

CD Unit COVID-19 Weekly Teleconference Notes

March 2nd, 2020

10:00 EST / 09:00 CST

1-855-288-0982 Access Code: 95 29 25 79

COVID-19 in Ontario

- COVID-19 continues to circulate in Ontario with increased cases being reported, including cases identified as variants of concern (VOC)
- On 19 Feb 2021 it was announced that the [stay-at home order was extended](#) in Toronto and Peel Public Health Regions and North Bay-Parry Sound would be in place for two more weeks – other areas of the province had started re-opening as of 16 Feb 2021, and some have moved to more restrictive levels again
 - A revised [COVID-19 Response Framework](#) has been provided to outline restrictions
- The AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine was [authorised](#) 26 Feb 2021 and [NACI](#) provided updated recommendations for use in those 18-64 years old 01 Mar 2021
 - It is a non-replicating viral vector vaccine which uses a modified virus to carry genes that encode the SARS-CoV-2 spike proteins
 - The vector virus is a chimpanzee adenovirus that has been modified to carry COVID-19 genes and prevent replication to prevent the viral vector from causing disease. (i.e., they are non-replicating)
 - Inside a cell, spike protein genes are transcribed into mRNA and translated into proteins

Public health measures like watching your distance, washing your hands, and wearing a mask remain very important

- Avoid crowded places, close contact, and closed spaces
- Avoid gathering, and keep 2 m distance from those not in your household
- Wear a [face covering](#) (cloth mask, non-medical mask) when running essential errands
- Stay home and self-isolate if you are sick, feel unwell, or [have symptoms](#) of COVID-19

Guidance Documents

The [Ministry website](#) provides guidance documents and information about COVID-19 (last updated 26 Feb 2021)

- COVID-19 [Variant of Concern: Case, Contact and Outbreak Management](#) Interim Guidance V2.0 (26 Feb 2021)
- COVID-19 [Signage Questions for Businesses and Organizations](#) V2.0 (26 Feb 2021)
 - Provides five questions to ask, with any “yes” response advising the person not to enter

The [COVID-19 Vaccine-Relevant Information and Planning Resources website](#) provides most of the resources shared around COVID-19 vaccine for Ontario (last updated 16 Feb 2021)

The [Ontario government website](#) has updated versions (27 Feb 2021) of the [COVID-19 worker and employee screening tool](#) and [COVID-19 customer and patron screening tool](#)

Further Information

The Public Health Ontario ([PHO](#)) website posts evidence summaries, scientific paper reviews, fact sheets and further information

- COVID-19 [P.1 Variant of Concern](#) – What We Know so Far – Synthesis (updated 22 Feb 2021)
- Evidence on [Public Health Measures Required for Rapid Control of Variants](#) of Concern – Evidence Brief (updated 22 Feb 2021)

The [Government of Canada website](#) also includes general COVID-19 information and vaccine information

- [NACI vaccine information](#) was updated 01 Mar 2021, including the AstraZeneca vaccine
- A third vaccine against COVID-19 from AstraZeneca was [authorised](#) 26 Feb 2021

COVID-19 FNIHB-OR Epi Report

- As of March 1st, 2021 at 4:00 pm we have 1,007 First Nations confirmed cases that is 154 more cases than last week. We currently have 189 active cases in 20 communities.
- Since the beginning of the pandemic, there have been 6 deaths. Two deaths occurred in the first wave and four occurred recently.
- In total, 16,959 tests have been reported to FNIHB-OR.
- A grand total of 40,812 tests (including tests done in SLFNHA and WAHA areas).
- As of March 1st, 2021, Ontario reported an increase of 1,023 cases of COVID-19. The number of hospitalizations decreased to 659. The number of patients in ICU is relatively the same from 277 to 280, however less patients are on a ventilator from 192 to 175. Ontario region has 10 active cases that are hospitalized and we remain at 5 cases in ICU.
- As of March 1st, 2021, an estimated 704,695 COVID vaccine doses have been administered in Ontario. Daily doses administered is 17,424. Over 263,214 people are fully vaccinated.
- 75 out of 116 (65%) communities reported holding influenza immunization clinics. A total of 7,693 Influenza vaccines have been administered (11.1% coverage rate within reporting communities). Last Flu season we had a 9.1% coverage rate within reporting communities.
- To date, no influenza cases have been reported to FNIHB this flu season. Flu Watch reports that Influenza testing continues at seasonal levels. To date, there is no evidence of community circulation of influenza. (Flu Watch, Week 5)

CD Unit Activities

MOH: COVID-19 Variant of Concern: Case, Contact and Outbreak Management Interim Guidance (V2) (Feb 26th, 2021)
Short summary of updates (see guidance for full details):

- Enhanced Contact Management for ALL cases in the Province including:
 1. Enhanced identification of contacts for all cases. Recommends a lower threshold for classifying contacts as high risk of exposure
 2. Enhanced asymptomatic testing recommendations
 3. Recommendations that symptomatic contacts with high risk exposure should be managed as probable cases and have contact tracing initiated prior to test results being available
 4. Recommendation that a contact's household members stay home during the quarantine period
 5. Recommendation that all household members of symptomatic individuals are required to quarantine while waiting for test results
 6. Recommendations for supporting cases and contacts with isolation and quarantine measures
- Section on enhanced case management for VOC screen positive cases
- Sections on outbreak management for all high priority risk settings
- CD unit resources will be updated to reflect changes in MOH guidance

COVID Vaccine:

- As Dr. Freeman mentioned, the AstraZeneca vaccine has been approved for use in Canada on February 26th, for individuals 18 years of age and older.
 - We will await Ministry guidance for the use of the vaccine.
 - It is a 0.5ml dose, provided as a 2 dose series 4 to 12 weeks apart.
 - Unlike the storage requirements for the mRNA vaccines, it can be stored at +2°C to +8°C.
 - There is no diluent and it is provided in a multi-dose vial.

Contact

General inquiry email set up for community leadership

- COVID19 General Inquiry Email: sac.covid-19fnihbontario.isc@canada.ca

Next teleconference:

Tuesday Mar 9th at 10:00 EST / 09:00 CST

Dial-in Number 1-855-288-0982 or 1-416-915-6530

Access code: 95 29 25 79