



April 28, 2021 – COVID-19 Cases & AstraZeneca Approval Expansion

Since the surge of the past few weeks, we have witnessed a 27% reduction in average daily COVID-19 cases, and are trending at ~28 cases per day with less severe illness and complex admissions across the health authority. The rate of transmission of the virus is falling with less than 1 new transmission per case identified - a significant and positive step in the right direction. In line with what we are seeing elsewhere, over 75% of the COVID-19 cases in the Island Health region are variants – two equally large proportions are the B.1.1.7 (UK) and P.1 (Brazil) variants, and although small, Island Health has a proportionally larger segment of B.1.617 (India) cases compared to other BC health regions. As of today, we have 731 people in self-isolation for COVID-19, and in the last 7 days only 2% of all COVID-19 positive cases were originating from travel abroad.

Last week, Canada's National Advisory Committee on Immunization [recommended that the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine may be offered](#) to individuals 30 years of age and older without contraindications, if the individual does not wish to wait for an mRNA vaccine and the benefits outweigh the risk. The announcement led to a surge in vaccination in community hotspots across BC over the past few days which is also positive for public health – there are no current hotspots in Island Health region. Dr. Bonnie Henry announced that 138,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine arrive this week, and the first shipment of 300,000 Johnson & Johnson vaccine doses should arrive early next week. Public Health Ontario (PHO) has [shared research](#) indicating the excellent efficacy of all vaccines available in Canada (see below). The current immunization schedule for all COVID-19 vaccines currently used in BC requires an interval of approximately 112 days between first and second doses. People who received their vaccine in January and early February will be due for their second dose in May. Island Health's call centre is now booking vaccination appointments for healthcare workers, medical staff, long-term care and assisted living staff, and essential visitors who received their first doses of vaccine prior to February 7th (see below). If you received your first dose on or before February 7, and have yet to be contacted please phone the call centre at 1-844-439-1919 directly to make an appointment. If you received your first dose of vaccine after February 7, please do not call to book an appointment yet. We will [continue to update](#) you on dose 2 scheduling in the days and weeks ahead.

We are pleased to report that the COVID-19 outbreak at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital (NRGH) is officially declared over as of 8 a.m. this morning. We would like to acknowledge the entire team at NRGH for their professionalism throughout this challenging experience. This positive development points to the efficiency and effectiveness of our screening and contact tracing efforts; indeed, only 14% of known COVID-19 cases are untraced in Island Health region. In today's Island Health Medical Leaders Townhall, Dr. Ben Williams shared that he received notice of the requirement for his daughter to self-isolate in less than three hours from becoming aware of an exposure. The re-direction of resources to contact tracing and mass immunization is causing some staffing pressures. Despite active and ongoing recruitment of qualified Medical Lab Assistants and Medical Lab Technologists, the laboratory is experiencing staffing challenges. The extent of the shortage may not be uniform across all facilities, but all facilities have some shortages and we ask for your understanding and support.

Island Health Total Vaccines Administered To Date	% Population Immunized - 1st Dose To Date
286,006	36.9%

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

[Booking 1st dose Vaccination for Healthcare Workers in the Island Health Region](#)

- It's not too late for healthcare workers in the acute, community, primary and allied health sectors to book their first-dose vaccination appointment directly with Island Health.
- Healthcare workers who provide direct patient or client care, or who are regularly within 2 metres of a patient for greater than 15 minutes, can use a [simple online form](#) to submit their information directly to Island Health to book their first vaccine appointment.
- The appointment booking process is fast and easy. After you submit your form a booking agent will call you in less than a week to make an appointment; please do not use this link to book a second dose.
- Healthcare workers can also choose to register for their first dose through the provincial registration system. To be prioritized before you are eligible by age, you must call-in at 1-833-838-2323 and declare you are a healthcare worker. It is important that you only register through one process – the Island Health form OR the provincial booking system.

[Vaccination Effectiveness](#)

Public Health Ontario (PHO) is actively monitoring, reviewing and assessing relevant information related to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

- Vaccine effectiveness is about 60-80% for preventing COVID-19 infection 3-4 weeks after receiving a single dose of Pfizer, Moderna or AstraZeneca vaccine, although this varies by population (i.e. general population, older adults, long-term care residents and health care workers). Vaccine effectiveness increases to greater than 85% after a second dose.

[Risk of cerebral venous thrombosis \(CVT\) and portal vein thrombosis \(PVT\) from Vaccination](#)

In a recent [scientific paper](#), please note that in terms of absolute risk:

- Incidence of cerebral venous sinus thrombosis after COVID-19 infection: 39 per million
- Incidence of cerebral venous sinus thrombosis after AstraZeneca/SII infection: 5 per million

[Stress First Aid Facilitator Guide](#)

A helpful facilitator guide for having Stress First Aid discussions:

- Think about how to roll out SFA in your team/area:
- Ensure staff have access to the Webinar, Workbook and other Handouts
- Create an Action Plan and monitor impact

[End of Day Doses at Mass Immunization Sites](#)

- Remaining end of day doses at Island Health immunization clinics are not for patients or members of the public who have not scheduled their vaccination. [Read](#) about the ways people can register for vaccination, and share the word that it is not our practice to issue any remaining doses to people who go to immunization clinics without a booked appointment for vaccination. Island Health tightly manages our vaccine supply and ensures that any leftover vaccine is prioritized for eligible populations. We do not maintain a standby list.

[Island Health Primary Care Grand Rounds](#)

May 27th from 8-9am

Dementia Management: Medication & More - Dr. Marilyn Malone

Why not make things interesting and [ask a question](#)?

Objectives:

- Know when to start, stop, or switch cholinesterase inhibitors and/or memantine
- Understand risks and benefits of other medications and their non-pharmacological alternatives in symptom management
- Avoid common pitfalls when evaluating treatment effectiveness



[SEPSIS Virtual Treatment Simulation](#)

- The [Centre for Interprofessional Clinical Simulation Learning](#) (CICSL) has partnered with [Oxford Medical Simulation](#) to provide the CICSL community with free access to four virtual SEPSIS patient simulation cases. In association with [Island Health's Sepsis Quality Improvement project](#), these [four scenarios](#) will provide participants from any discipline, with an immersive, interactive, and gamified approach to optimizing the care of patients with Sepsis.

LINKS, RESOURCES & FAQs

BCCDC Resources:

- [New Today](#): This section of the website highlights the latest guidance documents and updates to the website for health professionals.
- [About the vaccines](#)
- [Resources for Health Professionals](#)
- [Reporting adverse events](#)

Doctors of BC:

- [Info for doctors getting or giving the vaccine](#)
- [Updated toolkit for doctors' offices](#)
- <https://www.doctorsofbc.ca/news/cev-attestation-form-available-doctors>

Frequently Asked Questions:

- [ImmunizeBC FAQ](#)