

COVID-19 Status

JULY 14, 2020

As of July 9, a provincial total of 8,519 individuals have been confirmed with COVID-19, of which 584 cases are active. The average number of daily cases confirmed this week is 46, a 10 per cent decrease from the week before. Currently, there are 46 people in hospital, with seven in an intensive care unit. 7,774 Albertans have now recovered.

There were six deaths in Alberta related to COVID-19 this week, for a total of 161 Albertans lost since the start of the pandemic. We know this means that many more people are grieving during this difficult time and we offer our genuine sympathies as the families and loved ones of these Albertans mourn these losses.

A total of 507,169 COVID-19 tests have been completed since the start of the pandemic.

Things You Need to Know

COVID-19 Testing for Healthcare Workers

We continue to update the testing data for healthcare workers in the [AHS Healthcare Worker COVID-19 Testing dashboard](#). These statistics provide the total number of AHS, Covenant Health and Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL) employees and physicians tested, including a breakdown of the number of positive tests and those who have been confirmed to have been exposed in the workplace.

As of July 6:

- 33,958 employees (AHS, APL, and Covenant combined) have been tested for COVID-19, and of those tested, 267 (or 0.79 per cent) have tested positive.
- Of the 267 employees who have tested positive, 38 (or 14.2 per cent) acquired their infection through a workplace exposure (with 35 of the 267 positive results still under investigation as to the source of infection).
- 2,027 physicians (AHS, APL, and Covenant combined) have been tested for COVID-19 and of those tested, 32 (or 1.58 per cent) have tested positive.
- Of the 32 physicians who have tested positive, two (or 6.3 per cent) acquired their infection through a workplace exposure (with two of the 32 positive results still under investigation as to the source of infection).

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

Edmonton Zone Emergency Operation Centre Update – Misericordia Hospital Outbreak

On July 8, due to the ongoing transmission of COVID-19, the difficult decision was made to place the Misericordia Community Hospital, a Covenant Health facility in Edmonton, under a full facility outbreak.

The full facility outbreak extends to all adult and children's services including the Emergency Department. No patients are being admitted to the hospital and day procedures and visits have been postponed or rescheduled at another Edmonton hospital. All services at the Misericordia are

temporarily closed to incoming patients. Patients are being contacted and will be cared for and/or rescheduled at another Edmonton Zone hospital.

Patients within the hospital will continue to receive the treatment, care and support they need. Visitors are now restricted to end-of-life situations only.

These measures are in place to reduce the risk of further transmission and allow the facility to focus on current patients, staff and physicians.

As of yesterday, there were 16 patients at the hospital who have tested positive for COVID-19 in relation to this outbreak. In addition, 16 staff members have tested positive. Sadly, six patients linked to this outbreak have passed away. Our thoughts are with their family members and loved ones during this difficult time

This is an extremely challenging situation for the site, as well as all of the other facilities in the Edmonton Zone, which are working together to respond to this situation and assist by taking on additional patients.

Edmonton Zone has worked cooperatively and responded remarkably together through this entire pandemic response. Once again, teams are rising up to meet the challenge that COVID-19 presents.

The safety of our patients, staff and physicians is a priority and we're taking every possible step to respond to this situation and ensure a safe environment for care. This now includes setting up a formal outbreak investigation taskforce, in partnership with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, and Covenant Health. The taskforce will further support the ongoing investigation and management of the outbreak. It will include representation from Infection Prevention and Control, workplace health and safety, and public health.

Verna's Weekly Video Message

Back in May, I (Verna) invited some members of the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) to my vlog to talk about their work. Since then, our ECC has continued to be the nerve centre for our pandemic response, overseeing our actions across all portfolios across the province, as well as with government, the executive leadership team and many of our other partners.

As we move further into re-launch, I thought it would be worthwhile to do a [follow-up vlog to talk about what's happened since, and what the next few months have in store for the ECC](#). Joining me to discuss are Cheryl Bourassa, Executive Director of Emergency/Disaster Management; Tom Watts, Director of Emergency/Disaster Management; Chris McKiernan, Director of Provincial Strategies and Performance with Emergency/Disaster Management; and Samantha James, Analyst of Surveillance and Reporting.



Reminder of International Travel Advisories

As we head into the summer vacation season, please remember that both the Governments of [Canada](#) and [Alberta](#) continue to advise against all travel outside of Canada and all cruise ship travel. As well, all travellers arriving in Alberta from outside of Canada are legally required to self-isolate for 14 days, [per the Chief Medical Officer of Health's order](#).

We know that staff may travel outside of Canada for a variety of reasons, including vacation, bereavement leave and education leave. However, we want to remind you that failure to follow travel advisories may leave staff unable to return to Canada, and possibly ineligible for health and other benefits. As well, the required self-isolation period following international travel could potentially impact staffing and patient care.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to your leader.

PPE Question of the Week – Continuous Masking

Continuous masking remains critical to the protection of our patients, co-workers and visitors in all our facilities. It is essential that we remain vigilant, wearing masks in all patient care environments and also whenever two metres distance cannot be maintained between you and anyone in your workplace. [Dr. Mark Joffe provides more information on continuous masking at work, as well as considerations for masking outside of the workplace.](#)

PPE Question of the Week

The Importance of Masking
Why continuous masking is in place for AHS, and guidance on masking in public. 



Dr. Mark Joffe answers PPE question of the week.

Fit Testing Update

AHS has successfully secured another model of N95 respirator to add to our existing supply, to ensure our people have access to the PPE they need to be safe. This respirator is NIOSH (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health) approved. We will continue to monitor our supplies and transition healthcare workers to alternate N95 respirators as needed.

Please continue to make fit testing a priority in your area by working with Workplace Health and Safety or a fit test designate.

To learn more about when to use N95 respirators in your frontline work, visit www.ahs.ca/covidppe.

AHS Accreditation

On June 23, 2020, AHS' Executive Leadership Team approved the resumption of accreditation activities within AHS. There will be an onsite survey by Accreditation Canada this fall 2020. Sites and services that were to be surveyed this past spring will also be surveyed this fall.

As per the [2019-2022 Accreditation Cycle](#), the following programs in large urban hospitals are scheduled to undergo on site survey assessment in fall 2020:

- Critical care (excludes NICU/CVICU/CCU)
- Emergency department (includes urgent care centers)
- Inpatient (medicine) services (excludes adult inpatient cardiology units in Edmonton/Calgary)
- Peri-operative and invasive procedures (excludes adult and pediatric cardiac operating rooms and interventional cardiology procedures)
- Transplant care

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) will also undergo a survey assessment this fall. The postponed spring survey of South Zone rural hospitals and Correctional Health Services will also be included in the fall survey.

There are some exceptions, based on the most recent (and previous) Connect Care implementation schedules. No other exceptions will be granted by Accreditation Canada.

Emergency Coordination Centre: looking back and looking forward

As you can see from today's vlog, the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) has been essential in our ongoing response to COVID-19. While we are still in the midst of that response, it's important we look back to see what enables our successes and where we can improve. To that end, Emergency/Disaster Management (E/DM) conducted a review of ECC operations with a variety of individuals and teams to get their feedback.

Some of the strengths noted in the review include regular communications from the CEO and Senior Medical Officer of Health (what you're reading now), the Incident Management Operating System, and the use of task forces, including the Personal Protective Equipment and Indigenous Health task forces, to target specific work. Areas for improvement include training additional people in ECC operations, integrating non-clinical areas like Information Technology and Facilities Maintenance and Engineering within ECC Operations earlier, and clarifying when ELT approval on certain actions is required.

Similar to our ongoing Beyond COVID work, the review also identified what worked well in the ECC setting and could be retained across the organization moving forward. This included expedited decision making processes, measures introduced to support shelter populations, and the connections and relationships developed with Indigenous Health, the Zones and First Nations communities. This is only a small sample of E/DM's findings in the review. A more comprehensive review will be undertaken at a later date, and will help to further inform our Beyond COVID recommendations.

The ECC enabled us to act with extraordinary focus and speed and it eliminated the barriers and constraints that slow us down. It ensured that contributors at all levels were united in their efforts toward the achievement of a single goal.

It worked because everyone involved knew what they were accountable for. People trusted the direction they were given, and in turn, they were trusted to make the decisions delegated to them. We marshalled the strengths and intelligence of our organization in a way that was incredibly focused and tightly coordinated at the zone and provincial levels. That is what allowed us to deliver results and value in a remarkably quick and efficient fashion.

Thank you to everyone involved in the ECC, as well as the Zone Emergency Operation Centres. It's not an easy job, and you are doing us proud.

AHS COVID-19 Podcast – Importance of Immunization

We know that vaccines are safe and effective – much safer than the diseases they protect against. If you are immunized against a disease it not only protects you, but you are also protecting others, because you are not spreading that disease. The pandemic has given us a glimpse into how quickly infections can spread and how serious they can be when a population has no immunity to a

disease. [In this podcast, Dr. Kristin Klein](#), AHS Medical Officer of Health with the Communicable Disease Team, talks about the importance of immunizations particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Be Well - Be Kind

Take Care of your Mental Health

To continue to support you during this time, we encourage you to review the [Resilience, Wellness and Mental Health Resource Guide](#). This document makes it easy for our staff and leaders to find support services, educational opportunities, and written resources needed to feel safe and healthy. Whether you are looking for professional or personal support, you'll find the most relevant resources for your mental health and well-being in this comprehensive guide.

Please click on the link above, bookmark the page and share this with your teams or colleagues. We all need to continue to take care of our physical and mental health for the weeks and months to come.

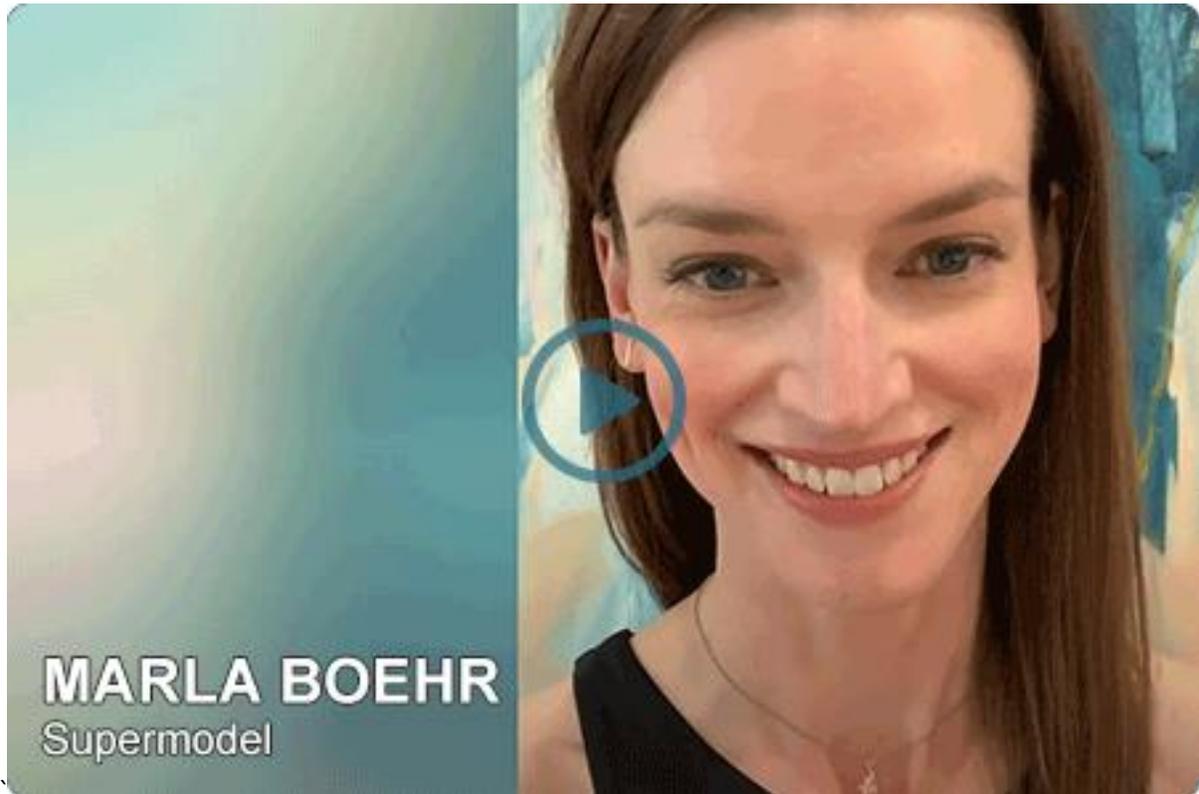
Celebrities Celebrating AHS

Musicians, models, athletes, and artists across the country keep sending messages of gratitude and support for our frontline healthcare staff.

Today's [thank you message is from Marla Boehr](#), a supermodel from Lethbridge, who has appeared on the covers of ELLE and Flare and has walked in the runways of Milan, Italy.

“We’re just so thankful for all the work that you do, for being there for people and for holding people’s hands through this crisis, for working long days and long nights,” she says. “Hats off to you guys, we really appreciate it and we’re so fortunate to be in such a great province.”

Stay tuned and follow AHS on [social media](#) for more celebrity shout-outs.



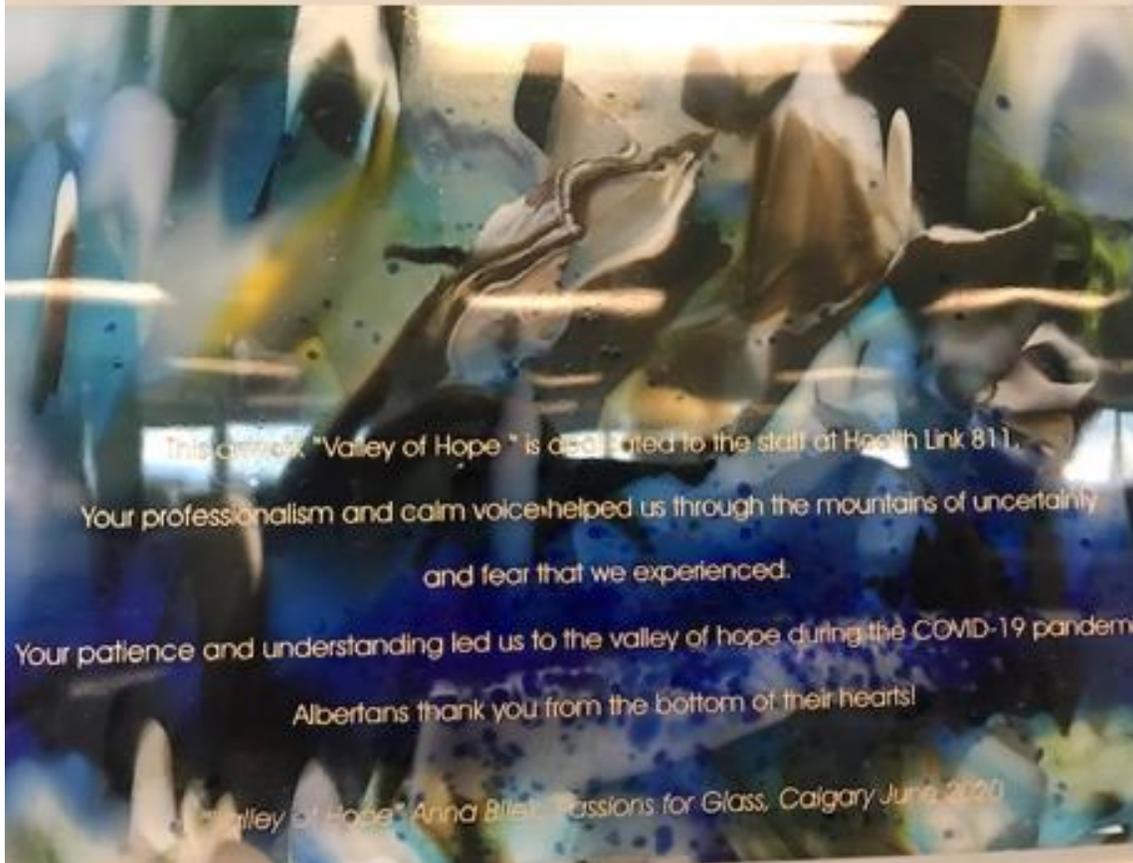
Sharing the Love: Thanking our People

Again this week, we have a collection of messages to encourage you as you continue to manage COVID-19 in Alberta. Please know that the notes here are just a small representation of the appreciation your colleagues and Albertans have for all you are doing.

A local Calgary artist gifted Health Link with a beautiful glass art piece in appreciation for the support that Health Link 811 has provided Albertans throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. She described her inspiration for her art piece below.

This art has come truly from the bottom of my heart as I am remembering the first few weeks of COVID-19 outbreak, and how much work and dedication went in to organizing the call centre for Albertans. I can only imagine the pressure and stress of everyone involved as Albertans feared this unknown virus. As an artist I can only express my thank you through my art. This artwork represents the voice of those around me.

-Anna Bilek



A BIG thank you to all the doctors, nurses, attendants, techs, EMS, and everyone who provides their very best care, and to Dr. Hinshaw for her calm, compassionate and honest leadership that Albertans can understand and learn from.

-Anonymous

Thank you so, so, so very much for all the sacrifices and care you show throughout the hours, days, weeks, months, years.

- Lindsay Allen

Thank you for everything you have been doing. I know under times of pressure, life can be very difficult and one might want to give up, but you haven't. Your team has been strong and pushed through everything. Thank you for being an inspiration to everyone out there.

- Anonymous

COVID-19 Badge of Honour

If there were badges in healthcare for managing COVID-19, we have no doubt that every one of you would have earned one over the past five months. Apparently, if you're a Beaver, you may have already received one for your hard work to adhere to public health guidelines and orders. The six year old nephew of one of our staff member's got his badge in the mail for being a good citizen during Alberta's efforts to stay home and protect each other. We know it was well deserved, Xavier. Congratulations for earning your COVID-19 badge.

Xavier got an unexpected badge from Beavers today. I laugh every time I look at it! #funnynotfunny #ineedabadgetoo



As our teams head into another summer weekend, whether you are working, starting a vacation, or just taking a break, please know that in our eyes you've earned your badge and so much more, for

your efforts to care for Albertans and to keep each other safe. Stay healthy and enjoy some sunshine.

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 *****

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

Josipa Pavicic on behalf of Nadine McRee

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