

LATEST UPDATE – MARCH 11, 2022

In an effort to keep our community partners connected, we are providing you with regular COVID-19 updates.

Second anniversary of the COVID-19 pandemic

Today marks the second anniversary of the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, as declared by the World Health Organization.

It has been an incredibly difficult two years, and we would like to take moment to remember those lost to the pandemic and convey our sincerest condolences to their family and friends.

We would also like to recognize and express our deepest gratitude to healthcare providers as well as our community partners for all they have done and continue to do in support our communities.

B.C. takes next step in lifting COVID-19 restrictions

As people in B.C. continue to step up and become vaccinated in record numbers, COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations have decreased, and Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer, has lifted additional public health orders.

Effective March 11, the following changes were made to public health orders:

- Face coverings order: Face coverings will be optional for people in all indoor public settings. People may want to continue wearing a mask based on personal choice.
 - Individual businesses and organizations can choose to continue to require mask wearing on their premises.
- Gatherings and events for faith gatherings: The requirement of faith communities to restrict attendance based on vaccination status is no longer required.
- Indoor common area mask requirements for employees as part of the Workplace Safety Order will no longer be required. Employers may choose to continue to require wearing masks for operational reasons or in certain settings.
- Overnight camps for children and youth order requirements: COVID-19 safety plans are no longer required to be submitted to a medical health officer for overnight camps.
- Masks are encouraged on public transit and BC Ferries but are no longer required under public health order.

COVID-19 guidelines are being adjusted to advise that mask use is no longer required when K-12 students return from spring break. Dates for return from spring break vary by school district. Similarly, VCH Public Health is working with the child care sector to revise guidelines. However, students and staff are supported to continue to use masks and other layers of protection based on their own comfort and risk factors. [Read more.](#)

Changes coming to visitation at long-term care homes

Changes are also coming to B.C.'s long-term care facilities. By March 18, the number of visitors to long-term care facilities will no longer be restricted as long as visitors are fully vaccinated and screened. Some facilities will be able to implement these changes earlier. Visitors should check with their local care home. [Read more.](#)

Additional COVID-19 restrictions to be lifted in April

In addition to the above, the following changes will also be made to public health orders effective April 8, 2022, at 12:01 a.m.:

- Showing the BC Vaccine Card proof of vaccination will no longer be required to access non-essential events, services and businesses.
 - Individual businesses and organizations can choose to continue to require the BC Vaccine Card proof on their premises.
- The remainder of the Workplace Safety Order will be lifted, which means businesses will transition back to communicable disease plans to reduce risk of all communicable disease.
- The requirement for students residing in residence to be fully vaccinated under the Post-secondary Institution Housing COVID-19 Preventative Measures Order will be repealed.

For all recent changes to public health orders, [read more here.](#)

Age limit lowered for Rapid Test Kits

The Province has announced that it will lower the age limit for free COVID-19 Rapid Test Kits to [individuals aged 50 and older beginning March 11](#). Those eligible can request a kit of five tests once every 28 days. The kits are available at more than 1,200 community pharmacies; a list can be found [here](#).

VCH vaccination campaign begins to transition

B.C. has one of the highest vaccinated populations in the world, and demand for vaccine appointments at community clinics has declined. VCH is now focusing on the delivery of pediatric vaccines to children aged five to 11, and working in partnership with pharmacies to ensure ongoing access to COVID-19 vaccines for everyone who is eligible.

To book a vaccine appointment, [register on the provincial system](#) or call 1-833-838-2323. [Service BC locations](#) can also help you register for a vaccine. Access a full list of VCH vaccination clinics, including pop-up clinics, by visiting <http://www.vch.ca/vaccine>. And get your BC Vaccine Card at gov.bc.ca/vaccinecard, by calling 1-833-838-2323 or from a Service B.C. Centre.

COVID-19 vaccination information and resources, including guidance on how to prepare children for vaccination, can be found on [the BCCDC website](#) and more information on VCH supports for children can be found [here](#). This information is also available in Chinese [Simplified](#) and [Traditional](#) | [Punjabi](#) | [Vietnamese](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Farsi](#) | [Arabic](#)

COVID-19 vaccine update

As of Friday, March 11, 2022, 90.7% (4,522,145) of eligible people five and older in B.C. have received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine and 86.6% (4,318,406) have received their second dose.

In addition, 93.4% (4,327,290) of eligible people 12 and older in B.C. have received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine, 90.9% (4,212,056) received their second dose and 56.4% (2,616,170) have received a third dose.

Also, 93.7% (4,052,632) of all eligible adults in B.C. have received their first dose, 91.3% (3,948,614) received their second dose and 58.4% (2,523,786) have received a third dose.

Ministry of Health update

In the Friday, March 11, 2022, [statement](#) on B.C.'s COVID-19 response, 368 COVID-positive individuals are in hospital and 46 are in intensive care. In the last 24 hours, three new deaths have been reported, for an overall total of 2,935.

288 new cases were reported with 47 of those in the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) area.

The total number of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 in B.C. now stands at 352,039 since the start of the pandemic.

International Women's Day

In honour of International Women's Day, we've highlighted just a few of the thousands of incredible women who help deliver exceptional, culturally safe care at Vancouver Coastal Health. Read all about them in [VCH news](#) or on VCH social media channels: [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

VCH boasts four of Newsweek's best hospitals in Canada

Vancouver General Hospital (VGH), UBC Hospital, Lions Gate Hospital and Richmond Hospital all made Newsweek's list of Canada's best hospitals in 2022 – four of the eight B.C. hospitals listed.

For the second straight year, Newsweek recognized Vancouver General Hospital (number 7 on the list) as one of the world's best hospitals for its continued excellence and leadership in patient care. This is the seventh time VGH has been named in Newsweek's global rankings of best hospitals. [Learn more.](#)

Parking at VCH sites

On March 4, 2022, pay parking was reinstated at B.C. health authority sites, including at VCH facilities, to ensure parking spots are available for patients, staff, volunteers and visitors.

To ensure parking fees do not create a barrier to access for patients and visitors, parking exemptions will be available to people who meet certain criteria. [Learn more.](#)

Know where to go for the right care this winter

Winter can be an exciting time of year, but it also comes with an increase in people visiting the emergency department (ED). While it is important to visit the ED for emergent health issues,

non-life threatening urgent and non-urgent conditions can often be effectively managed by urgent primary care centres (UPCCs), family doctors, walk-in clinics or other services. Those who are unsure where to access care can call 8-1-1 for general health guidance and information on services available in their local community.

Both hospitals and community clinics continue to be safe place to access treatment and care. Find out more [here](#) about where and when to seek care this winter.

Access translated resources in the following languages:

Winter care poster in [English](#) | [Chinese Simplified \(简体中文\)](#) | [Traditional \(繁體中文\)](#) | [Punjabi \(ਪੰਜਾਬੀ\)](#) | [Arabic](#) | [Korean \(한국어\)](#) | [Tagalog](#) | [Japanese](#) | [Farsi](#) | [Russian](#) | [Spanish \(Español\)](#) | [Vietnamese \(Tiếng Việt\)](#)

Winter care postcard in [English](#) | [Chinese Simplified \(简体中文\)](#) | [Traditional \(繁體中文\)](#) | [Punjabi \(ਪੰਜਾਬੀ\)](#) | [Arabic](#) | [Korean \(한국어\)](#) | [Tagalog](#) | [Japanese](#) | [Farsi](#) | [Russian](#) | [Spanish \(Español\)](#) | [Vietnamese \(Tiếng Việt\)](#)

Community engagement opportunities

VCH values community input. Please consider participating in or sharing the featured community engagement opportunities below:

- [Advisor recruitment - Treatment resistant psychosis](#)
VCH's South Mental Health and Substance Use team (SMHSU) is working to improve health outcomes for persons with treatment resistant psychosis, including through optimizing medication. The SMHSU team is looking to engage persons with lived experience of treatment resistant psychosis and/or their family members to review their research priorities, develop research plans, and evaluate outcomes.
- [Interviews – Improving access to osteoporosis care](#)
St. Paul's Hospital is working to improve access to osteoporosis care after a person experiences a fragility fracture. You may have experienced a fragility fracture if you fell from standing height and/or with minimal trauma, leading to fracture. We are looking to interview those who have experienced hip, back, leg or arm fragility fractures and had received care at St. Paul's Hospital for the fracture.
- [Assertive Community Treatment Website Development](#)
Navigating information about mental health and substance use (MHSU) services is critical when you or someone you care for is in crisis. Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) is working to create a website that helps MSHU clients, their families and friends to quickly find important information about Assertive Community Treatment (ACT). We want to hear from individuals across the province in a survey, a focus group, and individual interviews for the development of the ACT website.

- [Survey - Medical imaging brochures](#)

Richmond Hospital's medical imaging team has developed medical imaging brochures that will be provided to patients. The goals of these brochures are to decrease the nervousness that some patients may experience before taking medical imaging tests and to help them become more knowledgeable about the tests. We would like your feedback on the brochures so that we can determine if our messaging is clear and if not, how it can be improved from your perspective.

Other resources

Find the Provincial Health Officer's orders [here](#).

To see a map of **COVID-19 cases by local health area**, visit [here](#).

For the **latest medical updates**, including case counts, prevention, risks and testing, visit: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>

For **community engagement opportunities** at VCH, see: <https://engage.vch.ca/>

Thank you

We appreciate the time you spend reading these updates and hope you find the information and resources useful. If you no longer wish to receive the VCH Community Partner Update, please reply or send an email to ce@vch.ca with the word "unsubscribe". Thank you.

Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge that our places of work and the Vancouver Coastal Health facilities lie on the traditional homelands of the First Nation Communities of the Heiltsuk, Kitasoo-Xai'xais, Lil'wat, x^wməθk^wəyəm, N'Quatqua, Nuxalk, Samahquam, shíshálh, Skatin, Squamish, Tla'amin, Tsleil-Waututh, Ulkatcho, Wuikinuxv, and Xa'xtsa.