

July 14, 2021 – Steady Improvement in Step 3 of British Columbia (BC) Restart Plan

The Province continues to report a few dozen cases of COVID-19 per day on average, and 80% of eligible people have been vaccinated with at least one dose. Planning at all levels of government is underway to pivot from a pandemic to endemic view of COVID-19 and the associated disease control measures. BC is progressing through the third of a four-step [reopening plan](#) that aims to lift virtually all remaining public COVID-19 restrictions by September.



BC'S RESTART: STEP 3

- Personal gatherings**
Return to usual; sleepovers
Attend a family reunion
- Organized gatherings**
Indoors – 50 people or 50% capacity, whichever greater
Outdoors – 5,000 people or 50% capacity, whichever greater
Fairs & festivals – return to normal
Meet friends at a summer fair
- Travel**
Canada recreational travel
Host family visiting from out-of-province
- Sports & activities**
Sports & exercise facilities – return to normal
Watch your kid's hockey game
- Businesses**
Dining – no group limit
Casinos – limited capacity
Nightclubs – seated at tables
Liquor service - restrictions lifted
Host a birthday party at your favourite restaurant
- Offices & workplaces**
Seminars and bigger meetings
Eat lunch with your colleagues

BC'S RESTART

Health Minister Adrian Dix and Dr. Bonnie Henry [announced](#) last week an easing of restrictions in long-term care and seniors assisted living beginning July 19, 2021. A summary of the key changes is provided in the latest [Ministry of Health briefing presentation](#), which also highlights new protections for seniors and those in care; however, additional details are required and are expected to follow by end of week. Health officials have stressed the importance of vaccinations as activity levels increase for all British Columbians. Anyone who has not yet registered for a vaccine in B.C. can do so in the following ways:

- Online through the [Get Vaccinated Portal](#).
- By calling 1-833-838-2323. Translators are available in 140 languages.
- In person at any [Service B.C. location](#).

Island Health Region Total Vaccines Administered To Date	% Population Immunized (18+) 1st Dose To Date	% Population Immunized (12+) 1st Dose To Date	% Population Immunized (18+) 2nd Dose To Date
993,695	79.1%	78.1%	49.0%

Dr. Richard Stanwick recently shared that Island Health will administer its 1,000,000th dose this Thursday, and that the risk of transmission is declining in the region with a stable COVID-19 transmission rate below one (1.0), with 0 to 5 new cases reported per day in the region on average, and no new deaths since May 30th, 2021. Island Health continues to offer all approved Canadian vaccines, and will offer all people a mRNA vaccine of their own choice based on availability. We acknowledge the public comments of a World Health Organization scientist who may have been quoted out of context, and whose comments may have cast doubt on the effectiveness and safety of vaccine mixing. All approved vaccines in Canada are safe and effective and prevent the spread of COVID-19, and the mixing of mRNA vaccines in Canada remains safe and effective based on the scientific guidance of the [National Advisory Committee on Immunization \(NACI\)](#). Indeed, the risk of contracting COVID-19 in the Island Health region is declining due to our successful public health measures and vaccination rates, and there has been a significant decrease in physician referrals for COVID-19 Assessment Clinics.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Closure of Island Health Covid-19 Assessment Clinics

- Referrals to COVID-19 Assessment Clinics have steadily declined and all clinics will be closed on August 31, 2021.
 - [COVID-19 Assessment Clinic Referral Form](#)

[Updated BCCDC Communicable Disease Control Manual](#)

- The recommendation to defer the second dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine for those who experience myocarditis or pericarditis following the first dose has been updated to clarify this event as '*physician-diagnosed*' myocarditis or pericarditis. Further guidance has also been added to indicate that deferral is not required for those with a prior history of myocarditis or pericarditis that is unrelated to COVID-19 mRNA vaccines.

[BC Ministry of Health Presentation: COVID-19 Restrictions in Long Term Care and Seniors Assisted Living](#)

- Visitors will no longer need to schedule or book in advance to visit loved ones, and the limit on the number of visitors for each resident will be removed.
- Fully immunized visitors can visit with residents without wearing a mask.
- Larger, facility-wide social events or gatherings are safe to begin again.
- Indoor gatherings may include residents and staff across units of a facility, while outdoor gatherings may include family and friends.
- Adult day programs and in-facility respite can fully resume, providing additional health and well-being benefits for seniors and caregivers in community.

[Updated: Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome \(MIS-C\) in Children \(COVID-19\)](#)

- Although children with MIS-C may appear well, their condition can deteriorate within hours to days. There should be a low threshold to evaluate for MIS-C in children who present with unexplained fever for three or more days, even if they are well-appearing on initial presentation.
- Caregivers of children who appear well and are discharged should be counselled about symptoms of MIS-C and told to return to the emergency department if:
 - symptoms worsen;
 - symptoms do not improve within 48 hours; or
 - fever does not abate after a total of five days since onset.

- Clinicians should liaise with the relevant specialist at BC Children's Hospital regarding the MIS-C patient's management and determine whether a higher level of care is needed.

[Patient Masking Poster for Primary Care Sites \(July\)](#)

- The Doctors of BC are providing this site poster to be clear about masking requirements at primary care sites.

[Updated: COVID-19 Vaccination Aftercare Document](#)

- Side effects are common a day or two after getting the COVID-19 vaccine, and the BCCDC has updated their guidance document on aftercare.

[Study: Long COVID-19 Cases are Underreported in General Practitioner Records \(July 2021\)](#)

- An analysis of pseudonymised electronic health records of patients in England found only 40 cases of long Covid reported per 100 000 people. This is a much lower prevalence than estimates using questionnaire research methods such as the React-2 study which estimated that around two million people have the condition.
 - The study found that the rate of Long Covid recorded among practices using EMIS software was 53.7 per 100 000 people compared with 20.9 per 100 000 in practices using TPP software. Over a quarter of GP practices (26.7%) have not recorded any cases of long covid. The proportion is much higher in practices using TPP (44.2%) than those using EMIS (15.1%).

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](#)