

oneVCH COVID-19 Bulletin

February 24, 2022



COVID-19 vaccinations

Kudos to staff and medical staff who delivered over 600,000 COVID-19 vaccinations at the Vancouver Convention Centre

Thanks to the efficient delivery of B.C.'s booster campaign, many thousands of residents in the Vancouver Coastal Health region received COVID-19 vaccine at the immunization clinic at the Vancouver Convention Centre, and with lessening demand and high vaccination rates across the region, the clinic closed on Feb. 20.

The downtown clinic first opened in March 2021, and during the five months of its initial operations, delivered more than 418,000 vaccinations. Since re-opening in January 2022 to support the province's COVID-19 booster campaign, the clinic has delivered more than 5,000 immunizations a day, for an estimated total of more than 600,000 vaccinations administered since the start of the COVID-19 vaccination campaign. We wish to thank our clinic staff for their hard work and dedication, as well as our partners, including BC Pavilion Corporation (PavCo), the Vancouver Convention Centre and Ceres Terminals Canada.

VCH continues to regularly monitor vaccination clinic operations, resources and demand, and to adjust our approach based on community needs. Resources from this clinic will be redirected to other healthcare services, including targeted outreach efforts in specific communities and to support other vaccination clinics.

COVID-19 testing

COVID-19 rapid tests to be available at pharmacies for people 70+

People aged 70 years and older will soon have access to rapid antigen tests through community pharmacies at no cost.

This week, the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the BC Pharmacy Association, is shipping COVID-19 rapid tests to community pharmacies throughout the province. Starting as early as Feb. 25, people aged 70 years and older can pick up one kit containing five tests every 28 days from participating pharmacies at no cost.

Individuals must present their personal health number when picking up the kit or, if others are picking up kits on their behalf, in addition to the individual's name and personal health number, date of birth must also be supplied.

Contact tracing

B.C. updates COVID-19 case and contact follow-up guidelines

New [guidance](#) issued Feb. 17 by the BCCDC for the management of COVID-19 cases and their contacts in the community reflect the changing nature of the pandemic in British Columbia.

The goals of our pandemic response are still to minimize severe illness and deaths while enabling normal societal function as much as possible. Vaccination is by far the most effective and safe public health intervention for achieving these goals, and B.C. has one of the highest vaccinated populations in the world. Against this context, and with the highly transmissible but less severe omicron variant as the dominant strain of the virus, contact tracing has become less useful as a tool to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The updated [guidance](#) from BCCDC notes that Public Health is no longer facilitating routine case notification and contact tracing, but continues to provide consultation as well as leadership with cluster and outbreak management.

In VCH, the Case and Contact Tracing (CCT) team has adapted and adjusted in approach and size as the pandemic has evolved. Under this new provincial guidance, some team members will return to prior roles, or shift to new ones, while a core group of contact tracers will remain in place to provide focused support, particularly for higher risk settings, and many of the tools, resources and skills gained through the pandemic response will now be utilized in other areas of Public Health. The transitional CCT Team is available for support at [COVID19@vch.ca](#). Resources to support programs managing COVID cases in health care settings are available on the VCH IPCAC and BCCDC websites.

With Public Health no longer providing individual case and contact follow-up, it's important for clinicians ordering COVID tests to take note of new tools and referral pathways for COVID-19 therapeutics for eligible patients. These therapies include an anti-spike protein monoclonal antibody (mAb) sotrovimab and a direct-acting oral combination antiviral nirmatrelvir/ritonavir (Paxlovid) which can be used to treat COVID-19 in mild to moderately ill patients.

Please see the full guide developed by the B.C. COVID-19 Therapeutics Committee for more information: [Clinical Practice Guide for the Use of Therapeutics in Mild-Moderate COVID-19](#). A VCH/PHC referral [form](#) is available for clinicians who identify a client that may be eligible for COVID-19 treatment. Physicians and nurse practitioners can submit completed referrals to [COVID.therapy@vch.ca](#) or fax 604-875-5375.

- Resources: [COVID IPCAC](#)
- BCCDC [Outbreak Management Tools](#)

For case and contact tracing inquiries, please contact the Case and Contact Tracing info line at 604-829-7901. For internal VCH support and assistance, please email [COVID19@vch.ca](#) and refer external inquiries to [covid19info@vch.ca](#).

Professional development

Course: self-management strategies, resources and tools for common post-COVID-19 symptoms

The BC ECHO for Post-COVID-19 Recovery is a free virtual learning community of specialists and community health care providers who use instructive and case-based learning to improve care for patients recovering from symptoms post COVID-19.

Each monthly ECHO session is an hour, and starts with a 30-minute presentation from specialists on participant-identified topics, followed by a case presentation.

The next session, **Self-Management Strategies, Resources and Tools for Common Post-COVID-19 Symptoms**, will be held on Mar. 8, at 12 p.m. A presentation will be provided by Dr. Jesse Greiner (General Internist, Providence Health Care), Dr. Jill Calder (Physiatrist, Interior Health), and Elise Bocknek (Occupational Therapist, Vancouver Coastal Health).

If you are interested in attending this session, please [register](#).

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)

Questions: Is peer testing available for health-care workers? Can pharmacies administer booster doses to individuals who received their second dose at least six months earlier?

Answers: Peer testing is available for health-care workers who work in clinical settings, but only if they develop COVID-19-like symptoms while at work. If health-care workers develop symptoms at home or elsewhere, they should not access peer testing at their workplace, but should instead visit a [COVID-19 collection centre](#) in their community. Staff and medical staff who wish to access [testing services](#) at work should notify their supervisor or manager that they are experiencing COVID-19-like symptoms.

Pharmacies can administer booster doses containing either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, and health-care workers can [book an appointment](#) at a pharmacy using the same method for booking at a vaccine clinic.

The question & answer were generated at the Feb. 16 Medical Staff Forum. The session slides and important links, as well as those from previous forums, will be available on the [Medical Staff intranet](#).

oneVCH virtual town hall

Did you miss today's oneVCH virtual town hall?

To watch the virtual town hall, please click on the link below.

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

During the virtual town hall, there was a question about how participants could provide feedback to the People team on staff retention ideas. To submit an idea, please email [people@vch.ca](#) with the subject "Retention."

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

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 2/23/2022 - New streamlined version of the report with focus on cases that are on precautions as of July 16, 2021			
	New Cases/Incidents Since Yesterday	Today's Total/Prevalent Cases on Precautions	Cumulative Cases
Hospitalized	11	99	3,636
Critical Care (Ventilated)	2 (1)	20 (12)	925 (492)
Not in Critical Care	9	79	2,711

COVID-related Readmission within 30 Days of First Onset	8	229
Discharged (Deaths)	22 (3)	3,378 (436)

Incident and Prevalent Cases of COVID-19 in Hospital and Critical Care across VCH/PHC
Reporting from 3/22/2020 to midnight of 2/23/2022 - New streamlined version of the report with focus on cases that are on precautions as of July 16, 2021

Legend: Hospitalization case count (light blue), Critical care case count (dark blue)

Incident Hospital Cases (Stratified by critical care)

Cumulative Hospital Cases (Stratified by critical care)

Prevalent Hospital Cases on Precautions (Stratified by critical care)

Incident Hospital Cases (Stratified by critical care)

Cumulative Hospital Cases (Stratified by critical care)

Prevalent Hospital Cases on Precautions (Stratified by critical care)

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](#).

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