

Daily Update – August 14, 2020

Ministry of Health update

In a joint statement, Dr. Bonnie Henry, provincial health officer, and Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, reported 84 new cases in B.C. today, for a total of 4,358 cases in British Columbia since the pandemic began. Of those, 1,354 cases have been in the Vancouver Coastal Health region. Currently, 12 people are hospitalized with COVID-19, four of whom are in intensive care, and 3,533 people have fully recovered. In total, seven long-term care or assisted living facilities and two acute care facilities have active outbreaks. There are no new community outbreaks, however there continue to be community exposure events, including in Vancouver Coastal Health, and on flights into and out of British Columbia. Check the Vancouver Coastal Health [Public Exposures](#) page for the locations and times of known possible exposures to COVID-19 to the public in our region.

Data and modelling presentation

Yesterday, Dr. Henry also did an updated modelling presentation, and noted there has been a steady increase in cases, particularly since the beginning of July. The data shows we do continue to have introductions into the province from international travel, including some from temporary foreign workers who have come in from other countries, particularly Mexico. Dr. Henry said she thinks a number of potential outbreaks have been averted by providing quarantine support for all of the temporary foreign workers coming into B.C. for two weeks prior to going to farms.

An update of the geographic distribution of cases by health service delivery area shows all areas of the province continue to be affected but the bulk of the cases are still in the Lower Mainland.

The data also shows there has been a rapid increase in cases in people in their 20s and 30s, primarily being driven by people gathering and having social connections in places like bars, clubs, parties and social events.

Increased testing

Dr. Henry also reported the numbers of tests are going up again as we are finding more people who have been exposed and we're encouraging people to be tested with any symptoms at all. For most tests, the turn-around time is less than a day. She said we are continuing to build out our lab capacity as we go into the fall and aim to be able to have rapid access to laboratory capacity at about 20,000 tests per day across the province.



Mobility data shows we are slowly but surely increasing our connections in our communities, while compartmental modelling helps illustrate where things are and where things could go in the future if we don't take the actions and the measures that we know work. The reproductive number — the average daily number of new infections that are generated per case — has been hovering around 1, which means that we're opening up as much as we can without putting things at risk. An extension of the projections shows we are on an upward trajectory with a contact rate at 70% of normal. We can bend that curve back down by making sure that those contacts are safe. That includes things like safe distances, keeping our numbers small, making sure that in those times where we can't maintain those distances we wear masks.

Increased contact tracing

Dr. Henry said with increased social contact it's important to find exposures quickly, which is why the provincial government announced on Wednesday it will hire approximately 500 additional health professionals to increase contact tracing around British Columbia, helping keep communities safe as it continues its COVID-19 restart plan. Contact tracing works by following up with each person who has tested positive for COVID-19 to understand who their contacts may be and providing appropriate follow-up.

Your Story, Our Future

Dr. Henry also reported on information from the population health survey, Your Story, Our Future. More than 390,000 people responded to the survey about how COVID-19 had impacted them. Findings included:

- West Asian, Latin American and South Asian respondents were more likely to report increased difficulty meeting their financial needs during this period of time and more likely to report not working directly because of COVID-19, whereas Caucasian respondents had less difficulty making ends meet, fewer were not working, they were less likely to avoid health care, and had less food insecurity.
- Japanese, Korean, and other South Asian respondents were more likely to report having difficulty accessing health care.
- Latin Americans, Southeast Asians and black respondents were more likely to report an increased connection to family, which is a positive support and helps in terms of resiliency when these measures are happening.



- Caucasian respondents were more likely to report things like increased alcohol consumption, which can be concerning in terms of helping to cope with the measures that we've seen during this pandemic.
- People in the lowest income level had difficulty meeting financial needs, where over half had concerns in that area.
- Forty per cent were food insecure because of the pandemic and a quarter of people in the lowest income bracket were not working due to COVID-19.
- In addition, people with lower income were more likely to have chronic health conditions, experience increased concern about their health, were less able to stay home from work when they were sick -- and this reflects the jobs that they were in -- and they had more difficulty accessing health care.
- Three-quarters of parents with households with school-age children reported that their children had challenges with learning during the past few months.
- Seventy-eight per cent of parents them reported children had decreased connections with friends was concerning and 59% reported increased child stress.

Testing

Anyone in the VCH region with cold, influenza or COVID-19-like symptoms, however mild, can now be assessed for and get a COVID-19 test. Contact your physician or nurse practitioner's office, or a local community collection centre to arrange for a test. Phone numbers and locations of collection centre can be found by visiting: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/testing> or by calling 8-1-1. In Vancouver, the City Centre and REACH urgent and primary care centres can provide testing as well as the St. Vincent's drive-up location at 4875 Heather Street. The Richmond Assessment Centre is located at 6820 Gilbert Road, in the parking lot of the Richmond Tennis Club. On the North Shore, testing is available at the North Vancouver Urgent and Primary Care Centre. If you think you need testing, please call ahead before visiting your doctor, urgent and primary care center or health clinic.

VCH Medical Health Officers, our provincial partners and the Public Health Agency of Canada continue to actively monitor the COVID-19 pandemic. To protect yourself while out in public, wash your hands frequently and maintain social distance. For more information on COVID-19, please visit www.vch.ca/COVID19.

For more information and latest updates on COVID-19, follow the BC Centre for Disease Control on Twitter [@CDCofBC](https://twitter.com/CDCofBC) or visit the website: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>.