



Message from
Dr. Verna Yiu &
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AHS Update: Number of active cases lowest since last October, province enters Stage 2 of government's reopening plan

Please print and share with your teams as needed

Dear staff, physicians and volunteers,

 **Today's Update**

- COVID-19 Cases in Alberta
- COVID-19 Immunization Update
- More Public Health Measures Eased
- COVID-19 Testing for Healthcare Workers — The Latest Numbers
- New COVID-19 Isolation/Quarantine Requirements for Vaccinated Inpatients
- Be on the Lookout for Suspicious Items
- Verna's Weekly Video Message — Rural Healthcare Provider Recruitment, Retention
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158,000+
Record-breaking immunization booking
milestone achieved

Yesterday (June 10), we booked 158,092 immunization appointments, surpassing our record of 156,000 on May 10.

Congratulations and thank you to everyone who has contributed to this work. We couldn't do this without you.

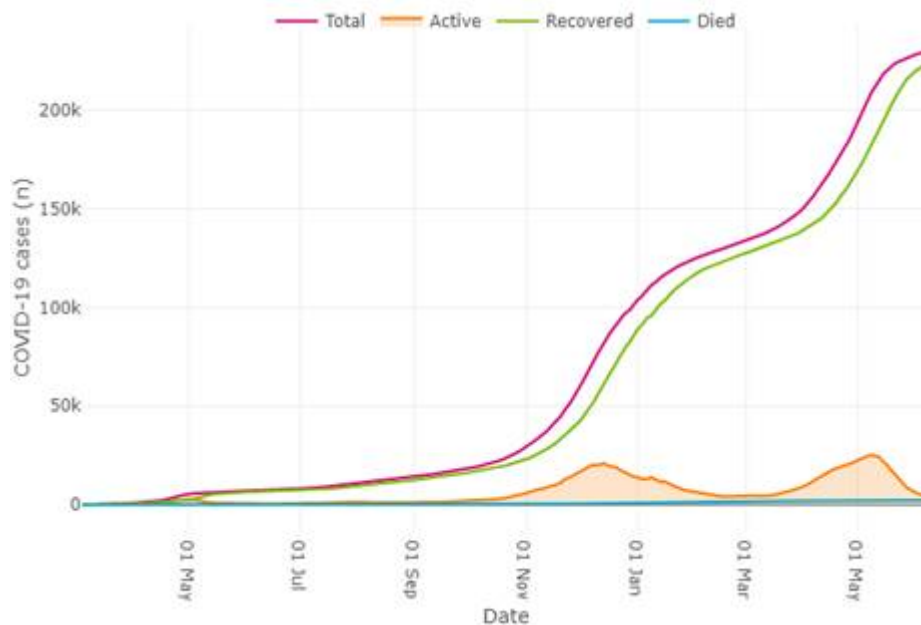
COVID-19 Status

This past week, Alberta's COVID-19 numbers continued to plummet, and the province entered Stage 2 of the Government of Alberta's reopening plan (see More Public Health Measures Eased below).

As of June 9, there were 3,810 active cases in Alberta — the lowest number of active cases since last October — with all five zones reporting steep decreases, as you can see in the table below.

	Active Cases (as of June 9)	Active Cases (as of June 2)	Per cent Change
Calgary	1,523	2,379	-36.0%
Edmonton	1,028	1,522	-32.5%
North	588	816	-27.9%
Central	496	745	-33.4%
South	174	367	-52.6%
Unknown	1	2	-50.0%
Total	3,810	5,831	-34.7%

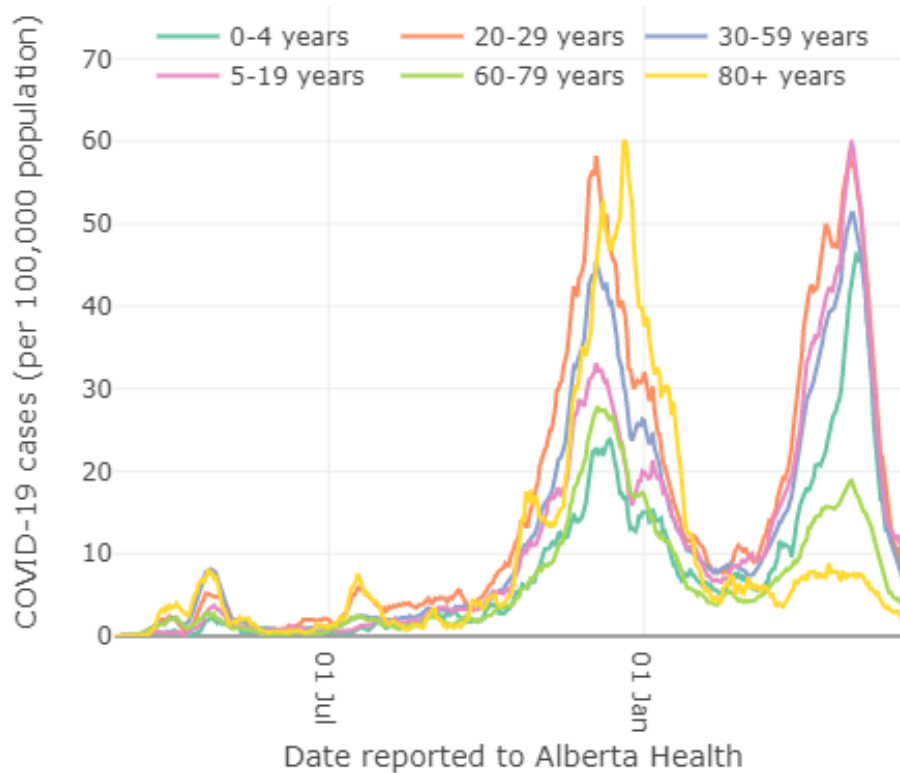
Alberta reported an average of 227 daily new cases for the seven-day period ending on June 9, a 37.6 per cent decrease from the previous week when there was an average of 364 daily new cases.



The Calgary Zone reported the most new cases this week with 641 but that still represents a 37.5 per cent decrease from the previous week, when 1,025 new cases were reported.

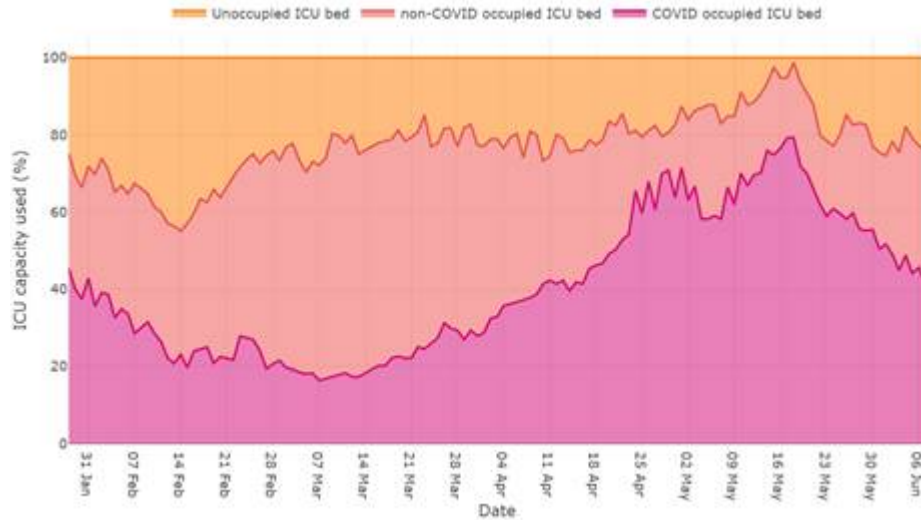
Cases by age group

Children aged 0-4 years had the highest seven-day rolling average rate of daily cases with 8.14 cases per 100,000 people, followed by school-aged children (5-19 years) with a rate of 7.14. Albertans 80 years of age and older had the lowest rate: 1.86 per 100,000 people. A visual representation of these trends in cases by age group is provided below.

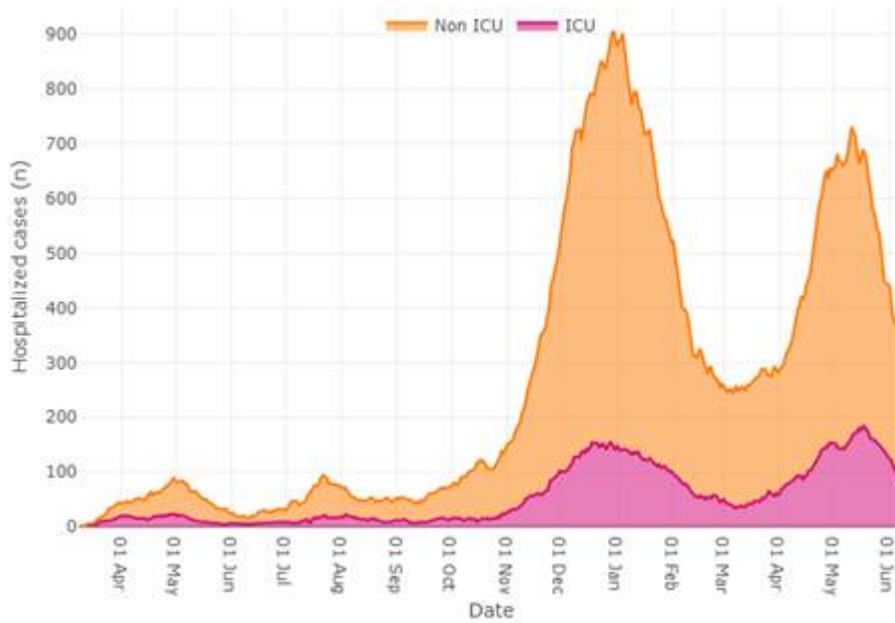


Hospitalizations and ICUs

On June 9, 81 individuals with COVID-19 were in ICU compared to 120 on June 2, a 32.5 per cent decrease. The most recent reporting — on June 7 — puts our ICU usage at 75.7 per cent, with 41.3 per cent of ICU beds occupied by a patient with COVID-19. The figure below shows ICU capacity in Alberta.



Also on June 9, 225 individuals with COVID-19 were in non-ICU hospital beds, compared to 292 on June 2, a 22.9 per cent decrease.



The table below shows hospitalization and ICU numbers by zone on June 9.

	Hospitalizations	ICUs
Calgary	129	33
Edmonton	98	34
Central	29	6
North	26	4
South	24	4

Variants of concern

On June 9, averaged over the previous seven days:

- 82.0 per cent of samples successfully screened was the B.1.1.7 (UK) variant
- 4.7 per cent of samples successfully screened was the P.1 (Brazil) variant
- 8.6 per cent of samples successfully screened was the B.1.617 (India) variant
- 0.3 per cent of samples successfully screened was the B.1.351 (South Africa) variant
- 1.2 per cent of total samples successfully screened were labelled as a presumptive variant.

Since this is a seven-day rolling average, the numbers may not sum to 100 per cent.

Other notable COVID-19-related information

- As of June 9, a total of 229,949 cases of COVID-19 have been detected in Alberta and a total of 9,484 individuals have been hospitalized, which amounts to 4.1 individuals for every 100 cases. In all, 223,877 Albertans have recovered from COVID-19.
- As of June 9, 2,262 individuals have passed away from COVID-19, including 26 over the seven-day period between June 3 and June 9. We extend our condolences to the families of these individuals, and to all who have lost loved ones from any cause during this time.
- From June 3 to June 9, 39,522 COVID-19 tests were completed, an average of 5,646 tests per day. During this period, the daily positivity ranged from 3.27 per cent to 4.47 per cent. As of June 9, a total of 4.58 million tests have been conducted and 2.15 million individuals have been tested.
- The R value, also known as the reproduction number, describes the ability of a disease to spread. It tells us the average number of people that someone with COVID-19 will infect. An R value of 1 means an infected person will infect one other person on average. Values below 1 mean transmission is decreasing; above 1, transmission is increasing. The provincewide R value from May 31 to June 6 was 0.74 whereas R value the previous week was 0.72.
- For the winter school term, as of June 9, AHS has confirmed 9,406 individuals with COVID-19 were present at schools while infectious or acquired the disease in the school setting. A total of 1,381 out of 2,415 schools (57.2 per cent) in the province have reported an individual has attended their school while infectious or had in-school transmission.

Things You Need to Know

COVID-19 Immunization Update

Second doses roll out to those who received their first shot in April

Alberta's COVID-19 immunization rollout expanded this week, as second doses are now available to all Albertans who received their first dose on or before April 30.

Appointments can be booked through ahs.ca/covidvaccine, through participating pharmacies and physician's offices, or by calling Health Link at 811.

Those who received an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna) as their first dose will receive an mRNA vaccine as their second dose. Those who received AstraZeneca/ Covishield as their first dose will be asked to choose to book their second dose with either AstraZeneca or an mRNA vaccine.

Everyone will need the date of their first immunization and type of vaccine they received when booking their second-dose appointment. Albertans have the option of booking second doses through either the same provider as the first dose, or elsewhere.

If you don't remember the date of your first dose or which vaccine you received, you can check the Care After Immunization sheet that was provided to you at the time of your immunization, or check [MyHealth Records](#). Health Link is also available to help at 811.

Family bookings now available for second-dose appointments

The AHS online booking tool has been updated and now allows eligible Albertans to book second-dose appointments for the same vaccine product at the same time for up to three additional family members. To book an appointment for family members, please select the 'Family Members' option on the online booking tool.

Second-dose immunization available for all acute care, LTC/DSL staff and physicians

All healthcare workers are eligible for a second-dose immunization if they are a staff member or physician working at an acute care, long-term care or designated supportive living site. This includes everyone who works full time, part time or casual.

These individuals don't need to have had a first dose on or before April 30 but must meet the minimum spacing requirements based on vaccine type. At this time, acute care and LTC/DSL staff and physicians can only book this second-dose appointment through Health Link (811) if their first dose was May 1 or later. A poster is available to use at acute care sites to remind staff to book their second dose appointment.

Staff and physicians are also reminded to complete the "[Got My COVID-19 Immunization Form](#)" after their final dose. Sites can also use this [poster](#) to remind staff to report their vaccine after receiving their second dose.

As a reminder, if you are fully immunized at the time you are exposed to someone with COVID-19, you do not have to quarantine providing you do not have symptoms. Please visit the [AHS website](#) for more details about quarantine for immunized close contacts.

First-dose appointments

All Albertans aged 12 and up who have not yet received their first dose are encouraged to receive their first dose as soon as possible. Visit ahs.ca/covidvaccine.

Walk-in clinics open for first-dose COVID-19 immunization

Albertans can now receive their first dose of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine without an appointment at walk-in clinics in 20 communities across the province. Full clinic details — including locations, dates and operating hours — are available [online](#). Albertans are asked to please bring their Alberta healthcare card if they have one, along with photo ID. Those attending a walk-in clinic will be required to wear a face mask and use hand sanitizer when visiting the site. Second doses are not available at these walk-in clinics.

Acute care immunization program expanded

All acute care inpatients should be considered for immunization during their hospital stay. This means all eligible patients born in 2009 or earlier should be educated about COVID-19 immunization and be immunized as soon as practically possible, if they wish.

Both first and second doses may be administered, and patients may be supported in booking their own immunization in the community after discharge if they prefer. Otherwise, immunization should be arranged before discharge. Eligible patients are also encouraged to discuss their options with their care provider to arrange immunization.

Acute care patients who have questions about their eligibility or about how to receive their COVID-19 immunization while in hospital are encouraged to reach out to their care provider.

Albertans adding out-of-province immunizations to their health records

Albertans are encouraged to submit their out-of-province COVID-19 immunization information to be entered into their formal health records. This ensures health records are fully up-to-date and provide an accurate record of who has been immunized.

If you've received any COVID-19 immunizations outside of Alberta, we ask you provide a copy of your immunization records to AHS Public Health. [Find an AHS Public Health office near you](#).

While the majority of Albertans have been immunized at a local AHS site, pharmacist or physician office, some have been immunized outside of the province. In order to reach our provincial target of 70 per cent immunization coverage for Albertans 12+, it is important to have an accurate record of who has been immunized.

People who received a first dose outside Alberta can get a second dose here when they are [eligible](#), and are asked to please bring the written record of their first dose with them to the appointment.

More Public Health Measures Eased

Yesterday (June 10), the Government of Alberta eased more public health measures as part of a three-phased plan to remove most restrictions this summer, providing

vaccination and hospitalization benchmarks are met. Yesterday's Stage 2 reopening changes measures related to restaurants, retail, personal and wellness services, gyms and fitness studios, social gatherings, places of worship, post-secondary learning and more. Visit the government website for details on the [Stage 2 reopening](#).

COVID-19 Testing for Healthcare Workers — The Latest Numbers

We continue to update the testing data for healthcare workers in the [AHS Healthcare Worker COVID-19 Testing dashboard](#). These statistics provide the total number of AHS and Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL) employees and physicians tested, including a breakdown of the number of positive tests and those who have been confirmed to have been exposed in the workplace.

As of June 8:

- 78,039 employees (AHS and APL combined) have been tested for COVID-19 and, of those tested, 5,847 (or 7.5 per cent) have tested positive.
- Of the 4,286 employees who have tested positive and whose source of infection has been determined, 571 (or 13.3 per cent) acquired their infection through a workplace exposure. An additional 1,561 employees who have tested positive are still under investigation as to the source of infection.
- 5,363 physicians (AHS and APL combined) have been tested for COVID-19 and, of those tested, 240 (or 4.5 per cent) have tested positive.
- Of the 186 physicians who have tested positive and whose source of infection has been determined, 19 (or 10.2 per cent) acquired their infection through a workplace exposure. An additional 54 physicians who have tested positive are still under investigation as to the source of infection.

For more information, see the AHS Healthcare Worker COVID-19 Testing [infographic](#) and [dashboard](#).

New COVID-19 Isolation/Quarantine Requirements for Vaccinated Inpatients

AHS' Acute Care Outbreak Prevention and Management Task Force has reviewed current practice and put forth the following guidance for management of admitted vaccinated patients in AHS facilities.

Updated quarantine recommendations for partially and fully immunized individuals who are close contacts of confirmed/probable COVID-19 cases will not apply to patients admitted to an acute care facility for greater than 23 hours. Current guidelines will remain in place for these patients regardless of their COVID-19 vaccination status.

Updates will be made to recommendations for ambulatory care and day surgery (less than 23 hours). Further discussion is occurring about high-risk patient groups in the ambulatory care setting (e.g., oncology, hemodialysis).

This guidance considers currently available scientific data related to forward transmission post-vaccination and current case counts and epidemiology throughout

the province in different settings. There is a higher risk of transmission and severe illness in vulnerable settings, such as acute care. Case-by-case patient assessment by Infection Prevention and Control will occur as needed (e.g., isolation capacity, individual patient needs, etc.). Quarantine recommendations in acute care will be re-assessed in six to eight weeks.

Be on the Lookout for Suspicious Items

We've been made aware of questionable items arriving by mail to AHS staff in Calgary. Each envelope contained a clipped-out article about how the lockdown is affecting small businesses.

Our Workplace Health and Safety, Emergency and Disaster Management, and Protective Services teams have been engaged. Appropriate steps have been taken to ensure the safety of our teams. All of the items collected have been sent to the Calgary Police Service for further analysis.

If you receive correspondence you are not expecting or receive mail that looks unusual in any way, please [do not open it](#) and alert the teams at [Workplace Health and Safety](#) and [Protective Services](#) in your zone immediately.

Your safety is our top priority and we take these matters seriously. If you have any questions or if you have other safety concerns, please talk to your leader.

Verna's Weekly Video Message — Rural Healthcare Provider Recruitment, Retention

Rural healthcare providers are incredibly important to their communities, providing quality care and enhancing the quality of life of their patients.

Working in a rural community often extends beyond the healthcare practice, involving strong connections and relationships with families, friends and neighbours in the community. We continue to recruit for physicians and healthcare providers across Alberta to meet the needs of our rural communities.

AHS has physician resource planners who identify and pursue physician recruitment opportunities. They work closely with various community partners and organizations, such as local Health Advisory Councils, the Rural Health Professions Action Plan, and independent physician recruitment and retention committees. To sustain and increase access to care for rural communities, we're also focusing on supporting the next generation of practitioners into rural practice.

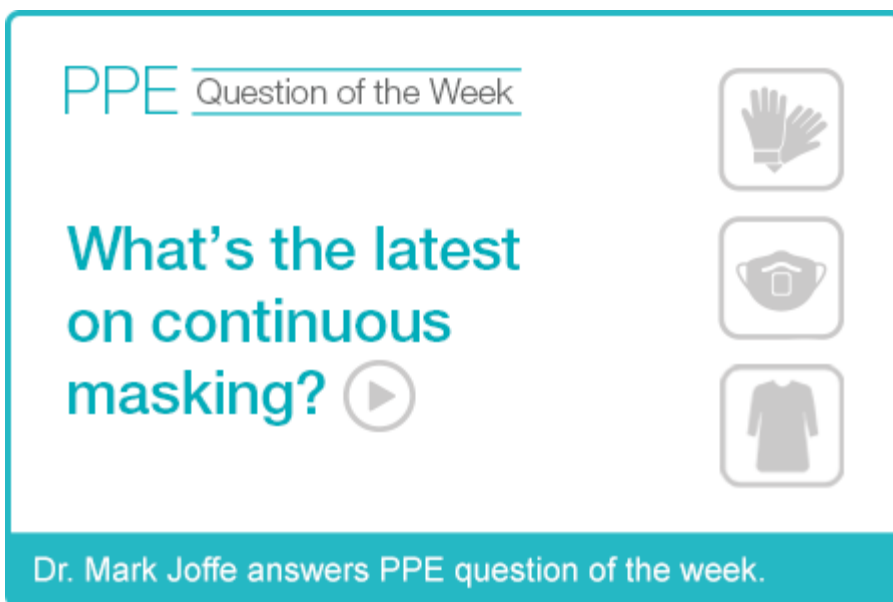
Joining us today to [tell us more about rural recruitment and retention](#) are:

- Dr. Brian Muir, North Zone Medical Director
- Fadumo Robinson, Associate Chief Nursing Officer & CoAct Collaborative Care, Health Professions Strategy & Practice



PPE Question of the Week — What’s the Latest on Continuous Masking?

As COVID-19 vaccines continue to roll out within AHS and across the province, the PPE Task Force has been receiving questions about how this might impact the need for continuous masking and continuous eye protection. In the latest [PPE Question of the Week](#), PPE Task Force Chair Dr. Mark Joffe explains the reasons continuous masking is still required, and also the specific circumstances in which continuous eye protection can be relaxed.



Previous videos in the PPE Question of the Week series are available on the PPE webpage at ahs.ca/covidppe.

Pride Drive Winds Through Edmonton

The second annual Pride Drive weaved its way through Edmonton on Wednesday, as part of AHS' Pride Month celebrations. About 40 AHS staff and community group members drove in as many as 20 vehicles — decked out in Pride colours — to nine AHS facilities between 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

“It was an incredible day for participants and colleagues at our sites and people across the city who came upon our convoy of rainbows,” says Marni Panas, Program Manager of Diversity and Inclusion. “This has been a tough year for so many. It was great to see so many smiles. We all need moments like this.”

During Pride Month, AHS is celebrating those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning and two spirit (LGBTQ2S+) and their allies.



Be Well - Be Kind

Coping with Change

As public health measures ease in phases, this period of transition might bring up mixed feelings. Some might be optimistic and excited; others stressed or worried. That's why it's important to keep mental health top of mind. Check in with [yourself](#) and [your colleagues](#). You can attend a [wellness seminar](#), make use of the [Employee and Family Assistance Program](#) (EFAP) or [boost your resilience](#) through this period of change.

Check the updated [Resilience Wellness and Mental Health Resource Guide](#) for a comprehensive list of services and supports, or contact wellness@ahs.ca.

Gratitude from Albertans

Everything you and your colleagues do every day to provide safe quality care to all Albertans is being noticed. Messages of gratitude keep coming in from across the

province and beyond during the COVID-19 pandemic. We want to share a few recent messages of gratitude with you — and you can see others on our [Sharing the Love](#) webpage on Insite.

I attended a COVID-19 vaccine clinic with my 12-year-old son. He has developed a needle phobia but also has asthma, so he wanted the vaccine even though he was a nervous wreck. The staff were so organized and so kind to him as we made our way through from registration to his turn with the nurse. He was visibly sweating and the nurse went slow with him to help him feel at ease. After his shot, he spent several minutes in surprised shock exclaiming how it didn't hurt and, instead of rushing him out, the nurse patiently chatted with him as his anxiety eased. It was an amazing gift to have such kind staff, and he is not as afraid for his second dose when the time comes.

— Cara

Had my vaccination and my son's vaccination. Just want to say thank you to all the staff who are working so hard in the vaccination area, as well as the staff in the drive-thru who are doing COVID-19 testing. You are all appreciated.

— Peter

Wrapping Up — Here Comes the Summer

We are now fewer than 10 days away from the start of summer — our second COVID-19 summer and hopefully our last. Like us, we suspect you're hoping that this summer will be a little more normal than the previous one, as the number of first- and second-dose vaccinations increase and protection against the virus is fortified. As we approach a time of warm weather and sunshine, we'd like to encourage all of you to take some time off over the next several weeks. Rest. Recharge. Put work aside. Get outside. (And get fully immunized, too!) We have all been working so hard for so long, taking care of patients, families and each other. But please find time to care for yourself and the people you love, too. We need you. You're all important members of our AHS Family. And we want you to do whatever it takes to be healthy and rested as we move into the latter half of the year. Thank you for everything you do every day. You are all truly inspiring.

With enduring gratitude and appreciation,

Dr. Verna Yiu

AHS President & CEO

Dr. Laura McDougall

Senior Medical Officer of Health

