

# oneVCH COVID-19 Bulletin

May 3, 2021

## COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAM

### Second doses being administered to those who received their first dose on or before Jan. 17

Following provincial and national [recommendations](#), we are offering second doses of COVID-19 vaccines 16 weeks after the first dose. This week, we are offering second doses of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines for staff and medical staff who received their first dose on or before Sunday, Jan. 17, 2021. We will soon be providing new information about how you will be alerted when it's time to receive your second dose. Please stay tuned!

#### B.C. may look at decreasing the interval between doses as more vaccine supply arrives

The province is expecting more than one million doses of vaccine to arrive throughout the month of May, which means first doses may be offered to all adults in B.C. sooner than originally anticipated. Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer, said today that if everyone is able to get their first dose sooner, it may mean the interval between the first and second dose could be reduced. In order to help get vaccine to adults across the province, Dr. Henry encouraged everyone who has not yet registered for their first dose to do so. Registration in the provincial booking system will help ensure the right amount of vaccine is sent to each clinic, and will help clinic locations scale up appropriately to meet increased demand.

## QUESTION OF THE DAY

### NACI has come out with new recommendations about waiting for the mRNA vaccine if you can. Should I encourage my family and friends to get AstraZeneca or wait?

All the vaccines available for use in Canada are safe, effective, and will save lives. Dr. Henry said today that one dose of either the mRNA (Pfizer and Moderna) or viral vector (AstraZeneca) vaccines provides a high degree of protection against serious illness. Both types of vaccine are equally effective in preventing someone from getting the illness, and making the illness less transmissible to others. The province continues to encourage people to receive the vaccine that they are offered first to protect themselves and their community.

Questions? Check out our [COVID-19 vaccine page for FAQs](#) →

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

### Point-of-care risk assessment

The point-of-care risk assessment (PCRA) is a routine practice which should be conducted before every patient/client/resident interaction by a health-care worker to assess the likelihood of exposing themselves and/or others to infectious agents. An [assessment tool](#) is now available from the B.C. Centre for Disease Control to help health-care workers decide on what actions may need to be adapted for specific health-care settings.

### Implementation of Stage 1 of COVID-19 emergency prioritization in a pandemic PPE allocation framework

On March 25, 2020, the Ministry of Health and B.C. Centre for Disease Control released the *COVID-19: Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic Personal Protective Equipment Allocation Framework*. This document was released to help guide health-care providers in determining what types of PPE individuals working or visiting in health-care settings would receive at a time when demand for PPE threatened to overwhelm supply. This coincided with the Province entering Stage 5 of the PPE Framework as the result of immediate and significant global supply chain disruptions and to manage our PPE inventory in a manner that maintained the safety of health care workers while ensuring supply of PPE was not depleted.

Since the start of the pandemic, the Ministry and health authorities have worked diligently to acquire a quality assured, central PPE supply at the Provincial Health Services Authority. The Ministry also documented and implemented a PPE Supply, Assessment, Testing and Distribution Protocol to ensure that any PPE deployed within B.C.'s health system is safe and appropriate for use.

With the stabilization of the PPE inventory, the Province will immediately move to Stage 1 of the PPE Framework. This means that all PPE items are intact and there is low probability that any item will be depleted in the immediate future. (i.e. extended continued availability of all types of PPE, extended use of PPE practices will remain in effect at this time (i.e. extended use of PPE that is not wet, soiled, or damaged).

## Daily COVID-19 self-screening health checks

The health and safety of Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) staff and medical staff is a priority as we continue to manage the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the most important measures we need to take to reduce transmission of COVID-19 in the workplace to protect our colleagues, patients, residents and clients, is to stay at home if you are unwell.

Under the Order of the Provincial Health Officer, [Workplace and Post-Secondary Institution Safety – April 21, 2021](#), Section 2, 3, and 4, all VCH staff and medical staff are required to complete daily self-screening health checks before leaving for work.

Please check-in with yourself by following the [Daily COVID-19 Staff and Medical Staff Self-Screening Instruction sheet](#) to determine if you have any new or worsening symptoms.

If you are unwell, please stay home and do not come to work. Please let your supervisor know and report your absence to the [Absence Call Line](#). If you are symptomatic, please go to a [COVID-19 testing site](#) to get tested and follow the advice of testing site staff until your results become available.

If you come to work, you are indicating that you have completed the daily self-screening health check and are not exhibiting any symptoms.

Please continue to be vigilant in the workplace by practicing exceptional hand hygiene, adhering to [Infection Prevention and Control](#) and personal protective equipment (PPE) guidelines, regularly cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces (e.g., work stations) and maintaining physical distance – even after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

Reminders for staff to do daily health checks will be posted at staff entryways and shared in the oneVCH COVID-19 Bulletin. Unit leadership should also reinforce the requirement for daily self-screening health checks at staff meetings and huddles.

Thank you for doing your part to ensure the safety of everyone at VCH. If you have any questions, please contact [EmployeeSafety@vch.ca](mailto:EmployeeSafety@vch.ca).

## MEDICAL STAFF (PHYSICIANS, MIDWIVES, NURSE PRACTITIONERS & DENTISTS)

### Q&A: Variants of concern

Q: Are the vaccines effective against variants of concern?

A: The three main variants of concern are the UK (B.1.1.7), the South Africa (B.1.351), and the Brazil (P.1). In terms of the efficacy data, and there's [New England Journal of Medicine](#) article summarizes this. Efficacy looked good for the B.1.1.7 variant, and there was reasonable good efficacy to B.1.351 for some of the vaccines.

The main message is that for severe disease we don't have as much data because the numbers are small, especially for the P1 variant, there isn't much data as there hasn't been much vaccination yet in Brazil. I would caution people about over interpretation of the immunology data. We should be focusing on the clinical efficacy and effectiveness data as these emerge rather than the lab data.

What's happening now in BC is two of the variants are becoming the predominant circulating strains: the UK variant and the P1 variant. Looking at real-world use, there are countries like the UK where vaccination has done a remarkably good job in reducing transmission.

At an individual level, in order to transmit, you need the same type of contact as any other strain of COVID-19: close contact (e.g., within households); unprotected contact. We're following the same public health guidance. It doesn't change the incubation period of isolation. The best thing to do is keep rolling out the vaccine because so far the data that we've seen from other countries has been positive.

Medical Staff Q&A were generated during the April 21 medical staff forum.

See [VCH Medical Staff Intranet](#) and [Slack](#) for previous medical staff forum recordings, transcripts and Q&A.

## BC COVID-19 SPEAK survey on population experience

### Round two of COVID-19 survey open until May 9

Last year, almost 400,000 British Columbians participated in the [BC COVID-19 SPEAK: Your story, our future](#) public health survey from the B.C. Centre for Disease Control & Prevention (BCCDC). Responses provided valuable information about how British Columbians experienced the first wave of the pandemic.

The B.C. Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) is now launching [BC COVID-19 SPEAK Round 2](#) and is again asking for your participation. The province is especially encouraging people from rural areas; males; Black and Indigenous people; people of colour; and seniors to complete the survey.

Data from this survey will help the BC CDC examine how British Columbians have been affected one year into the pandemic, and how their experiences may inform recovery and re-opening.

The survey is currently open to all British Columbia residents aged 18 years and older until the May 9, 2021. Take the survey [here](#).

## UPDATE ON NEW AND EXISTING COVID-19 CASES (as of May 3, 2021)

- We are reporting on three periods: from April 30 to May 1, we had 835 new cases; from May 1 to May 2, we had 671 new cases and in the last 24 hours, we had a further 668 new cases. This results in 2,174 new cases over the period, for a total of 131,656 cases in British Columbia.
- Active cases: 7,327
  - Vancouver Coastal Health: 438 new cases
  - Fraser: 1,509 new cases
  - Interior Health: 106 new cases
  - Island Health: 61 new cases
  - Northern Health: 60 new cases
  - People who normally reside outside of Canada: none
- 474 hospitalized
- 176 currently admitted to ICU
- 122,518 people who tested positive have recovered
- 15 new deaths for a total of 1,596 confirmed deaths
- 1,877,330 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines have been administered in B.C., 91,731 of which are second doses

[Click here to see more updates on the BC COVID-19 Dashboard](#)

## Incident and prevalent cases of COVID-19 in hospital and critical care across VCH/PHC

|                                      | New Cases (Since Yesterday)  | Today's Total Cases             | Cumulative Cases                             |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Hospitalized Patients                | 14<br>New hospitalized cases | 179<br>Total hospitalized cases | 1,653<br>Cumulative total hospitalized cases |
| Critical Care Patients               | 0<br>New critical care cases | 53<br>Total critical care cases | 498<br>Cumulative total critical care cases  |
| Critical Care Patients on Ventilator | 0<br>New ventilation cases   | 37<br>Total ventilation cases   | 246<br>Cumulative total ventilation cases    |

|   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| Discharged / Off COVID Precautions Patients | 11<br>Discharged case(s) from yesterday | 15<br>Current hospitalized all COVID precautions cases | 1,295<br>Cumulative total discharged cases |
| Readmission                                 |   | 5<br>Current hospitalized readmitted cases             | 78<br>Cumulative readmitted cases          |
| Death                                       |   | 1<br>Death(s) from yesterday                           | 184<br>Cumulative total deaths             |

## Incident and prevalent cases of COVID-19 in hospital and critical care across VCH/PHC



## COVID-19 DATA

COVID-19 data, including for long-term care, assisted living and independent living sites, is available on the B.C. Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) website, including outbreak and case information.

[Click here to go to the BC CDC site](#) →

## KEY LINKS

[Text Alerts: Physician sign up keyword: COVID19](#)

[Text Alerts: Staff sign up keyword: ALERT](#)

[Staff supports during COVID-19](#)

[Medical staff resources during COVID-19](#)

## TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- [BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Tool](#)
- [Wellness Together Canada: Mental Health and Substance Use Support](#)
- [COVID-19 Multilingual Resources](#)
- [Coping with COVID: Additional Employee Wellness/EFAP services](#)
- [VCH Virtual Health website](#)
- [Infection Prevention and Control \(IPC\) website: Staff resources on how to assess, test and treat patients and protect patients and staff.](#)
- [Infection Prevention and Control Policy: Ministry of Health](#)
- [VCH Regional Pandemic Outbreak Response Plan: VCH Communicable Disease Control website](#)
- [VCH Intranet: COVID-19 updates](#)

## REGIONAL AND LOCAL EOC ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

- [COVID-19 VCH-PHC Regional EOC](#)
- [COVID-19 Vancouver Acute EOC](#)
- [COVID-19 Vancouver Community EOC](#)
- [COVID-19 Coastal EOC](#)
- [COVID-19 Richmond EOC](#)
- [COVID-19 Providence Health Care \(PHC\) EOC](#)

## COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS?

[Please click here to submit questions or comments.](#)

## REMINDER ABOUT MEDIA

If you receive a media inquiry, please contact our Public Affairs team immediately for support. Our media line is 604-202-2012 or email [media@vch.ca](mailto:media@vch.ca).

The bulletins are distributed on Mondays and Thursdays. Past bulletins are available on the [COVID-19 section of our VCH staff intranet](#).