

COVID-19 Status

MAY 13, 2020

We have confirmed 45 new cases of COVID-19 over the past 24 hours, bringing the provincial total to 6,345. 4,866 cases have now recovered. Of the total cases, we suspect 654 cases may have been acquired through an unknown source in the community (this does not include cases associated with outbreaks), 269 have been hospitalized and 53 have been in an Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Currently, there are 73 cases in hospital, with 12 in an ICU.

We must report the sad news of another death in the past 24 hours, bringing the provincial total to 118 lives lost in Alberta related to COVID-19. We grieve together with all Albertans who have lost someone during this pandemic, associated with COVID-19 or from other causes. We know this is a very difficult time to suffer loss, made especially difficult by the pandemic.

3,173 tests were completed over the last 24 hours, bringing our total COVID-19 tests to 191,330 since the start of the pandemic.

Things You Need to Know

Asymptomatic Testing Update in Calgary

Yesterday, COVID-19 testing criteria was updated to include those who are asymptomatic and working outside their homes in the Calgary Zone. This testing project is in place for one week only with the goal of completing about 1,000 referrals a day to provide enhanced surveillance data. This will allow us to have a significant sampling of the Calgary Zone population to analyze and better understand the prevalence of COVID-19 infection among those who do not have symptoms.

In the first day, over 2,700 Calgary Zone residents completed the online assessment to register for this asymptomatic testing project. During this week, anyone who is working outside of the home in Calgary Zone is eligible for testing for COVID-19, even if they do not have symptoms.

To access testing, those eligible can go to ahs.ca/covid and complete the online assessment. Healthcare workers who have no COVID-19 symptoms and wish to take part in this project can access testing by completing the [online assessment tool designed for all Albertans](#). Healthcare workers experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms should complete the assessment tool designed for [healthcare & shelter workers, enforcement personnel and first responders](#).

Celebrating the Role of Nurses during COVID-19

This is National Nursing Week. We want to take another opportunity to celebrate the work nurses do every day across our organization and our country. In this [AHS COVID-19 podcast](#), Deb Gordon, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Clinical Operations, talks about how the role of nurses has evolved leading up to COVID-19, and the important role they play to support Albertans in the midst of this pandemic.



Today is also International Nurses Day, allowing us to celebrate what nurses bring to the health of people around the world. May 12 also marks the 200th birthday of Florence Nightingale, who is recognized as the founder of modern nursing.

We know there are countless stories of how nurses have made a difference in the lives of patients, families, their colleagues and in their communities during COVID-19. Here's an example that was shared with us about the compassionate care our nurses provide.

A wave through a window may not seem like a lot. But during a pandemic, that seemingly small gesture can contain a lifetime of love.

Sandra Mehrer and her husband David have never spent more than a week apart since they were married 51 years ago. But the recent COVID-19 pandemic has changed that. Sandra had been in a Calgary hospital for a month before returning to the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital, where, as an in-patient, she receives hemodialysis for her chronic renal failure. Her husband was not able to see her during the month she was in Calgary.

After her mom's return to Medicine Hat, her daughter called the hospital to ask if the family could wave to her through a window while she received dialysis.

"Fortunately, we had her in an isolation room at the front of the unit where this could be arranged," says Cheryl Carleton, a vascular access nurse with the Southern Alberta Renal Program, Medicine Hat Hemodialysis, at the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital. "We switched the bed and dialysis machine

around, and then hung a heart with her initials on the window so the family would know where to find her.”

There were plenty of tears, smiles and waves—from the nursing staff, too—when the family gathered around the closed glass window. “The house and my heart have been pretty empty,” says Sandra’s husband David. “Being able to see her means the world.”

We are so humbled by these stories. They remind us of the power of kindness and of the incredible lengths AHS staff and physicians go to care for Albertans.

Thanks to all nurses—and to all physicians and AHS staff. We are so proud of all you do.

PPE Tip of the Day

The daily series - *PPE Tip of the Day* – features quick and simple reminders you can take forward into your practice, from shift to shift.

High-Touch Surfaces

After providing patient care, immediately [remove your mask](#) and [wash your hands](#). Doing so reduces the risk of spreading the virus to others, or contaminating high-touch surfaces such as door handles and knobs, keyboards, computer mouses and personal or common-use phones.

To see previous PPE Tips of the Day, please visit the PPE Tips archive, [here](#).



Rehabilitation Advice Line

Starting today, a new Rehabilitation Advice Line, 1-833-379-0563, is available for Albertans over the age of 18, who:

- Have existing disabilities related to neurological conditions (e.g.: Parkinson's, spinal cord injury, Multiple Sclerosis, brain injury, stroke)
- Have existing health conditions that affect muscles, bones, and joints – including those awaiting or recovering from surgery
- Are recovering from COVID-19

Vulnerable Albertans living with disabilities in the community can have additional challenges accessing community supports during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our focus is on ensuring Albertans continue to get the care and support they need during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Rehabilitation Advice Line gives callers information about:

- Activities and exercises that help with physical concerns
- Strategies to manage the day-to-day activities affected by these concerns
- Rehabilitation services that are open for in-person and/or virtual visits
- Community-based organizations

An Alberta-only line, the Rehabilitation Advice line will be answered by allied health clinicians and will operate every day from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Calls outside this time will be redirected to Health Link (811).

The Rehabilitation Advice line is a collaborative effort by Allied Health Professional Practice and Education, Allied Health Zone Operations, the Neurosciences, Rehabilitation & Vision Strategic Clinical Network (SCN), the Bone and Joint SCN, and Health Link.

In the Zones

Zone Emergency Operations Centre (ZEOC) Update – Central

In an effort to further connect with our communities and staff, Central Zone executive leaders Janice Stewart and Dr. Jennifer Bestard, along with Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Ifeoma Achebe, provided COVID-19 updates in four separate sessions last week.

Each of the presentations were held via Zoom, and were organized and facilitated with help from the Community Engagement and Communications team. Two 60-minute staff sessions were delivered to a total of 512 staff. One of those sessions held 447 of the participants, making it the largest internal AHS zoom meeting provided since we began using the platform. The presentation included updates on the situation across the province and in Central Zone, PPE information, and employee mental health resources. These sessions also included a robust question and answer period, with a variety of insightful questions posed. Central Zone staff can expect to see a full compilation of the questions asked and answered sent out within the next week.

In addition to the presentations above, two 90-minute Community Conversation sessions, designed especially for municipalities and community partners, were delivered to a total of 92 participants. Information shared included the latest modelling scenarios, capacity planning measures across the province and some zone specifics. Maribela Arruda-Block, Manager, Community Addiction and Mental Health provided information on mental health in the time of COVID-19, the psychological impacts of

quarantine, what mental health needs communities may start to see in coming weeks, and AHS resources available to assist.

We greatly appreciate the partnership of all those who took time to attend the sessions and look forward to hosting additional updates in the near future.

Central Zone leadership would also like to send a special thank you to our teams as we celebrate National Nursing Week, and Speech and Hearing Month. Our nursing and allied health teams provide vital support for patients and families, and we are grateful for the work you do each and every day.

Fellow Albertans recognize you, too, as evidenced in this simple thank-you to teams at the Innisfail long-term care centre by the grandchildren of Maliva Crites, a resident at the centre. Thank you for keeping patients, including Nana, safe. Please stay safe yourselves.



The grandchildren of Maliva Crites, a resident at Innisfail long-term care, offer their thanks to the teams who are working hard to keep Albertans (and their Nana) safe.

Be Well - Be Kind

Community Acts of Kindness

Our communities want you to know that you are loved. The photo below was taken outside the Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre recently. These hearts of love were placed in several of the trees around the hospital, hanging from the branches for staff and physicians entering the building to see. Emmi, who sent the photo to us, was very touched by this display of appreciation from her

community. Even though we don't know who thoughtfully created and hung the hearts around the hospital, we are so grateful for the way they have brightened the day for teams at the site.



As we enter the next phases of this pandemic, which may include lifting restrictions for some businesses across Alberta over the coming days, we want to remind our teams (and Albertans) that

proper hand hygiene, limiting public outings and staying at least two metres from those who are not part of your household if you are outside your home, and staying home with any symptoms of illness are still our best defenses against COVID-19. This is so key to limiting the spread of the virus.

While AHS resumes some of our pre-pandemic activities, including surgical procedures and some diagnostic imaging and ambulatory services, we remain well-equipped and prepared to continue to manage the needs of Albertans in our facilities across the province related to this pandemic and otherwise. We must continue to rely on strict adherence to the health protocols to keep our patients, clients, residents, staff and physicians safe. While we know we mention this frequently in our updates, we can't emphasize enough how critical it is to maintain these practices.

Thank you for remaining at the ready to respond should the demands of this pandemic change in Alberta. Thank you for your continued commitment to reducing the spread and impact of COVID-19. Thank you for all you are doing to support our patients and each other as we fight this infection across our province, together.

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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