

COVID-19 Status

April 3, 2020

We have confirmed 96 new cases of COVID-19 over the past 24 hours, bringing the provincial total to 968. Of the total cases, 108 are suspected to be through community transmission from an unknown source, 67 have been hospitalized, with 21 admitted to intensive care. Currently, there are 32 cases in hospital with 14 receiving intensive care. 74 cases have been confirmed in continuing care and seniors' facilities, and we expect more confirmations in these kinds of facilities in the coming days. We have declared nine outbreaks at continuing care facilities across the province.

The number of recovered cases is now at 174, which is 32 more than yesterday. More than 4,000 tests were completed in the last 24 hours as our lab continues to work at maximum capacity. Approximately 98 per cent of these tests came back negative, similar to previous days.

With sadness, we are reporting two more deaths today – one was a man in his 90s in Calgary zone, the other a man in his 80s from North Zone. We extend our deepest sympathies to the family and loved ones of these men and grieve alongside you.

We must remember that the numbers of cases confirmed through testing are only a sample of the actual numbers of cases of this illness circulating in our population. We know we have not yet reached the peak of infections and we must remain extremely vigilant in our public health protocols. Because none of us has immunity to the illness, these are our only defenses against COVID-19.

As Dr. Deena Hinshaw, Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health, said today, we will likely have these measures in place for months to come. As hard as they are, if we let our guard down and relax the restrictions too soon, this disease will spread quickly and our health system will be overwhelmed.

We are in a marathon and not a sprint when it comes to managing COVID-19. In this [video from Dr. Verna Yiu](#), President and CEO, we are reminded to pace ourselves to stay mentally and physically well.



Things You Need to Know

New orders for Congregate Care Facilities

New outbreak standards are now in place for operators, managers and staff at all congregate health settings, including all hospitals, nursing homes, designated supportive living and long-term care facilities, seniors lodges and facilities in which residential addiction treatment services are offered, to help manage COVID-19 transmission.

Under the new orders, staff and operators will be required to notify public health as soon as a case is confirmed, or if two or more residents exhibit COVID-19 symptoms. In addition to this, staff who may work at multiple facilities are required to immediately inform their supervisors if they have worked at, or are working at, a facility where there is a confirmed or suspected case.

The new standards provide operators with direction on how to deploy staff and resources where most needed, how to implement isolation measures, and ensure staff have up-to-date training on care and personal protective equipment.

Hand Hygiene and Proper Handwashing Technique

Hand hygiene remains the single most effective action to prevent the spread of any kind of infection. We want to emphasize the importance of the simple advice to wash your hands often, and wash them well.

AHS has [hand hygiene resources](#) available online to help each of us adhere to a high standard of hand hygiene practice, for the health and safety of patients, visitors and staff.

The same is true for COVID-19 prevention: proper, regular handwashing is one of the best ways to protect yourself and others from contracting this virus. Washing your hands properly involves a few steps, but it's easy to do and takes about the same time as singing the A-B-C song. [This video shows you how.](#)



Auto-dialer Test Result Delivery

As of April 2nd, some Albertans being tested for COVID-19 will receive negative test results through an auto-dialer system.

To start, individuals who are tested in the Calgary Zone will be able to proactively consent to being informed about a negative COVID-19 test result through an auto-dialer call system, programmed and delivered by AHS. This option will be expanded throughout all zones of AHS, based on the success of this initial pilot approach in Calgary Zone. Positive result confirmations from swabs taken at Assessment Centres will still be delivered by a direct phone call from AHS Public Health in all zones of AHS.

This is an innovation that will allow AHS Public Health teams to focus their follow-up work on Albertans with positive test results. We anticipate this may also shorten turn-around time on test results, allowing Albertans to learn of their results sooner.

The auto-dialer message directs Albertans with negative test results to ahs.ca/results for additional important directions on steps they need to take, as well as on the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. It also outlines ways to continue to keep themselves and their families, healthy.

For those who have already been tested, if a consent was provided to receive results through the auto-dialer system, and results are available on or after April 2, results may be delivered through the automated phone call.

In the Zones

Zone Emergency Operations Centre (ZEOC) Update – Calgary

World class effort, world class results

The Calgary Zone recently achieved a major milestone this week by clearing its backlog of all COVID-19 testing referrals. This means all patients now referred to the zone's sole Assessment Centre or four Fast Track vehicle access sites are now seen immediately. Thanks to the tremendous efforts of a collaborative team, the five testing areas have conducted more than 17,000 swabs since the Assessment Centre first opened on March 7.

This past week, the team cleared a waitlist of approximately 3,000 swabs. These were non-urgent patients who had already been referred by Health Link for testing before the protocols changed on March 23. Central to this remarkable achievement is the rapid deployment of staff to meet the demand. The first Assessment Centre started with six public health nurses, four emergency department nurses and eight admin staff. At peak – with five testing sites in operation – the Calgary Zone testing team expanded to include 29 total nurses and 50 admin support staff. With Alberta receiving recognition for being among the top countries in the world for testing per capita, Calgary Zone Assessment Centre and Fast Track staff are exhibiting true leadership and outstanding commitment to patient care during the pandemic.

Resource: Government of Canada – Public Service announcement about COVID-19, has updated their page and a number of Indigenous languages are included. See link below.

Link: <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1583781906998/1583781926813>

Thank you and stay safe.

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

*****For Alberta Health Services – Indigenous specific questions/concerns please email ahs.ecc.operations.ih@ahs.ca *****

*****For Indigenous Services Canada please email sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca *****

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