

oneVCH COVID-19 Bulletin

March 3, 2022



Seniors care

Celebrating B.C. seniors care providers

Vancouver Coastal Health would like to like to thank all seniors care providers for the great work they do in delivering care and supporting individuals who are frail and elderly in care homes, community and home settings. It has been two challenging years for our seniors with the devastating impact of COVID-19 and the heat dome on this vulnerable population.

VCH recognizes the courage and resilience it takes to work on the frontlines and to champion major care initiatives, like the COVID-19 vaccination campaign.

With our deepest gratitude, VCH celebrates you and shares our collective appreciation for your hard work and dedication to keeping seniors in our care safe and living with the best quality of life possible.

[Read the full story →](#)



COVID-19 testing

B.C. pharmacies distributing COVID-19 rapid test kits

A number of community pharmacies in B.C. are now distributing BTNX Rapid Response® COVID-19 Rapid Test Kits. These kits are rapid antigen tests that work by detecting the antigens (proteins) of the virus that causes COVID-19.

Each kit comes with five take-home tests. The kits are free for eligible British Columbians age 70 and up, and eligible patients can request a kit of five tests once every 28 days.

[FIND A PARTICIPATING PHARMACY HERE](#)

COVID-19

Update on COVID-19 therapies

Recently, various novel agents have become available in B.C. to treat COVID-19 in mild to moderately ill patients, including sotrovimab and Paxlovid. To be eligible for therapy, patients at higher risk of serious illness must first test positive for the virus. If a patient tests positive with a rapid antigen test, they are asked to report it through the [provincial reporting form](#) for provincial tracking purposes. They are then directed to the new provincial [online assessment tool](#) to determine if they would benefit from these therapies.

Those who are tested at a Vancouver Coastal Health operated testing site will be assessed and followed up directly if they are eligible for treatment by our newly-established central intake process which operates daily from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Physicians in Vancouver or Richmond who feel comfortable prescribing Paxlovid are free to do so using the tools below. However, if a patient is complex, eligibility is unclear, or if after assessment sotrovimab is the preferred therapy, a referral can be made through the

central intake process by filling out [this form](#) and emailing it to: covid.therapy@vch.ca or faxing to 833-222-8131.

In the Coastal Community of Care, the same service can be accessed by contacting the COVID-19 physician on call at 778-984-4075 or emailing CoastalID@vch.ca.

Physicians practicing in the community, or outside of VCH can contact the provincial line (see details below).

Important clinical resources and tools

The province has developed a range of resources to support in the safe prescribing of these medications to British Columbians. Some of the most useful guides are listed below. For further information and available tools, visit the [BCCDC website](#).

- [Assess patient eligibility for Paxlovid and sotrovimab](#)
- [Drug-drug interactions and contraindications assessment](#)
- [Step-by-step assessment guide](#)

Broader availability and prescribing of Paxlovid

As of Mar. 1, all clinicians are authorized to prescribe Paxlovid to their patients who test positive and are eligible for treatment. For patients on additional medications, prescribers are obliged to review the above drug-drug interactions assessment before prescribing. This can be completed using the drug-drug interaction assessment tool above or by contacting the regional Central Intake Team (details above).



COVID-19

COVID-19 information sessions for Cantonese and Mandarin speakers

In partnership with [S.U.C.C.E.S.S.](#), [iCON](#) and [UBC](#), Vancouver Coastal Health recently supported COVID-19 information sessions for the Chinese community in Cantonese and Mandarin.

Both information sessions provided up-to-date information on COVID-19, including:

- Understanding COVID-19 variants and benefits of vaccination
- Protecting yourself and your family from COVID-19
- Understanding emerging treatments for COVID-19

- Addressing misinformation

[Click here to watch the recorded information session in Mandarin](#)

[Click here to watch the information session in Cantonese](#)

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](#).

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.

Presenters: Dr. Jesse Greiner (General Internist, Providence Health Care), Dr. Jill Calder (Physiatrist, Interior Health), and Elise Bocknek (Occupational Therapist, Vancouver Coastal Health).

Date and time: Mar. 8, 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.

Topic: Improving care for patients recovering from symptoms post COVID-19.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

COVID-19

Q&A for medical staff (physicians, nurse practitioners, midwives & dentists)

Question: Do we know the numbers of adults and children in B.C. with long-COVID? How can we accurately and efficiently diagnose long-COVID in the absence of COVID-19 testing?

Answer: We don't have absolute numbers of long-COVID since the Public Health recommendations for testing were changed. We have been working at a network level to ensure we are scaling up our resources, so we can accommodate a fairly large number of people who presumably will develop some degree of long-term symptoms related to the omicron variant.

Regarding the last part of the question, it comes down to how prevalent the omicron variant has been over the past month. Any clinical syndrome with symptoms consistent with omicron would be considered a diagnosis, and if persistent symptoms last for longer than 12 weeks, that would be sufficient to accurately and appropriately diagnose long-COVID.

The question and 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 [VCH Medical Staff Intranet](#).

Upcoming medical staff forum to focus on planetary health; COVID-19

Join us for a presentation from Dr. Andrea MacNeill, Regional Medical Director for Planetary Health, Vancouver Coastal Health and Founder of the UBC Planetary Healthcare Lab, on the environmental effects of the health-care industry and how medical staff can help make a positive impact. There will also be a COVID-19 update and live Q&A session.

Panelists: Dr. Chad Kim Sing (host), Dr. Ross Brown, Dr. Patty Daly, Vivian Eliopoulos, Dr. Andrea MacNeill and Dr. Titus Wong

Date and time: Apr. 20, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Topic: Planetary health and COVID-19 updates

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Submit questions in advance using the registration link, or via email to: Darren.piper@vch.ca.

See [VCH Medical Staff Intranet](#) for content from previous medical staff forums. Note: there will not be a Medical Staff Forum in March 2022 due to scheduling and time constraints.

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 3/12/2020 to midnight of 3/2/2022 - 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	6	80	3,694
Critical Care (Ventilated)	0 (0)	13 (7)	933 (495)
Not in Critical Care	6	67	2,761
COVID-related Readmission within 30 Days of First Onset		4	238
Discharged (Deaths)	14 (1)		3,474 (451)

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 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.

Data Source:

- 1) Quality Patient and Safety
- 2) Census Database from Decision Support

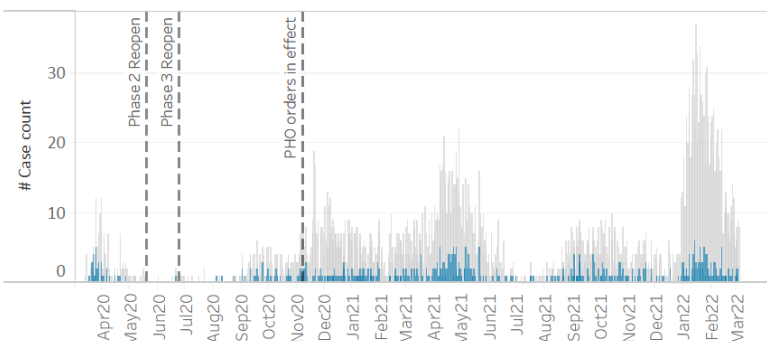
Version 2.4

Incident and Prevalent Cases of COVID-19 in Hospital and Critical Care across VCH/PHC

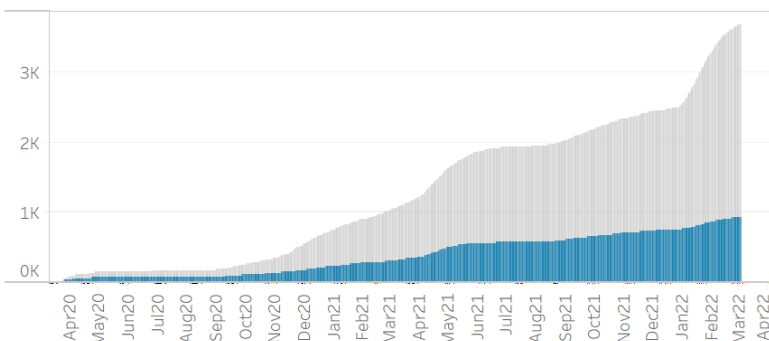
Reporting from 3/12/2020 to midnight of 3/2/2022 - New streamlined version of the report with focus on cases that are on precautions as of July 14, 2021

■ Hospitalization case count ■ Critical care case count

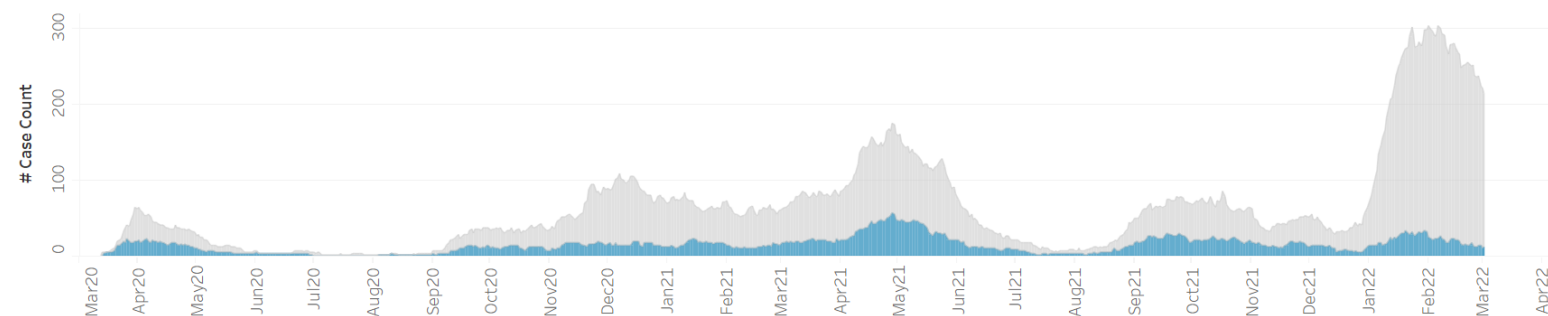
Incident Hospital Cases (Stratified by critical care)



Cumulative Hospital Cases (Stratified by critical care)



Prevalent Hospital Cases on Precautions (Stratified by critical care)



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Version 2.4

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 \(IPAC\) 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](#).



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