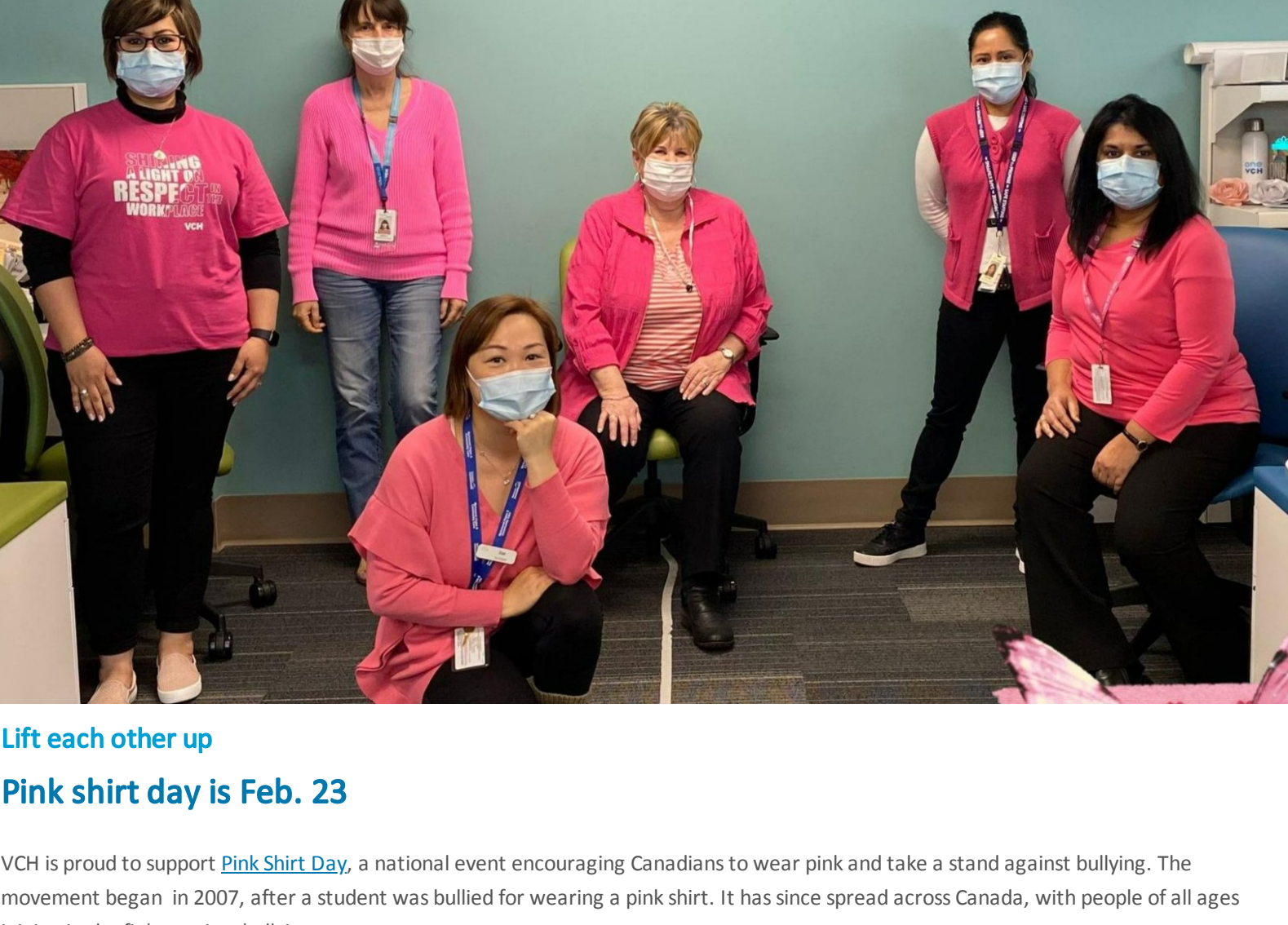


# oneVCH COVID-19 Bulletin

February 17, 2022



## Lift each other up Pink shirt day is Feb. 23

VCH is proud to support [Pink Shirt Day](#), a national event encouraging Canadians to wear pink and take a stand against bullying. The movement began in 2007, after a student was bullied for wearing a pink shirt. It has since spread across Canada, with people of all ages joining in the fight against bullying.

This year, Pink Shirt Day takes place on Feb. 23 and to show our support and stand with the community, we are once again adopting the national Pink Shirt Day theme of **Lift Each Other Up**.

These past two years have challenged us all, and it is more important than ever to be there for one another by showing respect, inclusion, compassion and kindness to create psychologically healthy and safe workplaces. It's also important to direct those values towards ourselves, as caring for everyone includes caring for yourself.

## Revisions to B.C.'s province-wide restrictions

On Feb. 15, 2022, B.C.'s provincial health officer announced revisions to the province's current public health measures. This is part of a shift to sustainable, long-term COVID-19 management strategy which is focused on immunization, self-management and specific actions to protection those most at risk of severe infection.

B.C. is one of the most vaccinated jurisdictions in the world, with over 90 per cent of British Columbians now immunized. This has offered our communities a high level of community immunity against COVID-19. We are also seeing a decline in transmission of the Omicron variant.

There will be an incremental easing of guidelines regarding social and organized gathering and adult sport and fitness. The public health guidelines will be reviewed again by Mar. 15 and again by April 12. Note, some existing public health measures will remain in place for many public settings, including the mask mandate, B.C.'s vaccine card COVID-19 safety plans. Some of the most noteworthy updates include:

- Restrictions removed on all indoor personal gatherings
- Indoor and outdoor organized gatherings can return to fully capacity, with dancing allowed
- Indoor seated events return to full capacity, including movie theatres
- Fitness centres, adult sports, dance and swimming return to full capacity, with no tournament restrictions
- Restaurants, bars and nightclubs return to full capacity with no table limits, while mingling and dancing are allowed

[B.C. Ministry of Health website →](#)

## Workplace safety Updated PHO order on workplace safety

The provincial health officer has updated the Provincial Health Officer Order on workplace safety, to support the transition of employees back into the workplace.

The previous version of the order contained a section that has been removed. That section required employers to allow workers to work from their private residence, if possible, given the nature of the work involved, unless the employer had an operational requirement to have the worker at the workplace.

All workplaces must continue to have COVID-19 safety plans in place, and the PHO's Face Coverings Order continues to apply to some workplaces.

[Read the full news release →](#)

## COVID-19 Therapeutics Updated on COVID-19 therapeutics

Recently, the [BCCDC posted guidelines](#) on available therapeutics for COVID-19 for mild to moderately ill patients. Given the volume of medications currently available and the challenges in safely prescribing certain medications, a phased approach will be used in their roll-out. Currently, providers are prioritizing treatment to patients at greatest risk from COVID-19, which includes those who are clinically extremely vulnerable.

**How can eligible symptomatic patients access treatment**  
In order to be considered for treatment, patients with symptoms who meet the [criteria for therapeutic intervention](#) should be referred for testing by their health-care provider.

At testing sites, VCH staff conduct an initial screening of symptomatic clients, who will be tested as per BCCDC guidelines. If a patient tests positive, information determined at the test site, in addition to a patient's medical history will support in determining their eligibility for treatment.

**VCH referral process for community patients**  
VCH has established a central intake process which will operate from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. seven days a week. This team is responsible for reviewing laboratory data and clinical history from positive patients, in consultation with Infectious Disease physicians. If a patient is deemed eligible, this team will liaise with the individual directly to schedule an appointment for intravenous Sotrovimab treatment, or to share information on how they can access oral medication in the community. This may include contacting their local pharmacy who will lead in dispensing the appropriate medication to the patient.

A VCH/PHC [referral form](#) is available for clinicians who identify a client that may be eligible for treatment. Physicians can submit completed referrals via email [COVID.therapy@vch.ca](mailto:COVID.therapy@vch.ca) or fax 604.875.5375.

Note: A separate referral and follow-up process has been established for both long-term care and for clients in the Downtown Eastside without a fixed address, and shared directly to relevant health-care providers.

**Further supports for prescribers**  
The province has developed a range of supports for clinicians, including clinical guidelines, practice tool, and step-by-step assessment, available below:

[Health Care Provider Information](#) on Sotrovimab (Xevudy) and Nirmatrelvir/Ritonavir (Paxlovid)  
[CTC clinical practice guide](#)  
Practice tool 1 – [assessment guide for clinicians](#)  
Practice tool 2 – [CEV Criteria](#)  
Practice tool 3 – [drug interactions and contraindications](#)

The treatments section is [here](#).

**Support with prescribing Paxlovid**  
A provincial COVID-19 antiviral support line for clinicians is available by calling 1-866-604-5924. This line is staffed by pharmacists that both prescribers and pharmacists can call for support regarding safely prescribing Paxlovid. The line is available from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

## Health-care worker vaccinations Reminder: register and book your COVID-19 booster

Health-care workers who received dose 1 and 2 of a COVID-19 vaccine, and who wants a booster, can register now and book a booster appointment six months after their dose 2 vaccination. Pregnant people 18 years and older can get a booster dose 8 weeks after their second dose. You must make an appointment for a booster dose.

First and second vaccine doses will continue to protect you from COVID-19 until you get a booster dose. A booster dose helps maintain your level of protection as your immunity may decrease over time.

For information on booster doses, visit the [BCCDC website](#).

## COVID-19 Q&A for medical staff (physicians, nurse practitioners, midwives & dentists)

**Question:** How can we get fit tested for an N95 mask and what are the expected wait times for an appointment?

**Answer:** There are multiple ways to get fit tested, including through the Mobile Rapid Response Fit Testing team, or by [booking a visit](#) through the People Safety team at one of our various testing locations.

The wait time for a fit-test appointment can vary, but if you are having trouble booking an appointment within a reasonable timeframe, or for any other scheduling-related questions, please contact [peoplesafety@vch.ca](mailto:peoplesafety@vch.ca). If you would like to discuss respirator use or talk to a POSH physician, please contact [posh.covid@ubc.ca](mailto:posh.covid@ubc.ca).

The question and answer were generated during the Jan. 19 Medical Staff Forum. If you missed the session, the link to the Jan. 19 Forum video recording is available on the [Medical Staff COVID-19 intranet](#). (We respectfully request that you do not share the link). The session slides and important links, as well as those from previous forums, are also available on the intranet.

## oneVCH virtual town hall Upcoming VCH virtual town hall - Feb. 24

To watch the upcoming virtual town hall on Thursday, Feb. 24, please click on the link below.

[VANCOUVER COASTAL HEALTH COVID-19 TOWN HALL UPDATE – FEBRUARY 24, 2022 11:00 AM WEBCAST](#)

Please note that current and past virtual town halls are available on the [oneVCH Intranet page](#). You will require your VCH username and password to access these broadcasts and recordings.

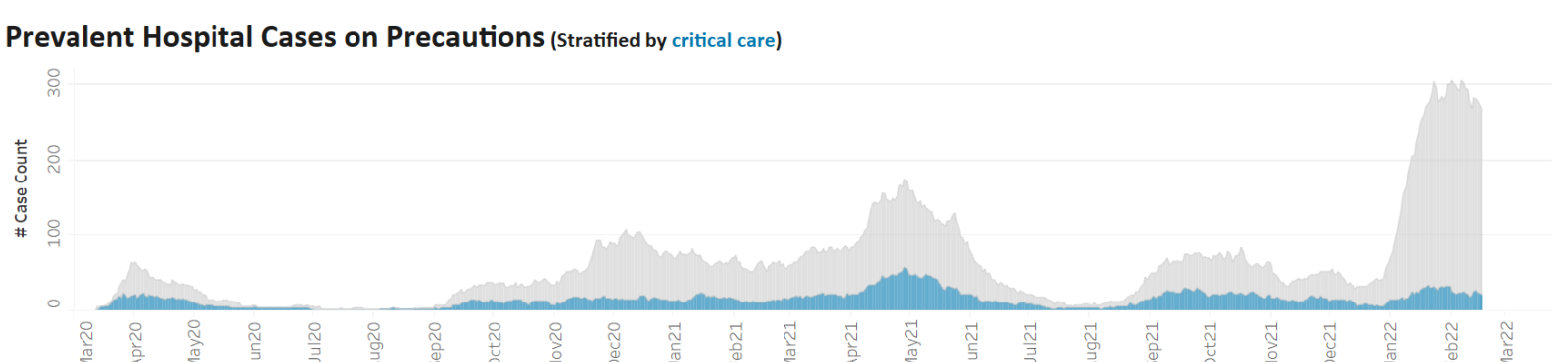
## COVID-19 DATA

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.

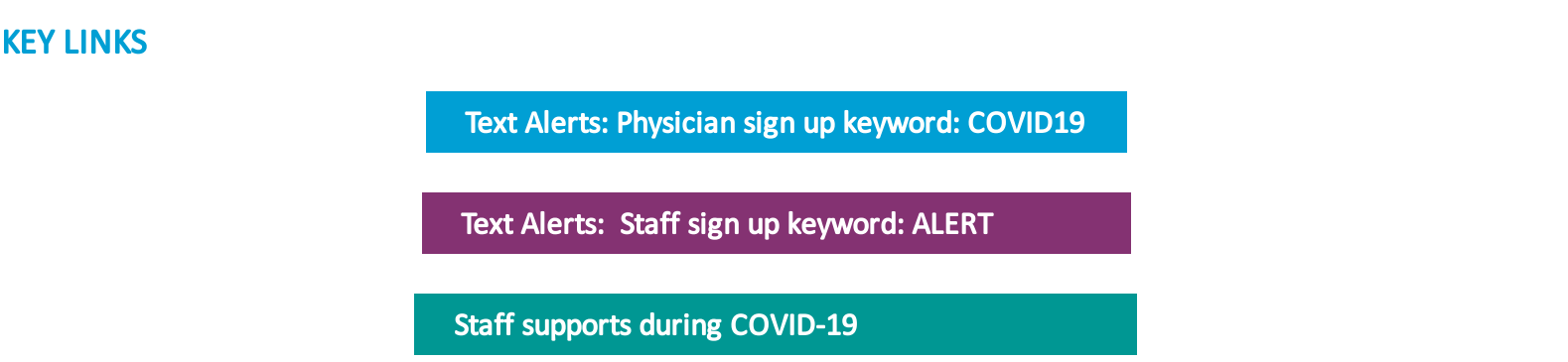
BC COVID-19 Dashboard →			
Incident and Prevalent Cases of COVID-19 in Hospital and Critical Care Across VCH/PHC			
Reporting from 3/22/2020 to midnight of 2/16/2022 - New streamlined version of the report with focus on cases that are on precautions as of July 14, 2021			
	New Cases/Incidents Since Yesterday	Today's Total/Prevalent Cases on Precautions	Cumulative Cases
Hospitalized	12	156	3,575
Critical Care (Ventilated)	1 (0)	24 (15)	915 (486)
Not in Critical Care	11	132	2,660
COVID-related Readmission within 30 Days of First Onset		9	216
Discharged (Deaths)	25 (2)		3,282 (415)

Note: 1) Data presented is our best conservative assessment but is subject to change due to data entry corrections and clinical review. 2) The patient's hospitalization status and location is based on the midnight census and only inpatient encounters greater than 24 hours are included. 3) COVID cases refer to COVID positive patients who were hospitalized within 30 days of first positive lab test result in the community or first positive specimen collection date in the hospital. 4) COVID cases include patients that are residing from within VCH/PHC, outside the health authority, out of province, or out of country. 5) COVID positive incident dates is the date the patient tests positive in hospital or the date of admission if the patient's positive occurs before hospitalization. 6) Cumulative cases are based on total incidents over time; a patient is counted once with multiple admissions for COVID, if readmission is within 30 days of initial infection.

**Incident and Prevalent Cases of COVID-19 in Hospital and Critical Care across VCH/PHC**  
Reporting from 3/22/2020 to midnight of 2/16/2022 - New streamlined version of the report with focus on cases that are on precautions as of July 14, 2021



**Prevalent Hospital Cases on Precautions (Stratified by critical care)**



Note: 1) Data presented is our best conservative assessment but is subject to change due to data entry corrections and clinical review. 2) The patient's hospitalization status and location is based on the midnight census and only inpatient encounters greater than 24 hours are included. 3) COVID cases refer to COVID positive patients who were hospitalized within 30 days of first positive lab test result in the community or first positive specimen collection date in the hospital. 4) COVID cases include patients that are residing from within VCH/PHC, outside the health authority, out of province, or out of country. 5) COVID positive incident dates is the date the patient tests positive in hospital or the date of admission if the patient's positive occurs before hospitalization. 6) Cumulative cases are based on total incidents over time; a patient is counted once with multiple admissions for COVID, if readmission is within 30 days of initial infection.

## 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](#)
- [LifeWorks Employee and Family Assistance Program 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 EOC ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

- [COVID-19 VCH-PHC Regional 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 Thursdays. Past bulletins are available on the [COVID-19 section of our VCH staff intranet](#).



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