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From: CLRInfo
Sent: July 9, 2021 8:25 AM
To: Ken McCormack
Cc: Maria Sushkova
Subject: COVID-19 Update - July 9

Importance: High

[CLR Members,](#)

Please find the latest updates on the COVID-19 situation.

[B.C. COVID-19 pandemic update](#)

As of Thursday, July 8, 2021, 79.6% (3,442,410) of all eligible adults in B.C. and 78.4% (3,635,811) of those 12 and older have received their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. In addition, 42.8% (1,851,792) of all eligible adults in B.C. and 40.0% (1,854,387) of those 12 and older have received their second dose.

B.C. is reporting 59 new cases of COVID-19, for a total of 147,915 cases in the province.

There are currently 649 active cases of COVID-19 in the province, and 145,491 people who tested positive have recovered. Of the active cases, 74 individuals are currently in hospital and 19 are in intensive care. The remaining people are recovering at home in self-isolation.

Since December 2020, the Province has administered 5,497,150 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines.

Learn More:

Detailed data is posted daily on the BC Centre for Disease Control's (BCCDC) dashboard: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data> or: www.bccdc.ca

To register to be immunized or to learn about getting your second dose, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated.html> or <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/dose-2>

To learn about BC's Restart plan, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restart>

For recent modelling, visit: http://news.gov.bc.ca/files/6-28_PHO_presentation.pdf

For information on breakthrough cases, see the BCCDC weekly data summary: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data#summary>

For the provincial health officer's orders and guidance, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

For guidance on restrictions, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/restrictions>

For COVID-19 exposure events, updates and information, visit:

- BCCDC: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/public-exposures>
- Fraser Health: fraserhealth.ca/covid19exposure
- Interior Health: <https://news.interiorhealth.ca/news/public-exposures/>
- Island Health: <https://www.islandhealth.ca/learn-about-health/covid-19/outbreaks-and-exposures>
- Northern Health: <https://www.northernhealth.ca/health-topics/outbreaks-and-exposures>
- Vancouver Coastal Health: <http://www.vch.ca/covid-19/public-exposures>

[Eased visitation restrictions, new protections coming for seniors in long-term care](#)

People in long-term care and seniors' assisted living and their loved ones will have more ways to safely spend time together, with a further easing of visitation rules coming into effect on July 19, 2021.

Changes to long-term care and seniors' assisted living include:

- 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.

The screening of visitors and practices such as hand hygiene, use of medical masks and physical distancing will remain in place when visitation restrictions are eased.

To view a PowerPoint presentation outlining the changes, visit: [VisitorRestrictionPPT.pdf](#).

[Post-secondary return to in-person learning follows BC's Restart plan](#)

Students, faculty and staff at B.C.'s colleges and universities are being supported to come back together for in-person learning this fall, informed by the release of new Return-to-Campus Guidelines. Those are designed to parallel B.C.'s four-step restart plan, and highlight the importance of public health measures, such as daily health checks and hand hygiene, as well as classroom logistics and on-campus student housing and dining services.

The new Return-to-Campus Guidelines are the result of consultations with a broad team of experts from the public post-secondary sector, including Indigenous organizations and student associations, alongside faculty and staff unions, in partnership with the ministry and public health experts from the BC Centre for Disease Control, regional health authorities and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer.

Further, post-secondary institutions will no longer be required to have a COVID-19 safety plan. Instead, institutions are developing communicable disease plans to reduce the risk of all respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19. The goal for the fall is to transition from highly prescriptive COVID-19 specific orders and protocols back to normal institutional policies and guidance on occupational health and safety.

[Pfizer developing booster shot to combat COVID-19 Delta variant](#)

Pfizer and BioNTech said Thursday they are developing a COVID-19 booster shot to target the highly transmissible Delta variant. The companies confirmed that they have seen "encouraging data in the ongoing booster trial" of the vaccine that suggests a third shot of the two-dose Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine has the capacity to offer the "highest levels" of protection against known COVID-19 variants, including Delta.

The data was based on trials where the booster was administered six months after a second dose, Pfizer said. The companies said they believe that "a third dose may be beneficial within six to 12 months following the second dose" for best results.

Pfizer said it expects to submit data to U.S. and European regulators "in the coming weeks" to get approval for the booster, and will have more definitive data to share soon.

[No specifics from prime minister on when travel restrictions with U.S. could lift](#)

Speaking at an announcement in Coquitlam, B.C., on Thursday, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau would not offer specifics when asked about a re-opening timeframe.

The border restrictions are currently set to remain in place until July 21 at the earliest.

Meanwhile, a \$50-million emergency grant program for struggling tourist attractions and tour bus companies in B.C. has received more than 100 applications, which are currently being evaluated. Major “anchor” attractions in urban areas can receive up to \$1 million. Attractions in rural areas and tour bus operators can receive up to \$500,000.

While the re-opening date is still an unknown, the prime minister made it clear how he felt about unvaccinated tourists being able to come to Canada. “I can tell you right now that’s not going to happen for quite a while,” he said. “All our conversations now are about what support we can give and what ease we can offer to vaccinated travellers.”

[The lambda COVID-19 variant is now spreading in Canada](#)

Lambda, or C.37, is one of the latest variants of the virus behind COVID-19, and it's now being reported in Canada. The first samples were found in Peru back in August 2020, but it was only deemed a variant of interest by the World Health Organization (WHO) in mid-June.

"Lambda has been associated with substantive rates of community transmission in multiple countries, with rising prevalence over time concurrent with increased COVID-19 incidence," reads an [epidemiological update from the WHO](#) released on June 15.

In Canada, 11 cases of the variant have been reported as of July 5, according to the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). PHAC is "monitoring carefully" for more cases and research tied to the variant's transmissibility and vaccines' effectiveness against it, said spokesperson Anne Génier.

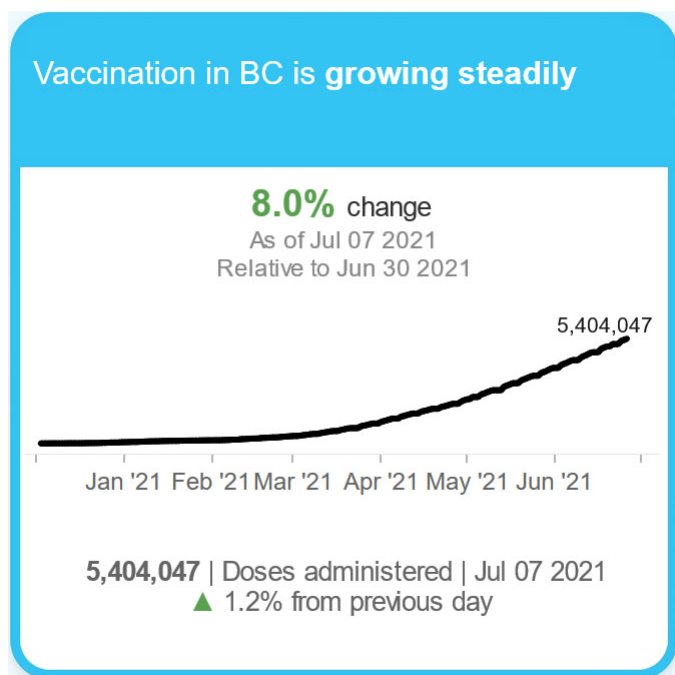
Lambda carries a "number of mutations," according to the WHO, which may make it more transmissible or resistant to neutralizing antibodies.

Dr. Anthony Chow, professor emeritus at the University of British Columbia's division of infectious diseases, also cautioned that the strain has the potential to turn into a variant of concern.

Despite its multiple mutations, there's early evidence that vaccines likely remain protective against the lambda variant. A recent U.S. lab-based study, which was [published online](#), but has not yet been peer-reviewed, suggests that the "vaccines in current use will remain protective against the lambda variant and that monoclonal antibody therapy will remain effective."

But the WHO stressed that further studies are still needed to "validate the continued effectiveness of vaccines."

[Immunization dashboard](#)



Stay safe.

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