

COVID-19 Status

April 1, 2020

We have confirmed 64 new cases of COVID-19 over the past 24 hours, bringing the provincial total to 754. Of the total, 77 of these cases are healthcare workers, including those working in continuing care facilities, up to 75 are suspected to be through community transmission from an unknown source, 49 have been hospitalized and 17 have required intensive care. Currently, there are 26 in hospital and 11 admitted to ICU. The number of recovered cases is now at 120.

In very sad news, Alberta has experienced an additional death today in a Calgary continuing care facility, bringing Alberta's total to nine. Our deepest sympathies are extended to the loved ones of this person, and to the healthcare teams who supported their care.

In recent days, we have seen increasing numbers of cases confirmed in connection to several outbreaks in facilities and at community events, and we have also seen growing rates of community transmission overall. These are worrisome trends. The responsibility lies with every single one of us to take action to stop the spread of COVID-19, whether we are at work or at home. Staying home when sick, with any symptoms, limiting activity out of our homes, and washing our hands often and thoroughly will make the difference. In fact, collectively, these are the measures we must take. Strictly adhering to the public health guidelines is the only way we will take control of COVID-19.

Online COVID-19 Self-Assessment for Healthcare Workers

The [online Healthcare Worker Self-Assessment](#) continues to be a helpful tool for providing guidance to healthcare workers who may have been exposed to COVID-19 in the community, at work, or from travel. It outlines when to self-isolate, and when to call Health Link for a referral for COVID-19 testing, or Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) to address a potential workplace exposure. Over 47,000 self-assessments have been completed since the online tool was launched last Friday.

You are encouraged to use the online healthcare worker tool if you may have been exposed or have symptoms, and work in any health facility where patient care is provided, work in any of the following settings, or provide any of the following services:

- Home Care
- Primary Care
- Diagnostic Imaging or Laboratory Clinics
- Medical Specialty Clinics
- Continuing Care and Licensed Supportive Living Sites
- EMS and Medical First Responders
- Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians

If you have already called Health Link or WHS, please review the [new Guidance While Waiting for a Return Call information](#). We appreciate your patience and understanding as Health Link and WHS continue to experience high volumes and wait times.

Use of Hydroxychloroquine

AHS is connecting with clinicians, operations, researchers and other experts to review emerging evidence and guidance of national and international bodies to ensure we have the most current information to provide care to Albertans during this pandemic.

At this time, Hydroxychloroquine is not recommended to be used as prophylaxis for COVID-19 outside clinical trials, given the lack of established benefit (with no existing data on prophylaxis) to counterbalance potential harms. There is minimal evidence for hydroxychloroquine in use as prophylaxis for COVID-19 illness. There are multiple trials underway to explore this, including determining what groups would be considered at highest risk and therefore in need of prophylaxis.

Potential harms of hydroxychloroquine include serious clinical and laboratory adverse effects, potential drug interactions, and pediatric morbidity and mortality. We will continue to monitor the research and evidence for hydroxychloroquine. More information is available [here](#).

Scientific Advisory Group

The Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) plays a key role in AHS' response to the COVID-19 pandemic. SAG undertakes a timely review of current evidence and makes recommendations to the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) to aid in their decision making. Questions related to any aspect of COVID-19 are within their scope, including risk for transmission, personal protective equipment, strategies for isolation, treatment strategies, and management of patients in hospitals. Watch for information briefs on these topics and more, coming your way soon.

Changes to Ambulatory Clinics

As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve in Alberta, so do our measures and supports throughout the system. We must ensure we have the capacity to handle the anticipated surge in demand, which means changing some of the ways we currently provide care, including ambulatory services.

We are reducing our ambulatory services at this time, to free resources and care spaces that may be needed for additional capacity. We recognize that these are difficult, stressful times and that any change in service may be concerning. Our number one priority is protecting the health of Albertans, and in this extraordinary situation, we must take significant steps to do so.

We will work with referring physicians wherever possible to seek other alternative care for patients outside of our ambulatory clinics. All patients requiring urgent ambulatory care will continue to receive it.

Phishing Scams

Cybercriminals are now using phishing emails to prey on fears about COVID-19. Please be vigilant and use caution when opening any external email. These scam phishing emails often mimic legitimate COVID-19 information sources to lure you into opening attachments, clicking links that install malware on computers, or asking for your credentials to access information for fraudulent purposes.

- Never click on unexpected email links, open attachments or give information.
- Always go to ahs.ca/covid for official updates

See [InfoCare](#) to learn more about COVID-19 related email phishing scams.

AHS Logo is Modelling Public Health Guidance

To demonstrate our commitment to the public health guidelines for COVID-19, and to stand by Albertans as we work to slow down the spread of the virus, AHS' logo is now modelling physical distance on the [AHS website](#) and our social media platforms.



In the Zones

Zone Emergency Operations Centre (ZEOC) Update – Edmonton Zone

COVID-19 Prenatal and Postnatal Clinic Opens

The Royal Alexandra Hospital's Lois Hole Hospital for Women opened a COVID-19 Prenatal and Postnatal Clinic on Monday, March 30, 2020, to provide support for those unable to see their provider in current clinic spaces.

The new referral-based ambulatory clinic is for prenatal and postnatal women who are 24 gestational weeks or greater and require a prenatal visit while on self-isolation. They may be self-isolating and asymptomatic, symptomatic and with suspected COVID-19, or COVID-19 positive.

Referred patients who meet criteria will be seen at the clinic for the duration of their self-isolation, then will resume care with their original referring healthcare provider. The clinic was created to help obstetrical providers in the Edmonton Zone reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in their family and obstetrical clinic spaces.

The Lois Hole Hospital for Women is collaborating with obstetricians, obstetric medicine, maternal fetal medicine, family practitioners, registered midwives, nurse practitioners and the public health antenatal home care program to provide support for this patient population, who will require ongoing medical support throughout the COVID-19 response.

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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