



Message from Dr. Verna Yiu & Dr. Laura McDougall

AHS Update: Second dose bookings open for new cohort, AHS reaches milestone of 2M vaccine doses administered

Please print and share with your teams as needed

Dear staff, physicians and volunteers,

We would like to recognize that our work takes place on historical and contemporary Indigenous lands, including the territories of Treaties 6, 7 & 8, and the homeland of the Métis. We also acknowledge the many Indigenous communities that have been forged in urban centres across Alberta.

Today's Update

- COVID-19 Cases in Alberta
- COVID-19 Immunization Update
- Stage 3 to Commence on July 1
- Second Dose Bookings — New Cohort
- Online Immunization Record Submission
- COVID-19 Testing for Healthcare Workers — The Latest Numbers
- PPE Question of the Week – Continuous Masking and Eye Protection
- Verna's Weekly Video Message — Celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Month
- Changes to Available Lab Results in MyHealth Records/My Personal Records
- Sharing the Love
- Run for Women Supports Mental Health
- Gratitude from Albertans
- Wrapping Up — Sunshine and Celebration

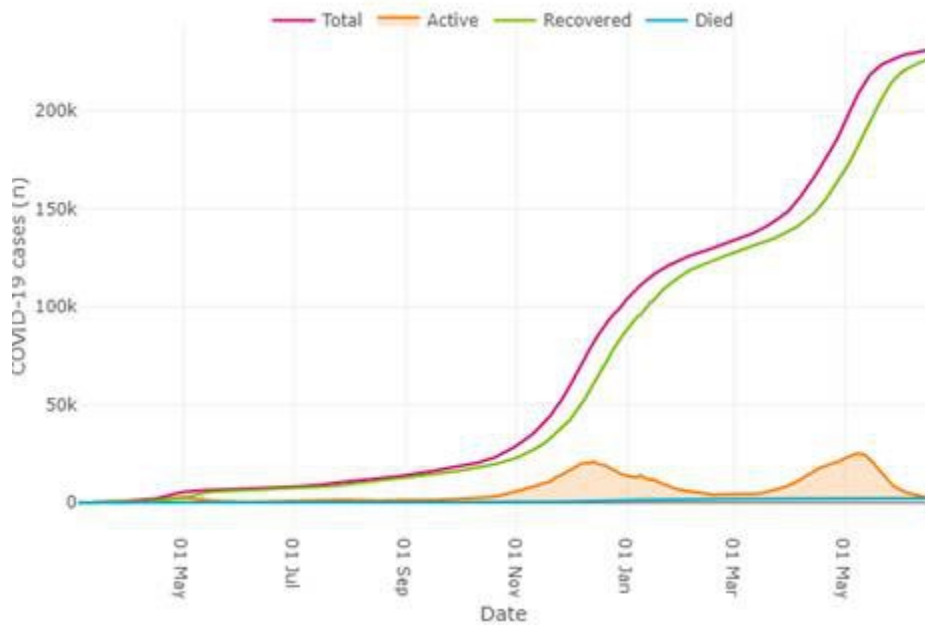
COVID-19 Status

This week again, COVID-19 rates and cases continue to trend downwards. There was an average of 153 new cases per day for the seven-day period ending on June 16, compared to 225 cases the previous week (June 3 to June 9), a 32.0 per cent decrease.

Again this week, all zones reported a decrease in active cases. For the twenty-third week in a row, the Calgary zone reported the most active cases with 1,078, however, that is still a decrease of 29.2 per cent over the previous week. The details for all zones are outlined in the table below.

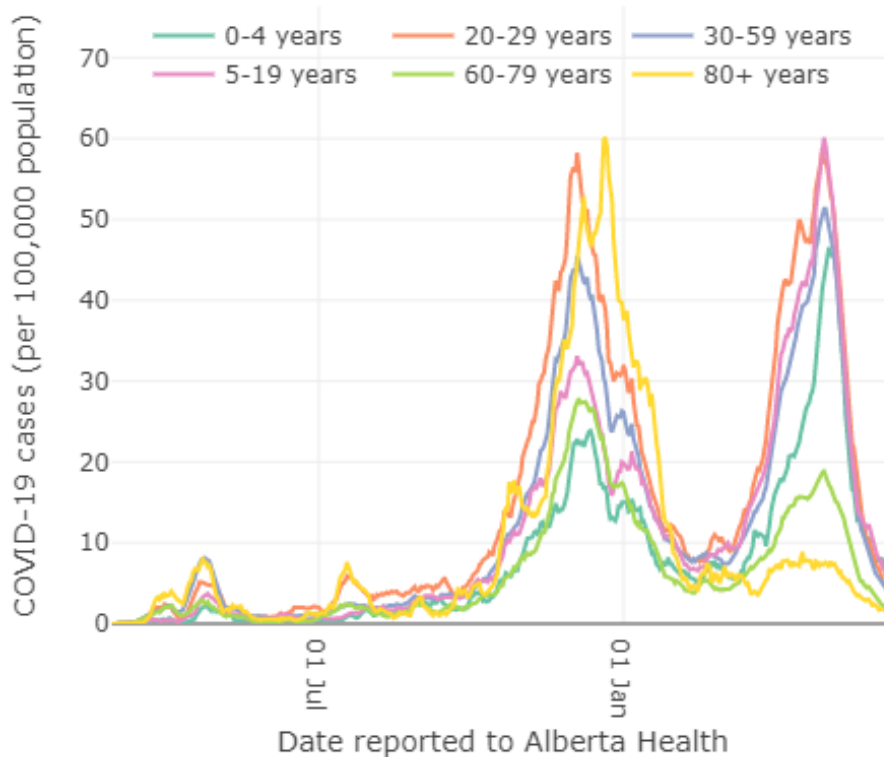
	Active Cases (as of June 16)	Active Cases (as of June 9)	Per cent Change
Calgary	1,078	1,523	-29.2%
Edmonton	535	1,028	-48.0%
North	486	588	-17.3%
Central	284	496	-42.7%
South	88	174	-49.4%
Unknown	0	1	-100%
Total	2,471	3,810	-35.1%

As of June 16, there are 2,471 active cases in Alberta, a 35.1 per cent decrease compared to June 9. For reference, in the first wave in Alberta, April 2020, active cases peaked at 2,932.



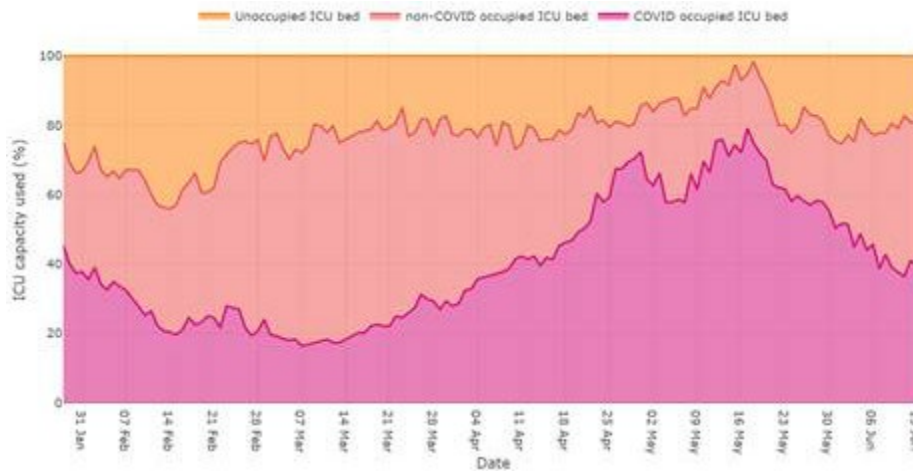
Cases by age group

On June 16, the age group with the highest seven-day rolling average of cases was school-aged children, ages 5-19, with 5.00 cases per 100,000 people. Those aged 80 years and older continue to have the lowest seven-day rolling average of cases at 1.14 per 100,000 people. A visual representation of these trends in cases in Alberta by age group is provided below.

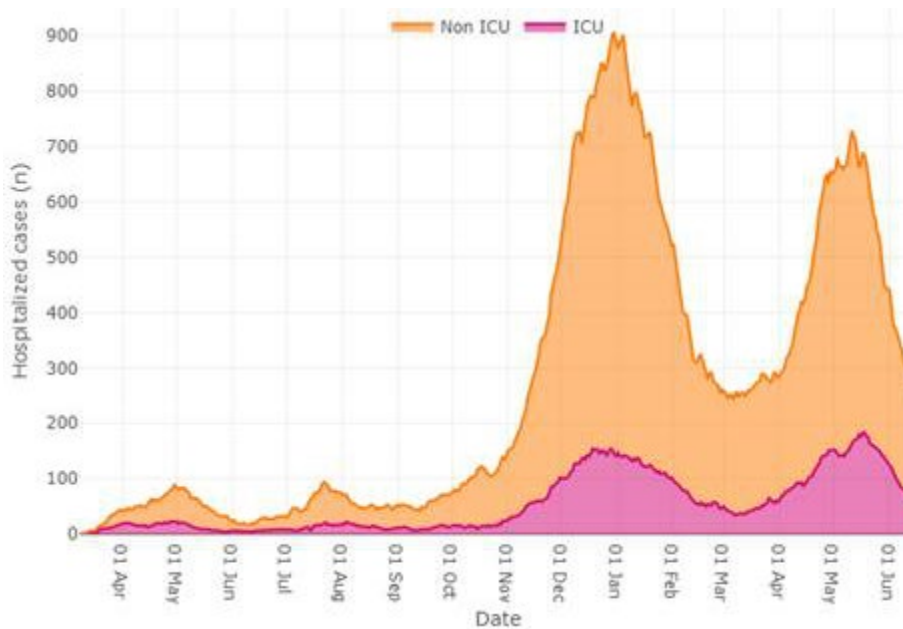


Hospitalizations and ICUs

On June 16, 58 individuals were in ICUs compared to 82 individuals in ICUs on June 9, a 29.3 per cent decrease. The most recent reporting on June 14 indicates our ICU usage is at 84.1 per cent, with 33.8 per cent of ICU beds being occupied by a COVID-19 patient. The figure below shows ICU capacity in Alberta.



A total of 184 individuals were in non-ICU hospital beds on June 16, compared to 231 individuals in non-ICU hospital beds on June 9, a 20.3 per cent decrease.



The table below shows hospitalization and ICU numbers by zone on June 16.

	Hospitalizations	ICUs
Calgary	116	28
Edmonton	61	19
Central	24	4
North	29	6
South	12	1

Variants of concern

For variants of concern, the lab is back to screening samples of all positive cases for variants and as a result the proportion of active cases that are variants is reportable once again. With the return to screening all positive cases, we may see the numbers below increase over the coming weeks. On June 16, the proportion of active cases which are known variants of concern was 72.7 per cent: 59.5 per cent of total samples successfully screened were the B.1.1.7 (UK) variant.

COVID-19 Variant	Proportion of Active Cases (June 16)
B.1.1.7 (UK) Variant	59.5%
B.1.351 (South African) Variant	0.2%
B.1.617 (India) Variant*	9.0%
P.1 (Brazilian) Variant	3.9%
Overall	72.7%

*Note: The B.1.617 variant can be sequenced as B.1.617.1, a variant of interest, and B.1.617.2, a variant of concern. Determining the complete sequence takes additional processing time

Other notable COVID-19-related information:

- As of June 16, a total of 231,008 cases of COVID-19 have been detected in Alberta and a total of 9,574 individuals have been hospitalized, which amounts to 4.1 individuals for every 100 cases. In all, 226,257 Albertans have recovered from COVID-19.
- As of June 16, 2,280 Albertans have passed away from COVID-19, including 18 individuals between June 10 to June 16. 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 10 to June 16, 38,509 COVID-19 tests were completed, an average of 5,501 tests per day. During this period, the daily positivity ranged from 2.16 per cent to 3.86 per cent. As of June 16, a total of 4.62 million tests have been conducted and 2.16 million individuals have ever 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 June 7 to June 13 was 0.76 whereas R value the previous week was 0.74.

- For the winter school term, as of June 16, AHS has confirmed 9,521 individuals with COVID-19 were present at schools while infectious or acquired the disease in the school setting. A total of 1,388 out of 2,415 schools (57.5 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

Stage 3 to Commence on July 1

Today, the Government of Alberta announced that with 70.2 per cent of eligible Albertans having been vaccinated with at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine as of June 17, Alberta will move to Stage 3 on July 1 and fully reopen, removing nearly all mandatory restrictions. This means that as of July 1:

- All remaining restrictions will be lifted, including the ban on indoor social gatherings.
- Isolation requirements for confirmed cases of COVID-19 and protective measures in continuing care settings may remain.
- The general indoor provincial mask mandate will be lifted, but masking may still be required in limited and specific settings.

More details about the Stage 3 plans and today's announcement, can be found [here](#).

Second Doses – New Cohort

Today, Alberta's COVID-19 immunization rollout expanded to include more Albertans. Anyone who has had a first dose of vaccine 28 days ago or longer is now eligible to book their second dose.

Albertans who had their first dose of vaccine with either Pfizer or Moderna (mRNA) can book through the AHS online booking tool, through local pharmacies, or by calling 811. Anyone who booked their first appointment with either Pfizer or Moderna (both are mRNA vaccines) can book their second dose with the same product, or the alternative mRNA product.

Albertans who had a first dose with the AstraZeneca vaccine can call Health Link at 811 to book an appointment for a second dose of AstraZeneca, or an mRNA vaccine. Second dose appointments for those who received AstraZeneca can no longer be made through pharmacies or the online booking tool.

While a second dose of AstraZeneca can be provided as early as 28 days after the

first dose, we encourage Albertans to wait a minimum of eight weeks between doses to ensure best effectiveness with this vaccine product.

Two doses of any of the COVID-19 vaccines available in Alberta is considered a complete, safe and protective vaccine series.

Everyone will need the date of their first immunization and type of vaccine they received when booking their second dose appointment.

For all Albertans who have not yet received a first dose and were born in 2009 or earlier, we encourage you to book your first dose as soon as possible.

Thank you to all who have been immunized and continue to follow public health guidelines as we continue to roll out first and second doses, provincewide.

Online Immunization Record Submission for Out-of-country and Out-of-province Immunizations

Starting today, AHS is offering a fast and easy way for Albertan's to add to their health records any out-of-province and out-of-country COVID-19 immunizations they've received.

Individuals who have received any COVID-19 immunizations outside of the province, or outside of the country are now able to submit that information to be added to their health records through a new, secure, web-based portal, available at ahs.ca/vaccineregistry.

People can submit out-of-province or out-of-country immunization records on behalf of themselves or their child/youth under 18 years of age.

Submitted records will be reviewed by AHS, and verified submission information will be available within two to three weeks on the person's [MyHealth Records](#) account. If someone is unable to access the online portal, a copy of the immunization record can also be brought to an AHS Public Health Clinic.

Only doses of vaccines considered acceptable by Alberta Health and given at appropriate spacing intervals will be entered as valid in a person's record.

Individuals with questions about vaccine products and COVID-19 immunization can visit our [vaccine FAQ](#), or call Health Link 811.

Submitting out-of-province and out-of-country immunization records ensures Albertan's health records are fully up-to-date. It also provides an accurate record of who has been immunized.

If you have already submitted your out-of-province or out-of-country COVID-19

immunization records to an AHS Public Health Clinic you do not need to upload them through the portal.

Individuals who have received only one dose outside of Alberta are also asked to bring a written record of their first dose when they are eligible to receive their second dose.

First dose appointments continue to be available, and anyone who has not booked one is asked to do so as soon as possible by visiting ahs.ca/covidvaccine.

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 15:

- 78,190 employees (AHS and APL combined) have been tested for COVID-19 and, of those tested, 5,868 (or 7.50 per cent) have tested positive.
- Of the 4,405 employees who have tested positive and whose source of infection has been determined, 579 (or 13.1 per cent) acquired their infection through a workplace exposure. An additional 1,463 employees who have tested positive are still under investigation as to the source of infection.
- 5,371 physicians (AHS and APL combined) have been tested for COVID-19 and, of those tested, 240 (or 4.47 per cent) have tested positive.
- Of the 187 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 53 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.

PPE Question of the Week — Continuous masking and eye protection

As communicated last week, AHS will continue to keep the [continuous masking directive](#) in place, while providing more flexibility for fully immunized healthcare workers regarding eye protection. A [memo with FAQs](#) was sent to zone emergency operation centres across the province this week, to help ensure understanding, clarity and consistency across all zones.

For more information on continuous masking and the use of eye protection, visit the [PPE webpage](#). [Guidelines for continuous mask and eye protection](#) in Home Care and Congregate Living Settings is also available on [Insite](#).

For other questions regarding these guidelines, please visit our [PPE FAQs](#) or reach out to the PPE Task Force at ppe@ahs.ca



The graphic features the text 'PPE Question of the Week' at the top left. Below it, the main question 'What's the latest on continuous masking?' is displayed in a large, bold font, followed by a play button icon. To the right of the text are three icons: a pair of gloves, a face mask, and a long-sleeved gown. At the bottom, a teal banner contains the text 'Dr. Mark Joffe answers PPE question of the week.'

Verna's Weekly Vlog: Celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Month

At AHS, everything we do is driven by our goal to ensure that patients and families receive the best possible healthcare experiences. This includes understanding the unique cultural needs and perspectives of everyone we serve, including the more than 220,000 Indigenous people in this province.

Throughout National Indigenous Peoples Month, we are celebrating the strength and resilience of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people by highlighting some great work taking place throughout the organization.

One silver lining of the pandemic has been the development of some great partnerships between Indigenous communities and organizations, and AHS that we hope to continue to foster into the future. While we know we have a lot of work to do, we have seen what is possible when we work together.

With me (Verna) today to [discuss what they have learned and experienced while working with Indigenous peoples and communities throughout pandemic](#) are:

- Dr. Esther Tailfeathers, Senior Medical Director, Indigenous Wellness Core
- Dr. Alike Lafontaine, an anesthesiologist from Grande Prairie who is the newly appointed and first Indigenous President of the Canadian Medical Association.



Monday, June 21, is National Indigenous Peoples Day. I encourage you to join our [virtual events](#) to celebrate and honour Indigenous peoples in Canada. Visit [Together4Health](#) to learn how you can participate.

Changes to available Lab Results in MyHealth Records/My Personal Records

Effective June 15, 2021, lab tests for microbiology and blood bank will be released immediately to Alberta Health's MyHealth Records (MHR), in the My Personal Records (MPR) application. This change is part of Alberta Health's rollout of expanded result release, which began in February 2021, to provide Albertans with more access to their health information.

Once the changes are in place, new MPR users will see an 18-month retrospective view of any lab results slated for release. Existing MPR users will not have labs added retroactively, but they will be able to see the expanded lab results moving forward.

As is the standard practice, Connect Care releases these lab test results to MyAHS Connect. What's new is that as of June 15, 2021, these specific lab test results will also be released immediately to [MyAHS Connect](#), instead of being delayed by five days as they were previously. This means that patients will have immediate access to more of their own lab results and may have questions for their healthcare providers about them. As part of the overall rollout plan, Alberta Health is planning to release additional lab test results to MPR in the coming months. We will provide more details regarding the next planned release as we have them.

Alberta Health is providing support to Albertans through the [MyHealth.Alberta.ca](#) website and a 24-hour telephone line at 1-844-401-4016. Albertans can also call HealthLink at 811 for health-related inquiries.

Be Well - Be Kind

Upcoming Run for Women Supports Mental Health

As many of us look forward to the easing of public health measures, it is also a time to pause and reflect on the impact this pandemic has had on our lives and the lives of others. Many of us have experienced an impact on our mental health, and so it is especially important that we take this summer to rest, rejuvenate and do activities that bring us joy.

That is why we are excited to share that the nationwide [2021 Run for Women](#) held by Shoppers Drug Mart is taking place virtually July 4-11. This is a great opportunity to get outside, enjoy the company of friends and loved ones, while also supporting an important cause — women's mental health. All funds raised in Alberta from this year's run will support the Women's Mental Health Clinic in Calgary through the Calgary Health Foundation and women's mental health programs at the Lois Hole Hospital for Women in Edmonton through the Royal Alexandra Hospital Foundation.

If you are interested in participating, we encourage you to create a team, or sign up as an individual at runforwomen.ca. When you register for the Edmonton or Calgary run, you can also take advantage of the special discount code WEAREAHS to receive \$5 off registration. Since the run is virtual, you do not need to live in these city to participate; simply select the city closest to you.

Sharing the Love

AHS congratulates Dale Weiss, Executive Director, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Provincial Operations on being elected President of the Paramedic Chiefs of Canada. Dale has been with AHS EMS for over 33 years and brings a wealth of experience, knowledge and leadership skills to this high profile national position. Dale has previously served six years as Vice President with the Paramedic Chiefs of Canada. We are proud of you as you represent and lead Alberta's paramedics through this important role.

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 recent message of gratitude with you — and you can see others on our [Sharing the Love webpage](#).

I want to say a huge thank you to Tammy, one of the Registered Nurses in the 811 Call Center. On June 6th, I called 811 to clarify what the quarantine restrictions were following being notified that my Covid test was negative. Tammy was so pleasant, taking time to answer my questions and clarify information I had been given at the time of testing. I know she was busy, but she even directed me to the appropriate location on the AHS website so that I

could see a printed copy of the information she was telling me about. In this time of Covid when many tempers are short it was a breath of fresh air to have Tammy answer my questions in such a professional and also friendly manner. Thank you to all the 811 nurses who work so hard to keep us informed.

— Jan

I am so grateful to the community EMS staff who assisted with my father's health needs in Edmonton recently. They were so kind, knowledgeable and proficient at what they did. They are a valuable team and deserve high fives for their care and concern.

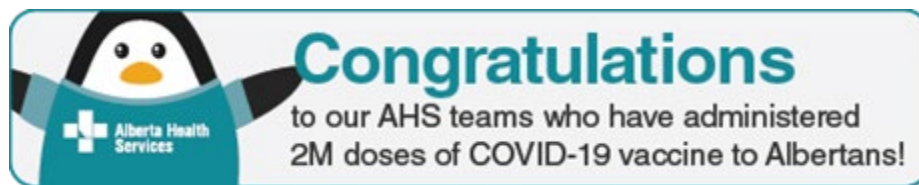
— Ingrid

Thank you all for hard work and resiliency in dealing with COVID-19 unit outbreak! You guys are awesome!

— Anonymous

Wrapping Up

The future feels brighter as we enter Stage 3 of the plan to re-open Alberta. The periods of warm sunshine we've experienced across the province over the past week have also served to lighten the burden of this pandemic and finally, as we've surpassed the 70 per cent vaccination rate in the province, it seems an end to these overwhelming months of fighting is in sight. We've reached a significant milestone as the two millionth dose of COVID-19 vaccine was administered by AHS teams today.



We are also seeing hospitalization and ICU numbers continue to decline - another beaming ray of hope in this year-and-a-half-long journey. You can celebrate these accomplishments with the knowledge that you have given your very best for Albertans, under the most trying of circumstances.

Although community COVID-19 restrictions are easing, the risks to Alberta's most vulnerable remain real. COVID-19 will remain with us and we must continue to exercise caution to protect our patients, staff, healthcare facilities, families, friends and communities, but overall indications are that we can finally start to look ahead with confidence and optimism that the worst is behind us. AHS will be looking to gradually reduce our restrictions as community COVID-19 infections decrease and more Albertans are immunized, but this will be at a slower pace than in other areas in order to protect patients who are often the most vulnerable to the virus.

We hope you can find time in the summery days ahead this week to reflect on all you have done and revel in a well-earned sense of satisfaction that the care you provide and support across our province is second to none.

With enduring gratitude and appreciation,

Dr. Verna Yiu

AHS President & CEO

Dr. Laura McDougall

Senior Medical Officer of Health

