

COVID-19 Update for Partners

November 12, 2020

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Key messages from Dr. Gardner, Medical Officer of Health

Key Messages

1. **Yellow Protect Level** – As we anticipated and recommended, Simcoe Muskoka has been delineated as under the Yellow - Protect Level in the province's new COVID-19 Response Framework. What does this mean? Public health units are expected to implement enhanced education, targeted enforcement and fines to limit transmission, while applying public health measures in high-risk settings.

Restaurants, bars, food/drink establishments – Limited hours, close at midnight, and are only allowed to serve liquor between 9 a.m. and 11 p.m. (These rules have been in place since Sept. 26). Only six people at maximum can be seated together at a table, and contact information for anyone seated is required. Music also cannot be louder than the volume of a "normal conversation". This also applies to meeting and event spaces and retail stores.

Casinos, movie theatres, performing arts – Casinos, bingo halls, and gaming establishments have to follow the same restricted liquor rules as restaurants. Movie theatres and performing arts spaces serving liquor must also follow the same rules.

Personal care services – Contact information needs to be collected from guests.

Example: Our local community setting outbreak where there were 95 contacts that needed to be notified is a good example of why this is an important measure to control the spread.

Sport and recreation – In a sport or recreational facility where there are weights and fitness classes, people will need to be spaced out from each other by three metres. Appointments to enter are required and contact information must be collected. Attendance from team sports has to be taken. Recreational programs are limited at 10 people indoors, and 25 people outdoors.

2. Trends in transmission need to be addressed

Workplaces – Physical distancing challenges

- a. **Work lines** – Where physical distancing is a challenge, proper PPE must be worn.
- b. **Lunchrooms** – Lunches should be staggered to reduce numbers of people sharing space, to allow for physical distancing. Cohorting of workers lunching, who work in same area, should be implemented to help reduce risk of transmission to other areas of the workplace.
- c. **Change rooms** – Physical distancing, a reduced capacity at all times, and masking to reduce risk of transmission.
- d. **One-way work flows** – There are gaps in directional one way work flows in many work areas.
- e. **Gaps in cleaning and disinfection, hand hygiene** – There are gaps in everything from lack of knowledge of need for handwashing, frequency and how to use cleaning products properly, to limited access to handwashing facilities.
- f. **Lack of active screening** – Almost all workplaces lack in active screening protocols/policies which has resulted in individuals working while ill and putting others at risk. *Example: One facility was screening every two weeks, paper was submitted with symptomology noted and no action was taken.*
- g. **Masking challenges (for source control)** – Many workplaces are still behind or don't understand mandatory masking. *Example: One recent outbreak - staff were wearing face shields (no masks).*
- h. **Worker travel challenges** – Especially noted with temporary agency workers travelling together; there is little to no reduction in capacity while travelling and gaps in control measures noted.

In the community – Many of our sporadic cases are the result of close contacts. Quite a few household clusters, where within a large household all become infected, more than half of those listed this week, where acquisition has been identified, were close contacts.

3. **New recommendations for masking from Dr. Tam** – Health Canada updated recommendations about wearing homemade masks [with at least 3 layers](#). This does not mean that the masks you have been using up to this point have been ineffective. The new recommendation is added protection, if you choose to use it. Remember, all masks need to be worn correctly over the nose and mouth, and shouldn't fall down when speaking. The goal is to keep your hands away from your face as much as possible. Also, wear the mask inside any places you can't maintain physical distancing from those not in your immediate household. More information on masking is available on the [COVID pages of our website](#).

Previous media briefings can be found on the [SMDHU Facebook](#) page and [YouTube](#) channel.

Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Case Status *(As of Nov 12, 2020, 13:00)*

Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
1,604	169	1,378	50

Highlights:

- There have been 141 new cases reported for the week of November 1st making it the highest number reported in a single week since the start of the pandemic.
- This was the third consecutive week where weekly highs in reported cases were above 100.
- Since November 10th, there have been 46 new cases, no new deaths and 18 recoveries reported.
- There are currently eight people hospitalized in Simcoe Muskoka.
- There are currently nine ongoing outbreaks in Simcoe Muskoka.
- The weekly incidence rate of new COVID-19 infections for the week starting November 1st in Simcoe County is less than half of the overall provincial rate. There were only two cases reported in Muskoka for the week starting November 1st.
- The vast majority of COVID-19 cases in Simcoe Muskoka reside in Barrie, Bradford West Gwillimbury, New Tecumseth, and Innisfil.
- New Tecumseth has the highest weekly [incidence rate](#) of new COVID-19 infections amongst all Simcoe Muskoka municipalities for three of the past four weeks.

SMDHU [COVID-19 HealthSTATS page](#) and the [COVID-19 Case Explorer](#)

Local Media Updates *(Since Nov. 4, 2020 Partner Update)*

- Barrie hospital receiving \$12M from province for almost 100 new beds ([article](#))
- Christmas Cheer switches to financial campaign only this year ([article](#))
- Simcoe Muskoka is in the COVID-19 yellow zone: What it means ([article](#))
- Huntsville's Hidden Valley ski area wants provincial assurance in the COVID-19 era ([article](#))
- Modify your seasonal holiday plans, Muskoka, says health unit in 2020 ([article](#))
- Bradford Bypass part of province's COVID recovery plan ([article](#))
- No surprises in provincial budget, but Lehman wishes there was more money for Public Health ([article](#))
- Grade 8 students! Time to catch up on your vaccinations ([news release](#))
- Warm weather, open patios and paved roads must mean Open Air Dunlop ([article](#))
- Georgian, Waypoint team up to examine pandemic's impact on health-care workers ([article](#))
- Catholic school board presses pause on elementary hybrid-learning switch ([article](#))
- Number of living-wage employers in Simcoe County on the rise ([news release](#))
- One-stop shop for local food unrolls distribution centre in Barrie ([article](#))
- Physicians: COVID-19 pandemic aside, you need to stay in touch with your family doc ([article](#))
- Staffers baffled after vandals cause \$10K in damage at Barrie COVID testing centre ([article](#))
- Local pharmacist asks for patience, urges people to get flu shots ([article](#))
- As winter approaches, OSMH CEO urges extra caution, vigilance ([article](#))

Provincial, National and Global COVID-19 Case Status

Ontario (As of November 12, 2020, 10:30)

Total cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
89,784	11,271	75,220	3,293

Highlights:

- Since the last update there have been over 10,000 people infected with COVID-19 and 111 people have died and there are almost 2,950 more active cases.
- In the last day there has been:
 - An increase of 1,575 confirmed cases;
 - An increase of 917 resolved cases; and
 - An increase of 18 deaths.
- There are currently 431 people hospitalized, with 98 in ICU and 62 in ICU on a ventilator.
- Highlights from the last reporting week (Oct. 25-31):
 - There were a total of 77,303 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Ontario with a public health unit (reported date up to October 31, 2020).
 - For the period with a public health unit reported date between October 25 and 31, 2020 (week 44):
 - A total of 6,384 cases were reported to public health compared to 6,109 cases the previous week (October 18-24).
 - For the first time since week 23 (May 31 to June 6), the rate of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population reported amongst cases aged 80 and over (65.7) surpassed the rate of cases aged 20-39 (57.2) to become the age group reporting the greatest rate of disease in week 44.
 - In week 44, the most ethnically diverse neighbourhoods in Ontario had COVID-19 rates that were more than 10 times higher than the least diverse neighbourhoods, and the neighbourhoods with the greatest neighbourhood deprivation had rates that were two times higher than neighbourhoods with the lowest neighbourhood deprivation.

For more provincial data see: [Province of Ontario COVID-19 case data](#) and [Public Health Ontario Data Tool, Public Health Ontario Daily Epidemiologic Summaries, Public Health Ontario Weekly Epidemiologic Summaries](#)

Canada (As of Nov. 11, 2020 at 19:00 EDT)

Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
277,061	43,177	223,199	10,685

Highlights:

- In the last week, over 30,000 people in Canada have tested positive for COVID-19 and over 400 people have died as a result of COVID-19.
- On November 11th Canada reported (excluding BC who did not provide a report):
 - 4,024 new cases [reported in ON (1,426), QC (1,378), AB (672), MB (430), SK (112), NS (2)], NFLD (1), PEI (1), NWT (1), Nunavut (1)]; and
 - 53 new deaths [reported in QC (22), ON (15), MB (9), and AB (7)].
- The following are national highlights from the last published reporting week of Oct. 24-31:
 - An average of 2,967 new daily cases reported, representing a 16% increase in comparison to the previous week.
 - The average number of daily reported deaths (31) was also higher than the average from the previous week (25).

- Manitoba reported a 97% increase in cases from the previous week, including the highest age-standardized incidence rate (106.4 cases per 100 000 population) and the largest increase in age-standardized incidence rate (increased from 55.9 cases per 100 000 population).
- Incidence rates amongst all age groups has increased compared to the previous week (with a notable increase in those 80 years of age and older).
- The incidence rate in adults 20-29 years of age remains the highest and has increased from 58.3 per 100 000 during the previous week to 69.9 per 100 000.
- Hospitalizations increased 7%, with a 1% decrease in those requiring ICU care.
- 55% of reported cases were exposed to COVID-19 by a known source and 44% were exposed to COVID-19 by an unknown source.
- The average number of people tested daily decreased from the previous week (6%) but the average percent positivity increased from 4% to 4.7%, with Manitoba showing a percent positivity rate of 8.1%.

National [daily epidemiology updates](#); [National weekly epidemiology report](#)

Global (As of November 12, 2020 at 10:00 CET)	
Confirmed Cases	Confirmed Deaths
51,547,733	1,275,979
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On November 11, World Health Organization (WHO) reported an additional 490,525 people had a confirmed new case of COVID-19 and 8,570 people died of COVID-19. ● Those countries with the most new cases in the past day were the United States, India, Italy, Poland and Brazil and those countries with the most new deaths were the United States, France, Mexico, Italy and India. ● In the past week, the global number of cases of COVID-19 has increased by 8% compared to the previous week with almost 4.2 million new cases of COVID-19, and over 60,000 deaths. ● The European Region continues to account for the greatest proportion of new cases and deaths in the past week, representing over half (54%) of all new cases and nearly half (47%) of new deaths. ● The United States, France, India, Italy and Poland had the highest weekly number of cases and the United States, France, India, Mexico and Iran had the highest weekly number of deaths. 	
WHO COVID-19 Disease Dashboard ; Previous Situation Reports	

Provincial, National and Global Updates *(Since Nov. 4, 2020 Partner Update)*

Provincial Updates

The Ontario government:

- Ontario investing additional \$761 million to build and renovate more long-term care homes ([news release](#))
- Ontario supporting agricultural and horticultural societies during COVID-19 ([news release](#))
- Province launching recruitment program to support long-term care sector ([news release](#))
- Ontario providing additional public health support for Peel Region ([news release](#))
- Ontario moves public health unit regions into COVID-19 response framework to keep Ontario safe and open ([news release](#))
- Ontario investing \$15.2 billion to protect people and support health care during COVID-19 ([news release](#))
- Ontario supports businesses, workers and families during COVID-19 ([statement](#))

Other Provincial News:

- Ontario cremation data suggests 1,800 more deaths than normal at peak of pandemic in April ([article](#))
- Ford defends Ontario's new COVID-19 restriction system, says it will allow early response ([article](#))

National Updates

The Government of Canada:

- Remarks from Chief Public Officer/Deputy Chief Public Health Officer of Canada: [November 11, 2020](#), [November 10, 2020](#), [November 9, 2020](#), [November 8, 2020](#), [November 7, 2020](#), [November 6, 2020](#), [November 5, 2020](#), [November 4, 2020](#)
- Prime Minister's [remarks](#) on additional investments for business and science
- Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy ([backgrounder](#))
- Lockdown support for businesses facing significant public health restrictions ([backgrounder](#))
- Details on the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy Extension ([backgrounder](#))
- Combating unauthorized and counterfeit goods during the COVID-19 pandemic: The CBSA, Health Canada and RCMP announce the results of *Project Purify* ([news release](#))
- Minister Fortier discusses support for Canadians through COVID-19 and efforts to focus on Canadians' quality of life ([news release](#))
- Connecting all Canadians to high-speed internet ([news release](#))
- Government update of Canada COVID-19 update for Indigenous Peoples and communities ([article](#))
- [Statement](#) by Minister Garneau on measures to protect Canadians from the impacts of COVID-19 on the air travel sector

Other National News:

- What's happening in Canada and around the world on Thursday ([article](#))
- Canada: The unmet health-care needs of non-COVID-19 patients ([article](#))
- Canada follows WHO and U.S. in acknowledging aerosol transmission of coronavirus ([article](#))
- Distributing the first COVID vaccines will pose logistical challenges: PM ([article](#))
- Why COVID-19 cases are surging across Canada and what needs to be done ([article](#))
- COVID-19: The unprecedented toll the pandemic is taking on mental health ([article](#))
- Canada: Why young people tune out government COVID-19 messaging ([article](#))
- COVID-19: Remote work requires reconsidering how employees are evaluated, paid ([article](#))
- COVID-19 vaccine to be limited when first available in Canada: Tam ([article](#))
- How businesses and schools are dealing with airborne COVID-19 and preparing for a winter indoors ([article](#))
- Will COVID-19 kill Christmas? ([article](#))

International Updates

The World Health Organization (WHO):

- Published:
 - Updated [guidance on critical preparedness, readiness and response actions](#), including further subclassifications of transmission scenarios within the community transmission category; and updated guidance on contact tracing, laboratory testing, infection prevention and control, public health and social measures and health services.
 - Updated [guidance on considerations for implementing and adjusting public health and social measures \(PHSM\)](#) in the context of COVID-19. PHSM are being implemented and adjusted across the globe to limit transmission and reduce mortality and morbidity from COVID-19.
 - Updated [guidance on health facility assessments](#), to inform the prioritization of actions and decision-making at health facility, subnational and national levels.

- The [Terms of References for a WHO-convened Global Study of the Origins of SARS-CoV-2](#). This outlines two phases of studies: Short term studies (Phase 1) will be conducted to better understand how the virus might have started circulating in Wuhan, China. Building on the findings of these short-term studies, and the scientific literature, longer term studies will be developed (Phase 2).
- A [policy brief](#) on readiness for influenza during the COVID-19 pandemic, which provides a concise summary of information and considerations for key issues policymakers may face. The document also includes links to relevant guidance and resources for monitoring the situation, preventing seasonal influenza, reducing severe complications and mortality, protecting specific populations, and communicating to and engaging with the public.
- Briefed the interagency communications strategy to create conditions for high acceptance and uptake of COVID-19 vaccines.
- Hosted its first design lab to transform WHO technical guidance into innovative, creative and engaging communication content. You can sign up to the [Youth Engagement mailing list](#) to be notified of future DesignLab topics, challenges and opportunities for collaboration.

SMDHU Resources

- SMDHU [COVID-19 HealthSTATS page](#) and the [COVID-19 Case Explorer](#).
 - [SMDHU Vulnerable Populations for COVID-19 Response Interactive Map](#) highlights vulnerable populations in Simcoe Muskoka.
 - Current COVID-19 information is available on our [website](#). Updates have been made to:
 - [Main COVID-](#)
 - [Wearing a face covering in all indoor places](#) has been updated to link to PHAC website instructions that include information about 3 layer masks.
 - [Operating your Business Safely-](#)
 - Information about the new framework and the yellow-protect level has been added.
 - [Partners and Municipalities-](#)
 - Posted [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Static Parades](#).
 - SMDHU Health Connection responds to calls and emails about COVID-19. Contact Health Connection at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 ext. 5829 or via [email](#).
- Health Connection Hours:**
- Monday-Friday - 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday - 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Credible Sources of Information

- [Ontario Ministry of Health](#)
- [Public Health Ontario](#)
- [Government of Canada](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)