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From: CLRInfo
Sent: February 19, 2021 7:11 AM
To: Ken McCormack
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Subject: COVID 19 Update - February 19

Importance: High

[CLR Members,](#)

Please find the recent news and updates on COVID-19 situation:

[B.C. will run out of the COVID-19 vaccine by Monday](#)

Based on the current dynamics, B.C. will run out of the COVID-19 vaccine by Monday.

On Wednesday, provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry reported 4,260 immunizations, bringing the average for the past five days to about 2,500 a day. Before supplies of Pfizer and Moderna vaccines began to decrease in late January, there were around 5,000 immunizations a day in B.C., with a peak of over 7,000.

B.C. has around 12,500 doses of vaccine left, based on B.C. Centre for Disease Control data. At 2,500 doses a day, that supply will be used up by Monday.

Henry said some Moderna vaccine doses are arriving next week, but fewer than expected. Pfizer has promised Health Canada it will deliver 403,000 doses by the end of this week, and then half a million a week for six weeks after that.

Based on population, B.C. should get around 55,000 doses of Pfizer vaccine next week, as it is distributed by Health Canada.

The Province has reported 60 cases of variants of concern. There are four variants circulating that the World Health Organization considers to be of concern: P1, B117, B1351 and B1525. B.C. has reported cases of all but the P1, which was identified in Brazil.

A third potential vaccine, made by AstraZeneca, has been approved by WHO and is under review in Canada. The Canadian government has a deal with AstraZeneca to get 500,000 doses in March if the vaccine gets Health Canada approval. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is also subject to Health Canada review but has not been approved anywhere in the world.

[Government of Canada expands restrictions to international travel by land and air](#)

Canada has some of the strictest travel and border measures in the world, including a mandatory 14-day quarantine for everyone returning to the country. Feb 12, the Government of Canada announced further testing and quarantine requirements for international travellers arriving to Canada's air and land ports of entry.

For travellers arriving to Canada by land, as of February 15, 2021, all travellers, with some exceptions, will be required to provide proof of a negative COVID-19 molecular test result taken in the United States within 72 hours of pre-arrival, or a positive test taken 14 to 90 days prior to arrival. In addition, **as of February 22, 2021,** travellers entering Canada at the land border will be required to take a COVID-19 molecular test on arrival as well as toward the end of their 14-day quarantine.

All travellers arriving to Canada by air, as of February 22, 2021, with some exceptions, will be required to take a COVID-19 molecular test when they arrive in Canada before exiting the airport, and another toward the end of their 14-day quarantine period. With limited exceptions, air travellers, will also be required to reserve, prior to departure to Canada,

a 3-night stay in a government-authorized hotel. Travellers will be able to book their government-authorized stay starting February 18, 2021. These new measures are in addition to existing mandatory pre-boarding and health requirements for air travellers.

Finally, **at the same time on February 22, 2021, all travellers**, whether arriving by land or air will be required to submit their travel and contact information, including a suitable quarantine plan, electronically via **ArriveCAN** before crossing the border or boarding a flight.

B.C. economic review and outlook

Business Council of British Columbia has prepared the report on economic outlook for the province. According to the analysis, it will take a couple years for the B.C. economy to fully recover. As we approach herd immunity, the provincial economy will steadily move to a more solid growth. Here are some highlights of the paper:

- Global GDP is expected to expand by 5.6% in 2021 and 4.6% in 2022, following a -2.8% contraction in 2020, according to the Bank of Canada. Globally, vaccination programs are being rolled out about six months earlier than previously expected. It is assumed this will allow many advanced economies (except perhaps, Canada) and China to achieve broad COVID-19 immunity for their populations by the end of 2021. Other emerging economies would achieve this by mid-2022.
- The U.S. economy is expected to recover faster than most other advanced economies and to return to full capacity by the end of 2021, roughly two years earlier than Canada.
- Canada's fiscal response in 2020 was easily the largest in the world. Nevertheless, Canadian GDP growth is expected to be only 4.0% in 2021 and 4.8% in 2022, after a large contraction of -5.5% in 2020.
- The provincial economy will grow by 4.5% in 2021, marginally outpacing Canada. A slightly stronger growth performance is expected in 2022.
- Provincial employment has almost returned to its pre-COVID level; the labour market recovery, however, is very uneven across sectors.
- Air transportation and other tourism-dependent industries remain the epicentre of economic displacement. They will be slow to revive and will weigh on the recovery process.
- Retail spending has rebounded and is on a healthy upward trajectory.
- Construction will be a leading growth engine in 2021-22 as several large capital projects resume full-scale activity and governments spend more on infrastructure.

Booster shots, new clinical trials: vaccines vs COVID-19 variants

New, more transmissible COVID-19 variants that have emerged in different parts of the world have raised concerns about the protection the vaccines can offer – and vaccine makers are looking at updating their products.

A new study published in the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM) on Wednesday showed that the Moderna vaccine appears to be highly effective against the B.1.1.7 variant first identified in the U.K., but showed a decrease in neutralizing antibodies against the B.1.351 variant found in South Africa. The results of another study published in NEJM for Pfizer's vaccine also suggested that the B.1.351 variant may reduce antibody protection by two-thirds, with researchers saying it is not clear if the shot will be effective against the mutation.

However, both companies have said that their mRNA-based vaccines are flexible and can be tweaked, if needed. In a statement to Global News on Wednesday, Christina Antoniou, director of corporate affairs of Pfizer Canada, said if a new strain of the coronavirus were to emerge that is not covered well by the current vaccine, an updated shot could be administered as a booster.

Moderna said last month that while its two-dose regimen is expected to be protective against the variants, it will test an additional booster dose against emerging strains.

Meanwhile, AstraZeneca said last week that it was working to adapt its COVID-19 vaccine developed in partnership with Oxford University to combat new variants. The company expects to have a new version ready for use by fall this year.

Provincial stats

British Columbia reported 427 new cases of COVID-19 on Wednesday and three additional deaths. It brought B.C.'s seven-day rolling average for new cases to 408, down from 439 this time last week. In a written statement, health officials said there were 4,150 active COVID-19 cases in the province. An additional 7,238 people were isolating due to possible exposure. There were 232 people in hospital with the disease, 63 of whom in critical or intensive care.

The province has administered 176,015 doses of COVID-19 vaccine, of which 26,030 were second doses. About 92% of B.C.'s 74,710 total cases have recovered, while 1,317 people have died.

Officials are also [encouraging people to fill out a new survey](#) from UBC, Simon Fraser University and the BC Children's Hospital looking at the mental toll the pandemic is taking on British Columbians.

Stay safe.

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