

COVID-19 Update for Partners

February 10, 2021

[Key messages from Dr. Gardner](#)

[Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Case Status](#)

[Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Vaccine Data](#)

[Local Media Updates](#)

[Provincial, National and Global COVID-19 Case Status](#)

[Provincial, National and Global Updates](#)

[SMDHU Resources](#)

[Credible Sources of Information](#)

Key messages from Dr. Gardner, Medical Officer of Health

Enforcement blitz

- An enforcement blitz was held in Simcoe Muskoka from February 5-8 in partnership with the *Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development* and municipalities. 33 ministry enforcers, 24 municipal bylaw officers, 11 public health inspectors and tobacco enforcement officers, and 6 police departments were involved in this blitz.
- The inspections were designed to ensure businesses are in compliance with the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act* and the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*.
- Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) inspectors completed 170 inspections and issued 14 tickets. The most common infractions included: lack of employee screening, lack of signage indicating capacity limits, lack of a COVID-19 workplace safety plan, and cleaning/disinfection failings. We are awaiting final counts from inspections completed by ministry and municipal enforcers.

Return-to-school

- In-class learning resumed on February 8, something that I have called for as important for children's overall health and education. Return-to-school will be carefully managed, with additional safety measures in place, given the concerns with the UK variant in our region.
- Masking is now required for all students in Grades 1-12 and we strongly encourage masking for JK/SK students who can tolerate it. However, school boards need to be able to set their own direction and we support their decisions. Many school boards have required JK-Grade 12 masking since September and it has been well tolerated.

COVID-19 variant concerns

- The UK B.1.1.7 variant is here and we expect it to become the dominant strain of COVID-19. The same public health safety precautions continue to be so important to prevent and reduce the transmission of COVID-19 and the variants of concern.
- We are now publishing daily the confirmed B.1.1.7 variant and positive variant cases on our [HealthSTATs webpage](#).

- Public Health Ontario completed a one-day study about the COVID-19 variants of concern. Preliminary results show that 89 of 140 (63.6%) COVID-19 test samples from Simcoe Muskoka were positive for the B.1.1.7 variant. Eighty seven out of 89 of these tests were tied to known outbreaks. Additional results are expected once final results are completed.
- We are now working in partnership with the City of Barrie, Ministry of the Environment, the University of Ottawa, and the CHEO Research Institute on a wastewater surveillance initiative to test wastewater for COVID-19. As of Friday, it was confirmed that a variant was found in samples taken from Barrie’s main wastewater treatment centre. Other municipalities are joining the wastewater surveillance initiative moving forward.

Vaccination update

- The Barrie COVID-19 Immunization Clinic reopened the last week of January and, as of last Monday, began to provide dose two to staff and essential caregivers of long-term care (LTC) and retirement homes.
- Our mobile immunization teams began providing dose two to residents of LTC and retirement homes as of February 5. Numbers detailing our vaccination efforts can be found on our [HealthSTATS webpage](#).
- We continue to plan with our local partners to ensure that we are ready to roll out the vaccine to our communities. As soon as more vaccine is available, we will focus on immunizing the following priority groups: remaining retirement home residents, LTC and retirement home staff and essential caregivers, hospital healthcare workers, and local First Nation communities.

Colour-coded framework for reopening in Ontario

- The current stay-at-home order is being amended and individual orders for each public health region will be made, subject to review of the trends in public health indicators. The stay-at-home order for our region remains in place until February 16, with some exceptions.
- Even when we do transition to the colour-coded framework, it is important to remember that this is not a reopening or a ‘return to normal.’ It is essential to continue following public health and workplace safety measures including staying at home as much as possible and not engaging in any social gatherings with people outside of your household.

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

Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Case Status (As of February 10, 2021 14:00)			
Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
5,810	744	4,856	169
<p><u>In the last day:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 people tested positive, 96 people recovered, and there were no new deaths. <p><u>Since the last Partner Update:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have reported 262 new cases, 10 new deaths, and 472 recoveries. • So far this week there have been 77 new cases reported to the health unit. • There are 224 fewer active cases. <p><u>There are currently:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 32 people hospitalized. 			

- 23 ongoing outbreaks (institutional settings: 13, workplace settings: 6, educational settings: 2, community settings: 1, congregate settings: 1).
- The current percent positivity rate in Simcoe County is 2.3% and 0.4% in the District of Muskoka compared to the provincial percent positivity rate of 3.0%.
- The weekly percent positivity is now highest among those ≤9 years of age, at 9.5% the week of January 31, compared to 4.8% the week of January 24.
- To date, 133 local cases have tested positive for the UK B.1.1.7 variant (with no new cases since yesterday) and an additional 86 cases have screened positive (awaiting confirmatory testing).
- Because variants of concern are more contagious, we need to be even more vigilant in our measures against COVID-19. The measures are the same: physical distancing, mask wearing, daily screening of symptoms, testing and self-isolation when one has symptoms, and staying home at this time except for essential activities.

For more local data, see: SMDHU [COVID-19 HealthSTATS page](#) and the [COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard](#).

Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Vaccine* Data (As of February 10, 2021 14:00)

Total doses administered	Doses administered previous day
23,066	897
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,329 immunizations have been provided since the last Partner Update. • 2,886 (90%) LTC residents and 2,375 (65%) retirement home residents have received their first dose. • More than 7,000 individuals have received both of the required doses of the vaccine, mainly healthcare workers in local hospitals, LTC and retirement homes. 	

Local Media Updates (Since February 3, 2021 Partner Update)

- Relaxed stay-at-home orders may spark surge in COVID cases ([article](#))
- COVID outbreak involving Collingwood residents includes possible link to variant ([article](#))
- Waypoint's COVID-19 outbreak toll continues rising ([article](#))
- One month into Roberta Place outbreak, no new cases or deaths being reported ([article](#))
- Still lots of question marks as area ski resorts ramp up for opening day ([article](#))
- Big-box store weekend inspection blitz in Simcoe Muskoka ([article](#))
- 'I think it is still too soon': Parents share back-to-school concerns ([article](#))
- What you need to know about returning to in-class learning ([article](#))
- 'They're terrified': Isolation impacts Collingwood residents during lockdown ([article](#))
- COVID outbreak declared in RVH's cancer palliative unit ([article](#))
- Stay-at-home order extended in Simcoe County ([article](#))
- The impact of the pandemic on our mental health: Orillia's hospital shines a light ([article](#))
- County of Simcoe Paramedic Services receives funding for COVID-19 response ([article](#))
- Collingwood health care agency part of province's rapid COVID-19 test pilot ([article](#))

Provincial, National and Global COVID-19 Case Status

Ontario (As of February 10, 2021, 10:30)			
Total cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
281,566	13,270	261,700	6,596
<u>As of today:</u>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were 1,072 new cases, 1,709 resolved cases, and 41 deaths in the last day. 			

- There are 3,378 fewer active cases compared to the same day last week.
- A total of 228 cases of the UK variant have been reported as well as three cases of the South African variant.
- A total of 948 people are hospitalized, 313 are in intensive care units (ICU) and 226 are on ventilators.
- There are 376 ongoing outbreaks in health care settings (208 in LTC, 109 in RH, 59 in hospitals).
- The current effective reproduction number is 0.9.

In the last week:

- There have been 9,469 new cases, 12,719 recoveries, and 291 deaths.
- The average number of weekly cases is 1,353.

Vaccines:

- Yesterday 13,486 doses of vaccine were administered, with a total of 412,119 doses administered.
- 125,575 people in Ontario are fully vaccinated having received both immunizations.

Regional updates:

Areas with the highest number of active cases per 100,000 population:

- Peel (218.49), Toronto (176.46), and Chatham-Kent (119.56).

Areas with the highest number of active cases:

- Toronto (4,820), Peel (3,019), York (1,024), Halton (545), and Ottawa (481).

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

Canada (As of February 9, 2021 at 19:00 EDT)			
Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths
810,797	39,179	750,709	20,909

- In the last week over 24,000 people tested positive for COVID-19, almost 700 people died and over 34,000 people recovered.
- There are over 10,000 less people with active cases of COVID-19 in the country than there was a week ago.

Yesterday:

- Canada reported 2,677 new cases and 74 deaths.
- New cases were reported in all provinces and territories except YT and NU.
- Deaths were reported in BC, AB, SK, MB, ON, QC, and NB.

Between January 25 and February 1:

- The number COVID-19 patients hospitalized decreased from 3,356 to 2,576.
- The number COVID-19 patients in ICU beds decreased from 844 to 726 beds.
- The number of COVID-19 patients mechanically vented decreased from 484 to 408.

Weekly update: January 24-30:

- New cases decreased by 20% compared to the previous week, with an average of 4,628 new cases every day.
- The average number of deaths reported each day decreased to 138.

- Case rates remain highest amongst those 20 to 29 years of age and those 80 years of age and older.
- Hospitalizations decreased, while ICU admissions remained stable since early January.
- According to forecasting, between 804,630 to 847,410 cumulative reported cases and 20,860 to 22,160 deaths are expected by February 14, 2021.

Key Vaccine Updates: As of January 30, 2021

- % of population who has received at least one dose: 2.29%
 - % of adults 80 or older who have received at least one dose: 10.84%
 - % of health care workers targeted for priority vaccination who have received at least one dose: 52.00%
 - % of adults living in group living settings for seniors: 48.25%
- % of population who has received two doses: 0.30%

For more national data, see: National [daily epidemiology updates](#) and National [weekly epidemiology report](#)

Global (As of February 10, 2021 at 10:13am CET)	
Confirmed Cases	Confirmed Deaths
106,321,987	2,325,282

In the last day:

- There were 296,724 new cases and 8,680 deaths.
- The U.S., Brazil, Russia, the UK, and India reported the most new cases and the U.S., Brazil, Mexico, Russia, and Germany reported the most deaths.

In the past week:

- Over 3.1 million new cases and 87,646 deaths were reported.
- The U.S., Brazil, France, the UK, and Russia reported the most new cases and the U.S., Mexico, Brazil, the UK, and Germany had the most new deaths.

Highlights from Weekly Epidemiological Summary as of February 7, 2021:

- For the last four weeks there has been a decline in new global cases reported, with the number of global cases now over 100 million. Last week, all WHO regions reported a decline in cases, with five out of six regions reporting more than 10% decreases.
- The number of new deaths declined globally by 10% compared to the previous week. New deaths declined in all regions, except the Western Pacific where deaths remained stable.

For more international data, see: [WHO COVID-19 Disease Dashboard](#) and [Weekly Epidemiological and Operational Updates](#)

Provincial, National and Global Updates *(Since Feb. 3, 2021 Partner Update)*

Provincial Updates

The Ontario Government:

- Third quarter finances demonstrate unwavering commitment to protect individuals, families, and businesses ([news release](#))
- Extends off-peak electricity rates to relieve families, businesses, farms ([news release](#))
- Is supporting COVID-19 response in high priority communities ([news release](#))
- Is extending stay-at-home order across most of the province to save lives ([news release](#))
- Is helping keep seniors safe and connected during COVID-19 ([news release](#))

- Increases mental health funding for postsecondary students ([news release](#))
- Invests in affordable housing for Indigenous People ([news release](#))
- Opens applications open for its new Skill Development Fund ([news release](#))
- Supports air monitoring technology to protect people from COVID-19 ([news release](#))

Public Health Ontario published:

- COVID-19 Herd Immunity – What We Know So Far ([synthesis](#))
- Trends of COVID-19 Incidence in Ontario ([surveillance report](#))
- COVID-19 in Ontario: Focus on January 24-30, 2021 ([weekly epidemiological summary](#))
- SARS-CoV-2 Variants of Concern: Interim Results of Point Prevalence Study ([report](#))
- COVID-19 Regional Incidence and Time to Case Notification in Ontario ([report](#))
- Association of Vitamin D Status with COVID-19 Incidence and Outcomes ([rapid review](#))

Other Provincial News:

- Ontario Finance Minister says all COVID-19 contingency funds spent ([article](#))
- Provinces must be ready to lock down quickly: Tam ([article](#))
- Medical officers in some COVID-19 hot spots push back against reopening plan ([article](#))
- Province's reopening plan could create 'confusion,' says Ontario Chamber ([article](#))
- Ontario to begin gradual reopening of economy, but 'we can't return to normal' ([article](#))
- Education minister considering cancelling March break to curb COVID spread ([article](#))
- Parents raise concerns over plan to reopen schools in COVID-19 hot spots ([article](#))
- Ontario is building a web portal for mass COVID vaccination ([article](#))
- COVID-19 patients are the first to access new Vaughan hospital ([article](#))
- Pharmacists say they could administer a million vaccinations a week ([article](#))
- Ontario allows pet groomers to reopen ([article](#))
- Is restricting regional travel a realistic COVID-19 measure for Ontario? ([article](#) includes comment from Dr. Gardner)
- All positive COVID tests in Ontario now screened for variant strains ([article](#))

National Updates

The Government of Canada:

- Statements from the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada: [February 4](#), [February 6](#), [February 8](#)
- Updates COVID Alert to evaluate its effectiveness in reducing virus spread ([news release](#))
- Launches intake for COVID-19 resilient projects under the Canada Healthy Communities Initiative ([news release](#))
- Issues label change authorization for Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine ([statement](#))
- Addresses CERB repayments for self-employed individuals and announces interest relief on 2020 income tax debt due to COVID-19 related income support ([news release](#))
- Announces one-year ban for pleasure craft and cruise vessels ([news release](#))
- COVID-19 Update for Indigenous Peoples and communities ([news release](#))

Other National News:

- Most international travelers still exempt from new COVID hotel quarantine rules ([article](#))
- Despite delays and reductions, Trudeau says COVID vaccine plan 'on track' ([article](#))
- As Canadian COVID cases drop by 30%, officials call for continued vigilance ([article](#))
- Virtual hub will provide info to First Nations, Inuit, Métis about COVID vaccines ([article](#))
- Negative COVID-19 test to be required for people entering Canada by land ([article](#))
- How Canada is trying to stop people from importing COVID-19 ([article](#))
- Canada's health-care system readies for next phase of COVID-19 vaccination ([article](#))
- Health Canada says Pfizer's vaccine vials can be stretched to six doses ([article](#))

- Early evidence suggests vaccines halting COVID outbreaks in nursing homes ([article](#))
- Canada doesn't know how many more Moderna doses will be delivered, or why there are delays ([article](#))
- What you need to know about the latest medical guidance on mask-wearing ([article](#))
- Canada boosts vaccine order by tapping global pool originally set up for poorer nations ([article](#))
- COVID-19 vaccines are 'ethically justified' for pregnant, breastfeeding women ([article](#))
- Few resources for COVID-19 long-haulers, new app offers hope ([article](#))
- Oxford says vaccine could curb not only illness but also spread of COVID-19 ([article](#))

Global Updates

The World Health Organization (WHO):

- In the COVID-19 vaccine race, we either win together or lose together ([news release](#))
- Director General identifies the need for a “massive scale-up in [vaccine] production... having received substantial public funding, we encourage all manufacturers to share their data and technology to ensure global equitable access to vaccines.” ([Remarks at Feb. 5th media briefing](#))
- WHO launches free OpenWHO.org training on rehabilitation for COVID-19 ([article](#))
- Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine and the new viral South African variant ([news update](#))
- Director General continues to emphasize “Vaccine equity must therefore be our top priority, not only across countries, but also within societies... Until we end the pandemic everywhere, we will not end it anywhere.” ([Opening Remarks at Arab Group of Ambassadors briefing](#))

WHO published:

- Special Focus: How COVAX is distributing the first COVID-19 vaccines to prioritized countries in all six WHO regions ([Weekly Epidemiological Update: special focus p.4-5](#))
- Special Focus: Update on SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern ([Weekly Epidemiological Update: special focus p.6-13](#))
- New videos on how to monitor and prevent COVID-19 long-term effects ([videos](#))
- COVAX statement on new variants of SARS-CoV-2 ([statement](#))

Other International news:

- WHO investigators conclude coronavirus didn't originate in Chinese lab ([article](#))
- Facebook bans misinformation about vaccines and COVID-19 ([article](#))
- AstraZeneca vaccine backed by governments despite questions over efficacy ([article](#))
- WHO panel calls for world to bolster pandemic warning systems, after Canada's GPHIN curtailed ([article](#))
- Iceland's 'COVID-19 passport' offers preview of debate over post-vaccine travel ([article](#))

SMDHU Resources

- SMDHU [COVID-19 HealthSTATS page](#)
- [SMDHU Vulnerable Populations for COVID-19 Response Interactive Map](#) highlights vulnerable populations in Simcoe Muskoka.
- Current COVID-19 information is available on our [website](#).
 - New HealthFaxes - None
- 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](#)