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**MEDICAL HEALTH OFFICERS'
NEWSLETTER
No. 331**

April 30, 2021

COVID-19 Update #14

Updates:

Vaccination

- Over 300,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been provided within Island Health, and ~40% of the adult population has been vaccinated.
- We continue to anticipate that all adults in BC will be offered vaccine by the end of June. Eligibility timeline and registration links are accessible at bit.ly/365whhR.

Thrombocytopenia with Thrombosis Syndrome (TTS)

- While no cases of vaccine-related thrombocytopenia with thrombosis syndrome (TTS) have been identified in Island Health, this rare syndrome has been reported elsewhere following administration of COVID-19 virus vector vaccines (AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD and Janssen/Johnson & Johnson).
- Estimated incidence is between 1 in 100,000 to 1 in one million recipients of these vaccines. ~17,000 doses of AZ/COVISHIELD have been administered within Island Health.
- Most severe reports have involved cerebral venous sinus and splanchnic vein thrombosis.
- At this time, any thrombosis identified 4-20 days following either of these types of COVID-19 vaccines should be considered as potentially associated. High index of suspicion should be applied for severe persistent headache especially with visual blurring, diplopia and/or seizure, severe abdominal pain, or new severe swelling, pain, or colour change of a limb.
- Refer to provincial guidance for identification and management: bit.ly/3tuCvAP. All suspected cases must be reported as per bit.ly/3tDIPsd.

Variants of Concern

- Variants of concern (VOCs) are becoming the dominant strains in BC and Island Health, mainly B117 and P1.
- As of earlier this month, all reported cases in Island Health are assumed to be VOCs and case and contact management has been refined to account for the relatively higher transmissibility.
- From the experience of many other jurisdictions, the introduction of VOCs are correlated with a surge of cases and the eventual dominance of VOCs. However, a sustained increase in incidence is not inevitable, and this is being seen in Island Health and BC as a whole.
- A summary of these variants from the BCCDC can be found at bit.ly/2QGTGSYR.

Resources:

- One-stop-shop for medical staff at medicalstaff.islandhealth.ca/covid-19
- Surveillance:
 - Island Health: islandhealth.ca/learn-about-health/covid-19/outbreaks-and-exposures
 - BCCDC: bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data
- Provincial restrictions: gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/restrictions



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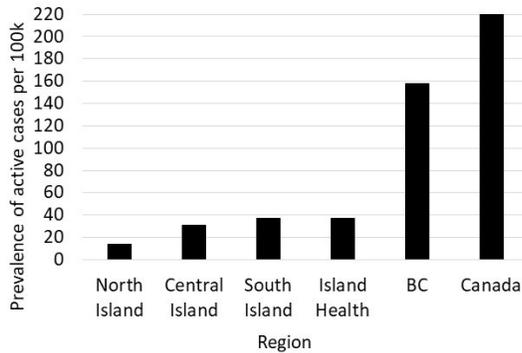
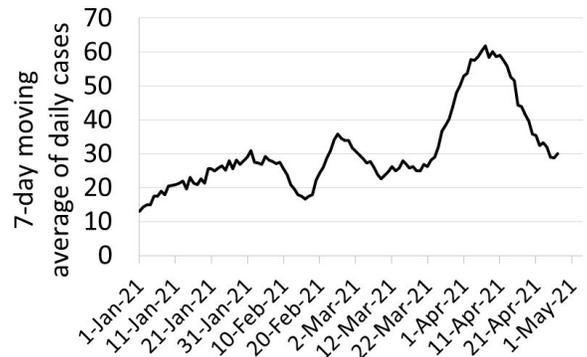
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Situational assessment:

- COVID-19 daily incidence in Island Health increased sharply in early April, coinciding with the 'third-wave' in BC. Current 7-day moving average of daily cases is 30, similar to incidence in March.



- The prevalence of active cases in Island Health, adjusted by population size, is 76% lower than BC and 83% lower than Canada. Local Health Area level data can be accessed at bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data.

- 7-day lab testing percent positivity is 3.4% - nearly half of that seen in early April. Almost all calling into the Call Centre are tested the day of or day after. For clients requiring COVID-19 testing but are unable to attend a testing site in-person, mobile testing may be available. Either direct clients to make this request when booking a test, or call 1-844-901-8442 on their behalf and request mobile testing.
- Currently 19 COVID-19 cases are hospitalized (5.9% of active cases) with 7 in HAU/ICU (2.2% of active cases). The average age of currently hospitalized cases is 67.
- COVID-19 cases continue to be contacted well within 24h of notification of a positive test result, and contacts are typically traced and managed within 24 hours as well. Cases and contacts receive virtual follow-up until they have successfully completed required periods of self-isolation or quarantine. Please note: this monitoring is predominantly for public health reasons (to ensure isolation and determine if contacts have developed symptoms), and does not replace clinical care. For select COVID-19 cases requiring a higher level of monitoring in the community, Intensive Home Monitoring is available upon referral: intranet.viha.ca/departments/hcc/hcc_index/Pages/ihtm.aspx
- The majority of cases in Island Health continue to have an identified source of infection, with most linked to a known case or cluster.
- Currently, there are two long-term care outbreaks: both in Victoria with a total of 4 cases (3 staff, 1 resident). There are no active hospital outbreaks.