

COVID-19: Update #30 Provincial Changes in Contact Management Revised Provincial VOC Interim Guidance Revised Provincial Screening for Schools & Child Care Centres Revised SMDHU Medical Officer of Health Order Re: Self-Isolation

Attention: Physicians, Emergency Departments, Infection Control Practitioners, Occupational Health Practitioners, Walk-In Clinics/Urgent Care Clinics, Nurse Practitioners, EMS, Designated Officers, Midwives, Family Health Teams, Pharmacies, Central LHIN, NSM LHIN, Beausoleil First Nation, Moose Deer Point First Nation, Rama First Nation, Wahta First Nation, Long-term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, Hospices

Date: February 23, 2021

Local Epidemiology & Reporting

The most current case counts for laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases, including variants of concern (VOCs), in the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) region are available at [Simcoe Muskoka Health Stats](#)ⁱ. The [most recent provincial modelling](#)ⁱⁱ released on February 11, 2021 projects that the highly transmissible B.1.1.7 may soon dominate. In order to control growth with VOCs, the Reproduction number (Re) must be 0.7 or less. If the Reproduction number is 0.9 or higher, this will trigger exponential growth. The current Re is between 0.8 and 0.9 provincially. Provincial ICU occupancy has stabilized, however, growth could start as early as the second week in March depending on the spread of B.1.1.7.

Revised Provincial VOC Interim Guidance

On February 12, 2021, the Ministry of Health (MOH) released [Version 2.0 of the COVID-19 Variant of Concern Interim Guidance](#)ⁱⁱⁱ document. While the document is still listed as draft, direction was provided on February 18, 2021 by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health that this guidance is to be implemented immediately.

Notable changes:

- **Clarification of high-risk exposures for health care settings regarding PPE use**
 - Direct care for, service provision to or interaction with a case without the appropriate and consistent use of recommended personal protective equipment (PPE) by the contact will be classified as a high-risk exposure;
 - In general, consistent and appropriate use of PPE (medical mask and eye protection) by the contact should be considered a low-risk exposure;
- **Household members of high-risk contacts to stay home except for essential reasons**
 - Household members are at increased risk of exposure based on sharing a household with a quarantining individual;
 - Therefore, household members are to stay home for the duration of the high-risk contact's self-isolation period unless for essential reasons such as attending work/school/child care, groceries, attending medical appointments and picking up prescriptions.



- **Household members of symptomatic individuals are required to self-isolate** until the symptomatic individual receives a negative COVID-19 test or is provided an alternative diagnosis by a healthcare professional
 - If the symptomatic individual does not seek COVID-19 testing, all household contacts must quarantine for 14 days (period of incubation) from break in contact with the symptomatic individual, which, if there is no break in contact, would start at the end of the symptomatic individual's isolation period (10 days from symptom onset).
 - **Note:** congregate settings are not included in the definition of household members

Revised Provincial Screening Criteria Re: schools and child care centres

Given the above-noted requirements for isolation of household members, the Ministry of Education is adopting a more rigorous and cautious approach to support a more comprehensive and enhanced school and child care screening program. As of February 22, 2021, the following approaches are being taken:

Single-symptom screening

- Staff, students and children with any new or worsening symptom of COVID-19, **even those with only one symptom**, must stay home until:
 - They receive a negative COVID-19 test result;
 - They receive an alternative diagnosis by a health care professional; or
 - It has been 10 days since their symptom onset and they are feeling better.

Isolation requirement for household contacts of symptomatic individuals

- All asymptomatic household contacts of symptomatic individuals are required to quarantine until the symptomatic individual receives a negative COVID-19 test result or an alternative diagnosis by a health care professional. If the symptomatic individual does not seek COVID-19 testing, all household contacts must quarantine for 14 days from their last contact with that symptomatic individual.

Revised SMDHU Medical Officer of Health Order Re: Household contacts

The Class Section 22 Order issued to all individuals residing, working or visiting SMDHU will be updated to include the above-noted requirements for household contacts of symptomatic individuals to self-isolate until one of the noted criteria is met.

ⁱ <https://www.simcoemuskokahealthstats.org/topics/infectious-diseases/a-h/covid-19>

ⁱⁱ https://covid19-sciencetable.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Update-on-COVID-19-Projections_February-11-2021_English-2.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/docs/default-source/jfy-health-care-professionals/voc-guidance-v2-0-2021-02-12.pdf?sfvrsn=0>