

NOVEMBER 13, 2020

Hello,

Please see most current information below, as the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve in Alberta.

Please note, if you have an alternate designate in addition to yourself, please reply to this email with the contact name, title and email address, so that we can add it to our Indigenous contact distribution list, going forward.

Indigenous Specific Resources:

Indigenous Health COVID web page:

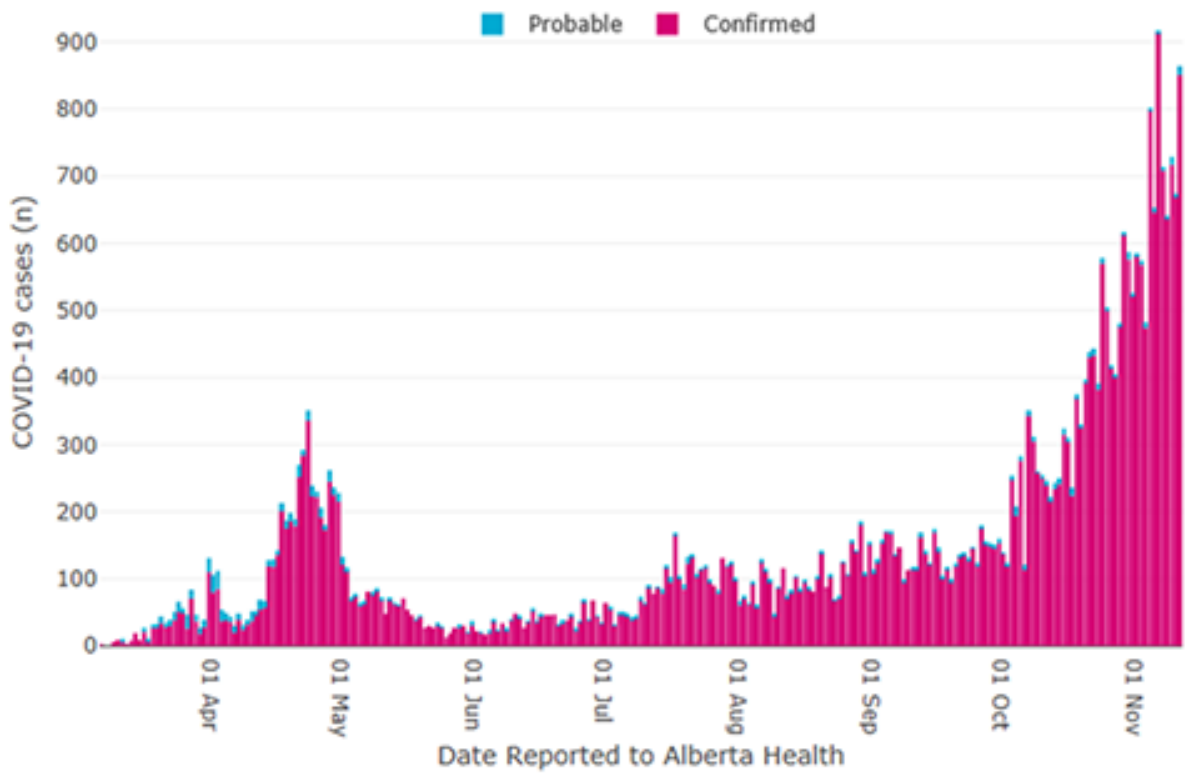
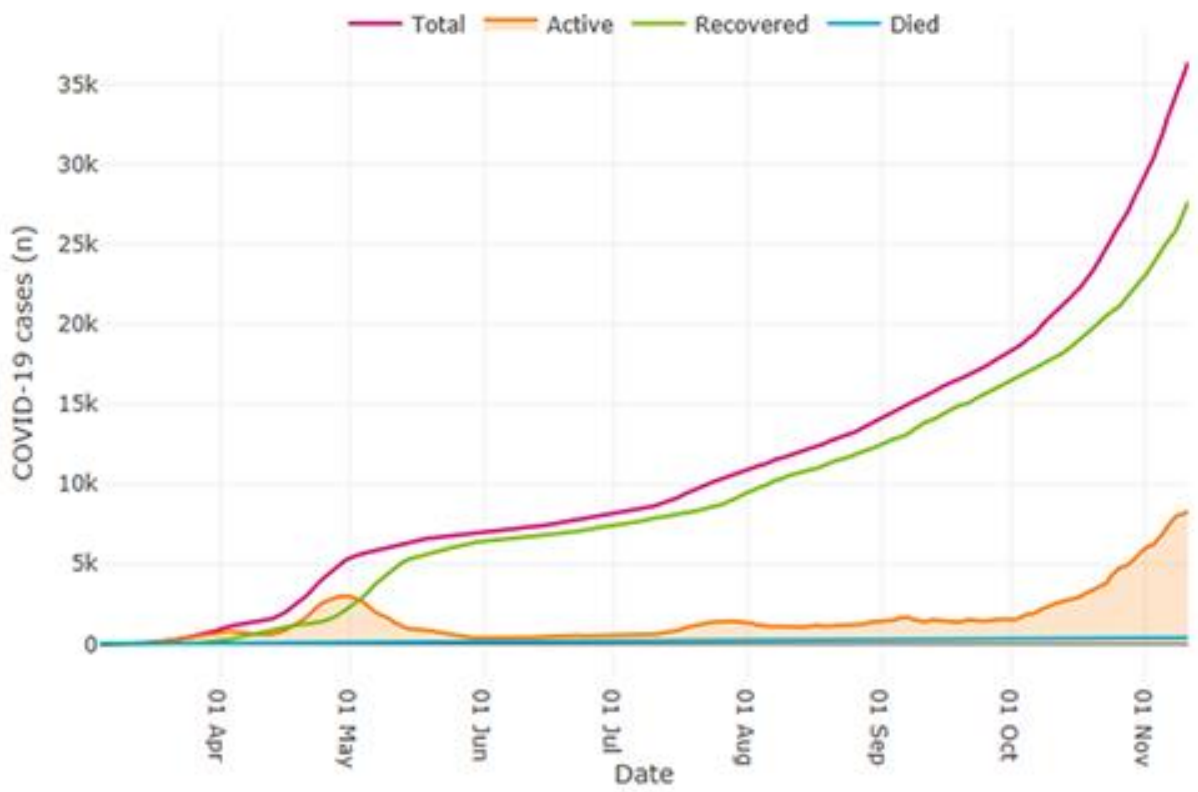
The Indigenous Health COVID web page is now live. It can be accessed directly through this link: www.ahs.ca/covidih or via the [main COVID landing page](#) in the “Information For” box. We will continue to update it with new information and resources as they become available.

COVID-19 Status

We are disheartened to see the rates of COVID-19 infection in Alberta continue to trend upward. The average number of daily new cases for the week ending on November 11 is 742, compared to 596 cases the previous week, a 24 per cent increase. On November 12, a record high number of new cases in a single day occurred with 930 new cases. We’re seeing the most dramatic increases in infections in people between the ages of 20 to 49, with 2,832 cases in the past week, which is 55 per cent of all new cases.

Across the province, there is a record number of active cases this week: 8,305 individuals currently have COVID-19 in Alberta, up 26 per cent from the week before. Calgary and Edmonton continue to face intense pressure from high rates of infection with 3,504 and 3,387 active cases, respectively. Calgary’s cases account for 42 per cent of the total cases in Alberta, while Edmonton’s are 41 per cent.

The graphs below, taken from a report by Alberta Health, visually depict the recent steep rise in cases in our province. The full report details for the graphs below are available [here](#), under the tabs for Total Cases and Severe Outcomes.



Hospital Capacity

The number of individuals being treated for COVID-19 in Alberta hospitals is also very concerning and continues to rise. On November 12, there were 240 individuals in Alberta hospitals – another record number - with 186 of those in non-intensive care units (ICUs) and 54 in ICUs. This is 46 per cent more hospital admissions than we had the week before, when there were 164 individuals in Alberta hospitals, with 130 of those in non-ICUs and 34 in ICUs.

As we see these numbers continue to rise we are carefully monitoring and managing our hospital and ICU capacity.

Currently, capacity at Edmonton and Calgary Zone hospitals is frequently exceeding 100 per cent. Some units are seeing occupancy as high as 125 per cent. Much of this is being driven by the need to isolate COVID-positive or likely COVID-positive patients or close contacts. Between Calgary and Edmonton, we have about 800 isolation beds, however we are currently using about 1,200 isolation beds, meaning some beds in multi-bed rooms cannot be used.

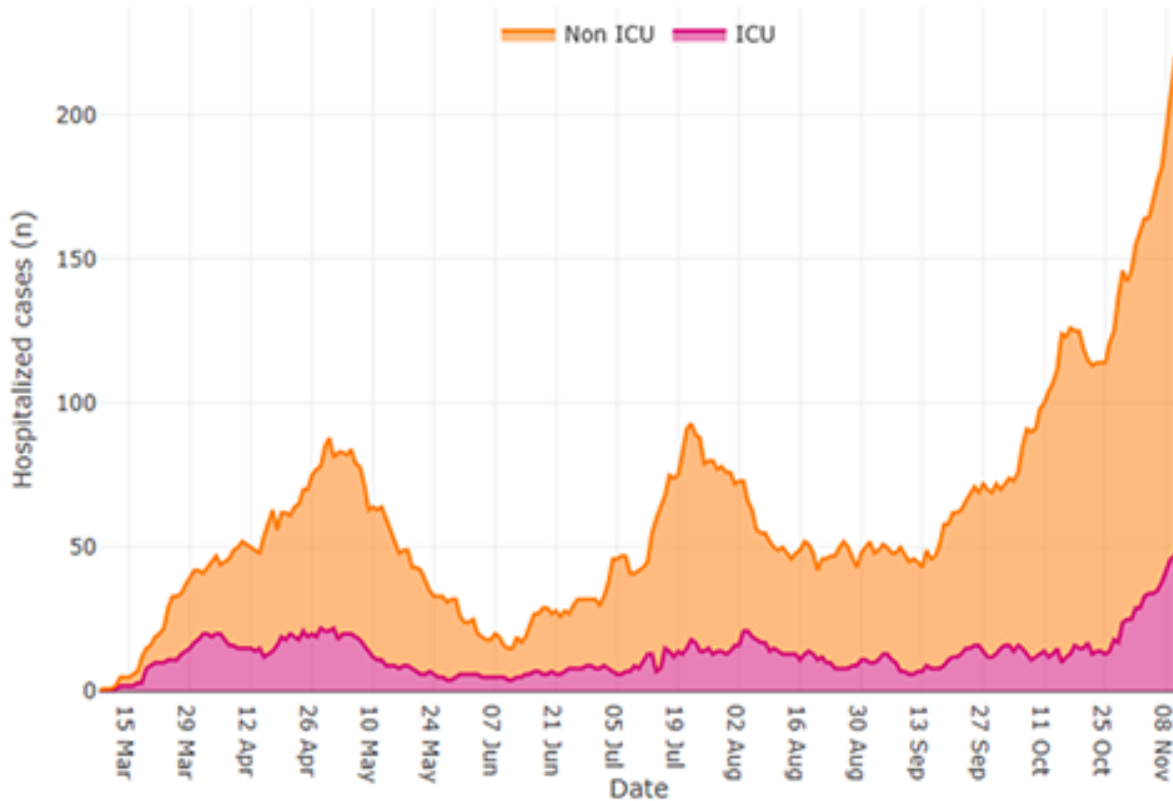
In addition to this, more than 500 continuing care beds across all five AHS zones are currently closed due to site outbreaks. Patients who would normally be transferred from hospital to a continuing centre are having to wait longer in hospital. This also limits the number of available hospital beds.

For these reasons, AHS has already initiated new measures in Edmonton to reduce the strain on our hospitals.

In Edmonton, new surge capacity measures were put in place two weeks ago to better support safe patient care. This included postponing up to 30 per cent of scheduled, non-emergency surgeries, and some ambulatory care clinic visits. These measures allow frontline teams to be redeployed to other areas to meet demand and ease pressure points. Taking these steps has helped ease pressure, but we continue to work to meet the demands of capacity and find ways to reduce the pressure on our hospitals.

Calgary Zone and South Zone are planning additional surge capacity measures over the next 7-14 days.

Ultimately, we need Albertans to work hard to reduce the amount of COVID-19 transmission in our communities to ensure we have the capacity to care for those who need it most.



In total, since the start of the pandemic in this province, 393 Albertans have died from COVID-19, including 38 in the current week. We continue to extend our condolences to the families of these individuals, and to all who have lost loved ones during this time.

Here is some other notable information from this past week:

- As of November 11, there has been a total of 36,405 cases of COVID-19 in Alberta, with a total of 1,308 individuals having been hospitalized. This is 3.6 individuals for every 100 cases. In all, 27,707 Albertans have recovered from COVID-19.
- As of November 12, AHS has confirmed 1,610 individuals with COVID-19 were present at schools while infectious or acquired the disease in the school setting. Currently, 597 out of 2,415 schools in the province have reported an individual has attended their school while infectious or had in-school transmission. The Edmonton Zone has the highest numbers of both in-school transmission and schools currently on alert, outbreak or watch.

Please note, we're unable to report on laboratory testing data of COVID-19 numbers this week due to technical issues at Alberta Health.

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 November 10:

- 62,816 employees (AHS, APL and Covenant combined) have been tested for COVID-19 and, of those, 1,205 (or 1.92 per cent) have tested positive.
- Of the 651 employees who have tested positive and whose source of infection has been determined, 186 (or 28.6 per cent) acquired their infection through a workplace exposure. An additional 554 employees who have tested positive are still under investigation as to the source of infection.
- 4,028 physicians (AHS, APL and Covenant combined) have been tested for COVID-19 and, of those, 64 (or 1.59 per cent) have tested positive.
- Of the 42 physicians who have tested positive and whose source of infection has been determined, seven (or 16.7 per cent) acquired their infection through a workplace exposure. An additional 22 physicians who have tested positive are still under investigation as to the source of infection.

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

Alberta Government Introduces New COVID-19 Restrictions

In an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Alberta, the Government of Alberta announced new restrictions to specific areas, business and activities in Alberta. Starting November 13, all restaurants, bars, lounges and pubs in [regions under enhanced status](#) must cease liquor sales by 10 p.m. and close by 11 p.m. This restriction will remain in place until November 27.

There will also be a two-week ban on indoor group fitness classes, team sport activities and group performance activities in Edmonton and surrounding areas, Calgary and surrounding areas, Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray, Red Deer and Lethbridge.

Additional public health measures will also be implemented in all regions under an enhanced status, including both voluntary and mandatory restrictions related to social gatherings, which will be in place until further notice:

- Maximum attendance of 50 at wedding or funeral ceremonies. Like all social and family gatherings, receptions in association with these ceremonies are limited to 15 people.
- It is recommended all faith-based activities limit attendance to one-third capacity per service
- Residents should not hold social gatherings within their homes and should not plan social gatherings outside their community
- It is recommended employers in office settings implement measures to reduce the number of employees in the workplace at one time

AHS continues to ask those who are able to work from home within their role to do so until further notice. Remote staff should only enter the workplace if they receive approval from their leader and are aware of the safety requirements for their site.

More information about the new restrictions can be found, [here](#). There is also an at-a-glance resource regarding the new restrictions available, [here](#).

All existing guidance and legal orders remain in place in all areas. Specific information related to your local community is available, [here](#).

Contact Tracing Update

Efficient identification and notification of close contacts of COVID-19 remains critical to Alberta's fight against COVID-19. Rapid notification of close contacts ensures that those exposed can isolate and get tested before potentially spreading disease to others.

Yesterday, a new Alberta Health Services online tool was announced, that will allow automated texting of close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases in our province.

Albertans who receive a positive COVID-19 result will now be asked to immediately visit ahs.ca/closecontacts and click on the COVID-19 Close Contact Tool, where they will enter information, including phone numbers of known close contacts. Once submitted, our contact tracing team will review all close contacts with the positive case, and an automated text message notification, including additional guidance and instructions, will be delivered to all close contacts whose phone numbers are provided.

The confidentiality of positive cases will be protected – they will not be identified in these text messages.

This tool will further support Albertans as they collaborate with our Contact Tracing team on notification of close contacts. It will also improve the efficiency of contact notifications.

As announced on [November 5](#), AHS will also continue to directly contact all close contacts of cases in healthcare workers, minors (parents will be notified if their child has been exposed in a school setting), and individuals who live or work within congregate or communal facilities, through either phone or email.

School-related contacts will continue to receive email notification from AHS, and workplaces and [organizers of events](#) of 10 or more attendees will also still be asked to notify the appropriate staff and all attendees, respectively.

In addition to this new online tool, AHS has also posted 425 new positions for hiring onto the contact tracing team. All positions can be viewed online at ahs.ca/contacttracingjobs.

We also encourage Albertans to download the Alberta Trace Together app, which provides our contact tracing teams with another source of information when working with Albertans to identify close contacts.

COVID-19 continues to affect our lives, and our health system. Many of you are asked questions by friends, colleagues and patients, about the latest news on COVID-19. Your willingness to share information helps ensure all Albertans are informed. We thank you for that, and are here to support you. Further information on contact tracing for Albertans can be found at ahs.ca/closecontacts.

As we work to deploy information, innovative approaches and new staff, it also remains critical that all Albertans limit their social bubble, and follow all other public health guidance.

This includes all of us. To the extent that we each limit the number of contacts we have now, and stringently follow public health and workplace guidance, we can each directly impact the days and weeks ahead.

Thank you for all you are doing to protect each other and all Albertans from COVID-19.

Updates to Designated/Family Support and Visitor Access in AHS Acute Care Facilities

Effective November 16, access to AHS acute care sites for the purposes of visitation is limited to designated family/support persons. Visitor access is restricted for patients at end-of-life and for those receiving critical care for a life-threatening illness. Exceptions will be made for faith/religious leaders, elders, an elder's helper, traditional knowledge keeper or legal supports who are requested by the patient or alternate decision-maker. These visits must be booked in advance with the service area.

This decision was not made lightly. We must do all we can to protect our patients, and the staff caring for them. We recognize that family and loved ones play an important role in the emotional and physical well-being of our patients, and will work with families and facilities to continue to support virtual visitation.

We are also encouraging staff, patients/residents, and designated family/support persons to work together to reduce the amount of time spent in AHS facilities by considering what support needs to be provided in person and what can be provided virtually. Designated family/support persons should assess their risk of exposure and transmission of COVID-19 before they enter an AHS site. To support this, we have created two brochures for designated family/support persons: [Know Your Risk](#) and [Know Your Role](#).

As we continue to see a rise in COVID-19 cases across the province, changes have been made to the [AHS Designated Family/Support and Visitor Access Guidance](#) including ambulatory appointments (for both pediatrics and adults), replacement support persons, outdoor visitation, patient off-site passes and Indigenous considerations during a patient's care journey. More information is available at ahs.ca/visitation.

Updates to the Return to Work Decision Chart and Guide

Effectively immediately, healthcare workers who have tested positive for COVID-19 will be able to return to work 10 days after the onset of their symptoms or once their symptoms have resolved, whichever is longer. Staff who are asymptomatic can return to work 10 days after the date of the positive test. This new direction has been updated in the [Return to Work Decision Chart](#) and [Return to Work Guide](#).

If you have experienced any symptoms, been required to self-isolate, or been tested for COVID-19, the Return to Work Decision Chart and Guide provide advice you can use to discuss the timing of your return with your manager. Safety is the most important thing during the COVID-19 pandemic. We want our people returning to work only when they are healthy and fit for work to ensure the safety of our patients and colleagues.

COVID-19 Daily Fit for Work Screening Update

AHS has updated the COVID-19 Daily Fit for Work Screening documents. A separate questionnaire specific to [non-continuing care staff working in a confirmed COVID-19 outbreak unit/area](#) is available.

Please remember to continue to check the latest updates to COVID-19 Daily Fit for Work Screening by visiting ahs.ca/fitforwork. Specific screening for staff working at continuing care facilities (hospice, long term care, designated supportive living, or congregate living) must continue to meet requirements from the latest Chief Medical Officer of Health [Orders](#). Information related to screening for people visiting residents and patients is available at ahs.ca/visitation.

We all need to do our part to create and maintain a safe and healthy workplace to provide quality and safe patient care. It's important to complete your [fit for work screening](#) before coming into work. Simple actions such as staying home when sick, [physical distancing](#), [washing your hands](#) regularly, and [continuous masking](#) can help keep everyone safe. We must all be diligent in modelling safe work practices such as adhering to [personal protective equipment \(PPE\)](#) measures.

Options for fit for work screening are available through our [COVID-19 Daily Fit for Work Screening Protocol](#). Talk to your leader if you have questions about fit for work screening at your site.

Maintaining Healthy Hands

Clean hands are healthy hands! Maintaining healthy skin is important to prevent skin breakdown. Remember to routinely use hand lotion throughout your shift and while away from work. To further protect your hands:

- Only use AHS-provided hand hygiene products while at work
- Handwash with water of a comfortable temperature and lightly pat hands and wrists dry
- Drink plenty of water; dry weather dries out the natural moisture in skin
- Wear winter gloves or mitts to protect hands from cold air
- Wear appropriate task-specific gloves to protect hands from further irritation, such as when washing dishes by hands or handling chemicals

Refer to section 1.2 Hand Health – Prevention Measures in the [AHS Hand Health FAQ](#) for more information, including answers to commonly asked questions. If you have skin integrity issues, inform your immediate supervisor and submit a report in [MySafetyNet](#).

For more information on hand hygiene, visit: ahs.ca/handhygiene.

Update on Hand Sanitizer

AHS continues to distribute alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) containing products made with pharmaceutical-grade ethanol to all facilities (e.g. 500 ml pump bottles). There are limited quantities of 1L Microsan® cartridges used to refill wall-mounted ABHR dispensers. As a result, distribution of these cartridges is being prioritized to areas based on factors such as patient population and risks of ingestion and theft.

Personal size (50 ml) ABHR is also readily available. Contact your Contracting, Procurement and Supply Management (CPSM) Site Services representative for ordering information.

If you have questions or concerns relating to ABHR, contact your Zone Emergency Operations Centre (ZEOC). For more information, visit: ahs.ca/handsanitizer.

Celebrating a Safe Diwali

Many in Alberta's community are celebrating Diwali this week and we want to offer our warm wishes as they enjoy the Festival of Lights and all it represents. We know this is an important celebration and

this year it's perhaps even more important than ever to focus on positive activities, given current stress and pressures.

With COVID-19 cases rising in our province, we want to make sure that no matter what our celebrations and activities are, we continue to protect ourselves and others from this virus. Remember, at this time, no social gatherings are permitted in private homes in Edmonton and Calgary, or in communities on the province's watch and enhanced measures lists. Please consider staying connected with friends or family through Skype or Zoom. For those not living in an area under enhanced status, gatherings must be 15 or fewer people. Maintain a two-metre, or six feet, distance from people not in your cohort — for instance, people who don't live in your household.

This [video](#) is a great reminder of the steps we can take to stay safe.



Happy Diwali to all of our friends and colleagues celebrating the Festival of Lights.

Verna's Weekly Video Message — National Philanthropy Day

November 15 is National Philanthropy Day, an opportunity to thank our many philanthropic partners and the donors, sponsors and volunteers who support Alberta Health Services.

Together, our partners raise over \$260 million each year for healthcare enhancements, including equipment, programs and research across the province and in our communities.

And they have continued to step up in support of our pandemic response, funding emerging needs and pursuing new partnerships in support of our patients and their families.

We are proud of our work with our partners, and joining me (Verna) on the vlog to tell us more are:

- Wendy Beauchesne, CEO with Alberta Cancer Foundation.
- Heather Bach, Executive Director with Medicine Hat and District Health Foundation.
- Mike House, President and CEO with Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation.

Wendy, Heather and Mike discuss [National Philanthropy Day, fundraising trends they are seeing during the pandemic, and what the future holds for healthcare philanthropy.](#)



Photo of the Week — Sharing a Smile

We're highlighting a photo every week which illustrates your efforts, compassion and achievements, as we respond to the pandemic and support Albertans who come to us for care.

This week's photo features respiratory therapist Heather Mughal sharing a smile with patient Gail Kidd.



To see all our AHS photos, visit our [Instagram Gallery](#) on the AHS website.

Influenza Immunization Update

More than one million doses of influenza vaccine have been administered in Alberta, an increase of more than 200,000 doses from last week. To date, there have been no reported cases of seasonal influenza. The th weekly influenza data report is now available at ahs.ca/influenza.

This is a great start to the season. However, with the cases of COVID-19 on the rise, we need to continue what we can to keep influenza out of our healthcare system, so we can focus on COVID-19.

As healthcare leaders, we have a responsibility to arm ourselves against influenza by getting vaccinated. This year, more than ever, it is imperative we protect our patients, our loved ones and our communities from further illness.

Check [Insite](#) for options to get the flu shot, [resources](#) to support this year's campaign and guidance on what to do if you experience [influenza-like symptoms after immunization](#).

[Click here](#) for more on the clinics for the public, including your families. And, if you got your flu shot at a [public health clinic](#), pharmacy or doctor's office, please complete the [Got My Flu Shot Form](#).

In addition to influenza immunization, public health measures such as [physical distancing](#), [masking](#), [limiting your social bubble](#) and maintaining [hand hygiene](#) continue to be critical to our fight against COVID-19 and other cold and flu-like illnesses, including influenza.

Let's work together to protect each other from a vaccine-preventable illness and reduce the strain on our healthcare system.

Timing and Sequence of Connect Care's Upcoming Launches

With the successful launch of Connect Care's second wave on October 24, we are starting to look ahead to our next launches. We know each launch of Connect Care involves thousands of people and hours of preparation. We want to acknowledge the efforts you are making to make Connect Care a reality in your waves, zones and sites, especially with the added pressures of COVID-19.

Wave 3 will launch on February 27, 2021, at 5 a.m. Teams are heavily involved in training and preparation for that launch, which will take place at 38 locations, including acute and combined acute/long-term care sites across the Calgary and North zones, and urgent care sites in Calgary Zone. This wave also includes related pharmacy and diagnostic imaging services, and Alberta Precision Labs (North Zone sites only) associated with these programs and services. The details of which sites are launching in Wave 3 can be found [here](#).

Recently, the Connect Care Executive Committee approved the launch timing for Waves 4 and 5, as follows:

- Wave 4 will launch Saturday, June 5, 2021, at 5 a.m. in Calgary and Edmonton Zones, including the Alberta Children's Hospital, Peter Lougheed Hospital, Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital, Lois Hole Hospital for Women, Royal Alexandra Hospital and many Addiction and Mental Health programs and services in the Edmonton Zone. It incorporates related clinical support programs, including pharmacy, diagnostic imaging services, Alberta Precision Labs associated with these programs and services (Edmonton Zone sites only, plus genetics labs at Alberta Children's Hospital), Health Information Management, Nutrition and Food Services, and other support areas.
- Wave 5 will launch Sunday, November 7, 2021, at 4 a.m. in various locations in all five zones. Major sites include the Foothills Medical Centre, Richmond Road Diagnostic and Treatment Centre, acute and combined acute/long-term care sites in Central Zone, the Centennial Centre for Mental Health and Brain Injury in Ponoka, Sylvan Lake Advanced Ambulatory Care Centre, Cancer Care, Screen Test and Alberta Kidney Care (Central, Calgary and South zones). It also incorporates all of the related clinical support programs, including pharmacy, diagnostic imaging services, and Alberta Precision Labs (Central Zone sites only) associated with some of these programs and services, Health Information Management, Nutrition and Food Services, and other programs.

Connect Care remains one of AHS' highest priorities. It will give patients and their healthcare team a more complete picture of their health history, improved access to consistent information on best practices, and other resources at their fingertips. It will facilitate communication between patients and their healthcare providers, and among members of the healthcare team.

Connect Care is being introduced to all AHS programs, facilities and many AHS partners in phases, which started in 2019 and will continue through 2023. The full implementation timelines and sequencing are available, [here](#).

For more information about Connect Care, please see [Insite](#) or ahs.ca/connectcare

Our People Strategy Webinar: Standing Together Against Racism – Nov. 18

Join us Wednesday, November 18, from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. for the latest Our People Strategy webinar: Standing Together Against Racism. We know that these unprecedented times (with COVID-19 and the growing conversations about racism and intolerance) have varying impacts on different groups. This webinar will focus on sharing personal and powerful stories, and address how current events and our workforce are guiding AHS into the future.

To register for this webinar, please email People.Strategy@ahs.ca.

Foundations Show Innovation with Holiday Fundraising Events

This time of year, many of our foundation partners host their annual holiday fundraising events. Whether it is the Festival of Trees in Grande Prairie or the Christmas Tree Festival in Lethbridge, these events are a longstanding tradition in communities across Alberta.

Each event provides an opportunity for families and friends to kick off the holiday season and support a great cause. However, with COVID-19, our partners have needed to look at different ways of hosting their events this year.

Instead of an in-person gala or luncheon, our partners are re-inventing their events so they take place virtually, or in a safe, physically-distanced way. While events like the Festival of Trees will look much different this year, the foundations have done a remarkable job at planning new and innovative activities for their communities, such as virtual visits with Santa, physically-distanced winter wonderlands, and online auctions.

This year has been challenging for everyone—including our philanthropic partners—and we want to take this opportunity to thank them for their ongoing support, perseverance and commitment toward healthcare in our province. As you and your loved ones get ready for the holiday season, we encourage you to consider taking part in one of their upcoming fundraising events, listed below:

- Nov. 12 – Dec. 12: [Christmas Tree Festival \(Chinook Regional Hospital Foundation\)](#)
- Nov. 14 – 28: [Festival of Trees \(Red Deer Regional Health Foundation\)](#)
- Nov. 14 – 28: [Festival of Trees \(Northern Lights Health Foundation\)](#)
- Nov. 16 – Dec. 15: [Avenue of Trees \(Sheep River Health Trust\)](#)
- Nov. 20 - Dec. 20: [Festival of Trees \(University Hospital Foundation\)](#)
- Nov. 22 - 29: [Festival of Trees \(Grande Prairie Regional Hospital Foundation\)](#)
- Nov. 29: [Calgary Santa Run & Walk \(Calgary Health Foundation\)](#)
- Dec. 4: [Candy Cane Gala \(Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation\)](#)
- Dec. 7: [Snowflake Gala - Snowed In \(Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation\)](#)

Be Well - Be Kind

Sharing the Love

AHS teams appreciate their colleagues and continue to make sure they know it. The following messages can be found on the [Sharing the Love](#) pages. Please take a moment to recognize those you work alongside. It can make all the difference in someone's day.

Thank you Connect Care Wave 2

We want to thank you for all that you have done for this successful rollout of Wave 2. As part of this launch, you and your colleagues helped us achieve a 4/5 rating from Epic on the Wave 2 implementation. Under normal conditions this would be an extremely great achievement, never mind doing it under the current circumstances. Keep up the good work.

- The AHS Board

Appreciation cookies sweeten the day in Barrhead



“Thank You” cookies sweetened the day for all on Nov. 4 at Barrhead Health Care Centre when Linda Wolfram, site manager, personally delivered the individually-wrapped treats to her many team members. In the absence of being able to gather properly for a staff appreciation event during the pandemic, the cookies said it all with their message on an accompanying tag: “You are all Super Heroes! Thank you for everything you do.” Naturally, the yummy sweets were very warmly received.

- Amanda P.

Thanks for all you do

Thank you for all of your hard work! We are so proud of you!

- Anonymous

Thank you for your bravery and dedication displayed in the face of the pandemic.

- Anonymous

To healthcare workers, thank you so much for taking care of us, especially during these hard times. Please take care of yourselves, too!

- Anonymous

Gratitude from Albertans

Everything you and your colleagues do every day to provide safe quality care to all Albertans is being noticed. Messages of gratitude keep pouring in from across the province and beyond during the COVID-19 pandemic. We want to share a few recent messages of thanks with you — and you can see others on our [Sharing the Love](#) webpage:

I just want to say how grateful we are in the Sturgeon IV Therapy Clinic to all of the departments who have helped us with our hiccups since going live with CC! Lab, RT, ER, Blood Bank, Management, Physicians, Inpatients, and CC Super Users at the Sturgeon - You have all stepped up to help our ambulatory clinic work out our particular kinks and we want you to know how much we appreciate your kindness and patience! Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!

- Suzanne M.

Dear ALL healthcare workers, We are so grateful to have you and wish to thank you for all your long hours spent taking care of the sick! You are rock stars!

- Anonymous

Wrapping Up — Standing Together

Let's be frank - it's been a hard dose of reality this week as we face more restrictions in our province to help manage the spread of COVID-19. We know that you most directly feel the stresses this pandemic is putting on the health system and you witness the toll it is taking on our healthcare teams, patients and families, firsthand. You also sometimes bear the brunt of the anger and frustrations Albertans have when they enter our care, or even as they see you as representatives of the health system.

This feels like a very good time to remind ourselves that we need to be kind to one another. And to remember that none of us wants this pandemic. None of us wants the restrictions that it is bringing. None of us wants to have our routines and activities disrupted. We are truly in this together, because we are forced to face it head on as a province, but also because Albertans come together when we're put to the test. We want to help each other, we rise to the occasion, we do the right thing and we join forces to affect change.

It's something we said often at the start of the pandemic, and perhaps bears repeating: together, we can make a difference and reduce the spread of COVID-19 – by heeding the health protocols, taking the steps to reduce our contacts, and supporting one another every step of the way. We've impacted the spread of COVID-19 in the past months and we can do it again. Don't give up and don't forget to reach out if you need help. There are resources for you, as noted above. We will continue to stand together as AHS and as Albertans, to protect the health of our families, friends and those who are most vulnerable. Thank you for being examples of hope to your communities and for modelling the measures that will help us recover from COVID-19.

As always, with gratitude and appreciation.

*****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.cdemergenciesaburgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca ***

Josipa Pavicic on behalf of AHS - Provincial Indigenous Health Hub

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