([link](#))
- Enforcement page – content updates ([link](#))

#### **Updated Resources:**

- Letter of Instruction to Businesses and Organizations for Additional Public Health Measures ([PDF](#))
- Increasing COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence in the Simcoe Muskoka Workforce ([PDF](#))
- COVID-19 Public Health Guidance: Workplace Safety Plan and Screening - Step 3 ([PDF](#))
- FAQ - Wearing masks or face coverings within enclosed public spaces - Step 3 ([PDF](#))
- SMDHU's COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Facilities for Sports and Recreational Fitness Activities ([PDF](#))
- SMDHU's COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Day Camps - Step 3([PDF](#))
- COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Food Premises - Step 3 ([PDF](#))
- COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Indoor and Outdoor Events and Gatherings – Step 3 ([PDF](#))

- COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Marinas - Step 3 ([PDF](#))
- COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Indoor and Outdoor Recreational Amenities – Step 3 ([PDF](#))
- COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Facilities for Sports and Recreational Fitness Activities – Step 3 ([PDF](#))
- COVID-19 Guidance for Outdoor Recreational Water Facilities - Step 3 ([PDF](#))
- COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Retail Businesses and Shopping Malls – Step 3 ([PDF](#))
- The Public Health Guidance for Taxi and Rideshare Drivers ([PDF](#))

### **New Public Health Alerts**

COVID-19 Vaccine: Update #34 Third Dose Updates, Valid Exemptions and Building Vaccine Confidence ([PDF](#))

### **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-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](#)