

## **AUGUST 28, 2020**

As of Aug. 27, a total of 13,476 people in Alberta have tested positive for COVID-19 since March, with 1,158 active cases. Two weeks ago, Alberta's active case count was 1,036. The average number of daily new cases confirmed in the past week is 102, compared to 91 the previous week. This is a 12 per cent increase.

Currently, 49 people are in hospital with the virus and seven of them are in an intensive care unit. In all, 11,923 Albertans have recovered from COVID-19.

We are saddened to see pandemic continue to take Albertans lives. Since the COVID-19 outbreak began, 237 Albertans have died of causes related to the virus. Since our all-staff update last week, another seven people have died. As always, we offer our genuine sympathies to the families and loved ones of these individuals and share in their loss. We also send our support to the caregivers who have lost patients to COVID-19.

Also, as of Aug. 27, a total of 922,397 COVID-19 tests have been completed in Alberta since the pandemic began: 66,429 in the past week, an average of 9,490 a day.

To ensure availability for teachers and staff, Alberta Health is asking Albertans with no symptoms and no known exposure to COVID-19 to wait until after Sept. 1 to access asymptomatic testing.

## **COVID-19 Testing for Healthcare Workers—The Latest Numbers**

AHS Healthcare Worker COVID-19 Testing tracks the number of employees and physicians with AHS, Covenant Health and Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL) tested for COVID-19 as well as the number of positive tests and confirmed exposures in the workplace.

Summary, as of August 27:

- 45,201 employees (AHS, APL and Covenant combined) have been tested for COVID-19, with 398 (or 0.88 per cent) testing positive.
- Of the 398 people who tested positive, 70 (or 17.6 per cent) were infected in the workplace. The source of infection for 70 of the 398 positive results is still being investigated.
- 2,904 physicians (AHS, APL, and Covenant combined) have been tested for COVID-19, with 37 (or 1.27 per cent) testing positive.
- Of the 34 physicians who tested positive, three (or 8.1 per cent) were infected through workplace exposure. The source of infection for three of the positive physician results is still being investigated.

For more information, see the AHS Healthcare Worker COVID-19 Testing [infographic](#) and [dashboard](#).

**Verna's Weekly Video Message: Guest Host Sean Chilton Looks at Provincial Staffing Services' Role During COVID-19**

Earlier this year, as AHS prepared for an influx of COVID-19 cases, we faced an incredible need to redeploy staff to essential areas, quickly and efficiently. One of the behind-the-scenes teams to step up and help with this was [Provincial Staffing Services](#)

This week's vlog looks at how the team supports the day-to-day scheduling of more than 45,000 employees and managers across AHS. Provincial Staffing Services also assigns relief employees, supports scheduling technology, analyzes staffing reports and provides staff rotation services.

Sean Chilton, the vice president of Health Professions and Practice and Information Technology, guest hosts this week. He's joined by three people from Provincial Staffing Services:

- Claire Silvey, administrative support for Staff Scheduling
- Donna Peterson, rotation coordinator for the North Sector
- Miko Managat, team lead for Application Support.


Claire, Donna and Miko share their experiences, including how their team is using new innovations and technology, such as the [Automated Shift Callout app](#), to overcome some of the pandemic's scheduling challenges.



**PPE Question of the Week: What are the Patient Masking Rules in Our Facilities?**

Dr. Mark Joffe speaks about [patient use of masks in our care settings](#).

PPE Question of the Week

What are the patient  
masking rules in our  
facilities? 



Dr. Mark Joffe answers PPE question of the week.

### **MyHealth Records Offers Quicker Access**

On Aug. 27, Alberta Health announced Albertans age 14 and up can now access the [MyHealth Records](#) (MHR) tool immediately after signing up online, without waiting for mailed verification.

Albertans who sign-up for MyHealth Records are able to see their COVID test results – as well as other lab work and immunization records - as soon as they are ready.

More than 250,000 Albertans have MHR accounts. [Join today.](#)

### **Responding to Travel-related Requests**

Today, AHS provided information to the public on an additional means of accessing printable COVID-19 testing results, which many countries and airlines are now requiring for international travel.

Albertans requiring test results prior to travel can secure their printable COVID-19 test results through several means. These include their [MyHealth Record account](#), through their family physician or primary healthcare provider, or through AHS by completing the new [Request to Access Health Information Travel Form](#).

Travellers are responsible for understanding any COVID-19 testing and reporting requirements for their travel, allowing enough time for their testing, and securing access to printable results.

All Albertans requiring proof of COVID-19 testing are advised to plan ahead, and allow at least seven days from the time they are swabbed for COVID-19 to having access to printable test results.

Detailed information for travellers requiring testing is now also available on the [AHS website](#).

All Albertans, including travellers, can access [asymptomatic testing through AHS](#) or by visiting a participating pharmacy.

### **Sharing the Love: Thanking Our People**

Thank you for recognizing your team members and colleagues as we continue to work together to respond to the needs of Albertans during this pandemic. We love how you share the love and appreciate each other.

#### **Shout Out to Calgary School Health Teams**

*Natalie Anderson shares these thoughts:*

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit Calgary in March, AHS Public Health rapidly set up community testing centres. Registered nurses and licensed practical nurses from school health teams were the first clinical staff redeployed to front-line COVID-19 testing. Today, almost six months later, they are still providing this essential service.

During my much briefer redeployment, I had the pleasure of working with many of these incredibly positive, resilient, adaptable and hard-working RNs and LPNs. Providing timely testing to Albertans has been a priority of this government, which has meant the hours and places of work for these staff have changed on a dime. They have been in it for the long-haul and have provided this essential service tirelessly, efficiently and with great care.

As school resumes next month and they return to their previous roles, I can only imagine the new challenges they will face as people turn to them for expertise on the health and wellness of students during a pandemic. But I know this team will rise to the occasion. Thank you for all you have done over the past six months, school health teams.

#### **Words of Praise for the Foothill's ED Family**

*An anonymous member of one of the busiest emergency departments in the province passed along these observations about his work family:*

Adaptable. Resilient. Collaborative. Dedicated. Creative. Caring. These are a few of the words that come to mind when I think of my colleagues at the Foothills Medical Centre's Emergency Department. As procedures change with a greater frequency than they stay static, I am constantly impressed by my colleagues' ability to quickly pivot and adapt their practice.

When so much is changing, their dedication to patient outcomes and sense of team never waivers. As we endure frustrations from patients and families for circumstances beyond our influence, our team has come together to bolster each other, allowing us to provide the best possible support for our patients.

As we have worn thin in this challenging time, the positive side-conversations, attempts at laughter and text messages of support sent after tough moments stand out. As with any family, we have our moments, but in this challenging time I have seen friendships once lost rekindled, cups of coffee silently purchased for others, starbursts regularly distributed and many more acts of forgiveness, compassion and warmth.

As a cohort, this frontline interdisciplinary family is cohesive and truly a beacon for our community. Throughout this interdisciplinary family is a strong underpinning of cohesion, dedication to our patients. Thank you for the privilege of being a part of this family.

#### A Family's Broken-hearted Thanks

*We wanted to share this touching excerpt, which appeared this week in the Lethbridge Heraldobituary for nine-year-old Anderson Sturm:*

The Sturm Family are devastated by this tragic, sudden loss and wish to humbly express our heartfelt gratitude to all those who have stopped by, called and connected with us to express their love and memories for Anderson. We cherish all these memories and are thankful for every one of our friends and family during this unimaginable time. We would also like to express our sincerest thanks to all first responders that came to our home and worked tirelessly to save Anderson's life. We would also like to profusely thank all of the staff at the Chinook Regional Hospital Emergency Department for their drive to fight through the impossible odds, they left nothing out and did everything within their power to save our boy. From the bottom of our broken hearts we thank you.

#### Wrapping Up

As the words above note, our work profoundly touches the lives of Albertans in time of crises and unimaginable loss. While our hearts ache for the Sturm family's loss, they also swell with pride to know our people do everything possible for their patients and families. We know such scenarios play out across the province every day.

We thank you for your dedication and compassion. For your ability to comfort and care. All are regularly tested and remain steadfast whatever what the challenge. We are humbled and amazed each time.

We know we've said all of this before in these weekly updates. We know we'll say it again. But we can never say it enough.

As always, with gratitude and appreciation.

*Please Note: This message has been modified from the AHS Daily Updates.*

**\*\*\*Please share this information as appropriate\*\*\***

**\*\*\*For Alberta Health Services – Indigenous specific questions/concerns please email [ahs.ecc.operations.ih@ahs.ca](mailto:ahs.ecc.operations.ih@ahs.ca) \*\*\***

**\*\*\*For Indigenous Services Canada please email [sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca](mailto:sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca) \*\*\***

*Forwarded on behalf of the Provincial Indigenous Health Hub*

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