

Higher COVID-19 Hospitalizations with Declining Community Spread – January 26, 2022

As we approach the two year anniversary of the first confirmed COVID-19 case in British Columbia, we continue to see high levels of hospitalization. Provincially, nearly 1,000 people are in hospital (100 in Island Health region today) as the Omicron variant continues to surge, but Dr. Henry shared that community spread is on a downward trend, as evidenced by a gradual decline in daily cases and test positivity.

The Government of BC moved yesterday to extend the vaccine card program to access non-essential indoor spaces, including restaurants, bars and gyms until June 30, 2022. The program was set to expire on Jan. 31st and first went into effect on Sept. 13th.

New guidance on outbreak management in long-term care is expected soon, and will likely address visitation during outbreaks. Dr. Henry says the high rate of vaccination and boosters for residents and staff has resulted in lower rates of severe illness and death. “We are working very closely with long-term care homes to make sure we can continue to have designated visitors for every resident who has one and make sure we have those all-important visits continuing even when we have some cases of COVID-19.”



**Dr. Eric Partlow MD, Division Head
Infectious Disease**

**New Outpatient Therapies for
COVID-19 and the Island Health
Covid Therapeutics Clinic
February 24, 2022 – 6:30 to 7:30pm
Online Zoom – RSVP Coming Soon**

Island Health Region Total Vaccines Administered To Date	% Population Immunized (12+) 2nd Dose To Date	% Population Immunized (5+) 2nd Dose To Date	% Population Immunized (18+) Two Doses & Boosters To Date
1,793,265	91.6%	85.6%	46.5%

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Mark Your Calendar: Island Health Primary Care Grand Rounds * RSVP Coming Soon *

Who: Dr. Eric Partlow, MD, Division Head Infectious Disease

What: New Outpatient Therapies for COVID-19 and the Island Health Covid Therapeutics Clinic

When: February 24, 2022 – 6:30 to 7:30pm

Where: Online Zoom – RSVP Coming Soon

Island Health Medical Health Officers' Newsletter #340 (see PDF file attached in the email message)

- Since mid-December 2021, Omicron has been the dominant variant among COVID-19 cases in Island Health. While the number of people infected with COVID-19 has increased substantially, the proportion of those with severe disease has substantially decreased.

[BCDCD Handouts – Patient Guidance on What to Do After a Positive COVID-19 Test](#)

New BCDCD guidance handouts explain what to do following your COVID-19 test result:

- Fully vaccinated people and people younger than 18 years: self-isolate for at least 5 days from the first day you had symptoms, and until your symptoms have improved and you no longer have a fever, if you had one. Avoid higher risk settings, such as long term care facilities and gatherings.
- People aged 18 years and older who are not fully vaccinated: self-isolate for at least 10 days from the first day you had symptoms, and until your symptoms have improved and you no longer have a fever, if you had one.

[Clinical Practice Guide for the Use of Sotrovimab in Patients with COVID-19](#)

- The BC Covid-19 Therapeutics Committee (CTC) issued its latest clinical guidance recommending that Sotrovimab can be considered for adults and children 12 years or older (≥ 40 kgs) who are mildly ill from confirmed COVID-19

[Updated: Island Health COVID-19 Vaccination Clinical Guidance – Frequently Asked Questions \(01/23/22\)](#)

- This document provides guidance regarding frequently asked questions related to clinical aspects of COVID-19 vaccination. It is considered the Island Health 'source of truth' and is reviewed by the Clinical Advisory Group with accountability resting with the Physician Lead, COVID-19 Vaccination (currently Dr. Mike Benusic).

[Physicians Practicing in Rural Communities](#)

- If you are a physician practicing in a rural community you may qualify for rural incentives. A communication was recently circulated requesting rural physicians complete the annual Rural Physician Confirmation. If you have not received this communication you can access the form online using the provided link. **If you have already completed the online form, no further action is required.**
- The Rural Physician Confirmation Process is an annual process to determine physician eligibility for rural benefits, such as the Rural Continuing Medical Education (RCME) and the Rural Retention Program (RRP). In order to determine eligibility for rural benefits, the Ministry of Health needs our full count of physicians residing and/or practicing in rural communities by January 31, 2022. Questions can be sent to:
MedStaffDevelopment@islandhealth.ca.

[Pay Parking Returning to Island Health Care Facilities](#)

- On January 20, 2022, the Ministry of Health [issued a statement](#) noting the return of pay parking at care facilities effective March 4, 2022. At Island Health, pay parking will resume at all sites that previously had pay parking in place.

- Free parking will be supported for patients receiving dialysis or cancer treatment in acute-care programs, and for parents or caregivers of children staying in the hospital overnight. Volunteers will still be able to park for free, and financial hardship provisions will continue to be managed on a case-by-case basis by Island Health.

[Past Issues of the Island Health Primary Care Update](#)

The Island Health Archive for past issues of the Primary Care Update.

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](#)

Frequently Asked Questions:

- [ImmunizeBC FAQ](#)