

CDA COVID-19 UPDATE



A Message for CDA Stakeholders

Below is a snapshot of the Canadian Dental Association's (CDA) pandemic-related work for the week ending June 18, 2021. CDA's next update is anticipated for September 24, 2021.

Fast Facts: Current COVID-19 Situational Report

Dr. Aaron Burry, CDA's COVID-19 Team Lead and Deputy CEO - Professional Affairs, provides a video update to the Presidents and CEOs of CDA's Corporate Member provincial dental associations (PDAs) on COVID-19 pandemic trends, case growth and the administration of COVID-19 vaccines in Canada and across the world.



Video Length: 11 minutes. Recorded: June 15, 2021.

Summary points:

- There has been a decline in COVID-19 case growth across the globe.
- Due to vaccinations ramping up, hard lockdowns and individuals maintaining social distancing, Canada is now at the lowest number of case growth since

- September 2020. Dr. Burry compares case growth and hospitalizations from April 2021 to June 2021 to demonstrate the downward trend.
- Despite this good news, it remains critical that individuals remain vigilant to avoid contracting the virus regardless of having been vaccinated or not against COVID-19. Vigilance includes getting vaccinated, wearing masks and social distancing.
 - Maintaining safety precautions should continue until a greater proportion of Canadians have received their second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, which is anticipated to occur later this Fall. It will be some time before a declaration of the end of the pandemic is anticipated. Full vaccination is the only way forward.

Implications for dentistry:

- Dr. Burry discusses recently released research on the Delta variant from the United Kingdom (UK). The UK experience indicates that the Delta variant is twice as transmissible and results in twice the number of hospitalizations, compared to the previous UK variant.
- In Canada, approximately 16% of cases are now associated with the Delta variant. Current trends indicate that “the Delta” is rapidly becoming the dominant strain, and that individuals who are not vaccinated are at high risk of contracting it. “The Delta” has indicators of being more serious, and is affecting younger, healthy individuals. Experience shows that if an individual is not vaccinated “the Delta will find you.”
- The good news is that vaccinations are working. Double vaccinations provide an added level of protection. There is evidence of recurrent illness and outbreaks across communities; however, these tend to be moderate, mild or individuals being asymptomatic.
- It is important for dentists and their staff to maintain discussions with patients about the importance of getting vaccinated. As a reminder, CDA has developed a resource package for Corporate Members to help dentists address vaccine hesitancy with individuals. The package includes office posters, suggested talking points on a range of COVID-19 vaccine related topics, digital/printable factsheets – all of which are good conversation starters. Corporate Members are encouraged to continue promoting the package of materials to their member dentists, as deemed appropriate.
- Dental office staff must remain hyper vigilant in their personal lives, when presenting to the office for work, and when in non-clinical/common areas inside the office. Corporate Members are also encouraged to continue promoting the “*Being Vigilant Inside and Outside the Op!*” poster series and talking points to member dentists.

CDA’s areas of focus over the coming months:

- To date, dentistry has demonstrated that dental offices can offer care safely and that infection prevention and control (IPAC) practices are effective, allowing oral health care provision during the pandemic.

- CDA’s next steps involve getting prepared for the Fall as outbreaks should be anticipated in areas of low vaccination. There is a current national media push from the Federal Government, and Provincial Governments are also launching their respective campaigns to encourage more individuals to get fully vaccinated (2 doses). CDA will continue to stress the importance of **full** vaccination for **all** dentists and staff in Canada, and promote getting vaccinated on its corporate social media channels.
- CDA anticipates that there will be forthcoming updates IPAC protocols across the country and related to dentistry. The lead on these updates will likely come from the long-term care (LTC) sector. CDA will communicate further updates as information becomes available.



Left: A preview of one of the new posters included in CDA’s resource package called Sleeve Up: Addressing COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy. Colours and text may vary as PDAs may adapt the materials for use by their member dentists.

Right: A preview of one poster in CDA’s Be Vigilant Inside and Outside the Op! series. Colours and text may vary as Corporate Member provincial dental associations may have adapted the materials for use by their member dentists. Dentists should be encouraged to use the posters and to discuss the importance of being vigilant with their staff.

New! COVID-19 Webinar: COVID-19 Variants and Vaccines

This moderated and live webinar includes a presentation and discussion on the national surveillance measures and effects of vaccines on variants, internationally and in Canada,

with live Q&A to inform health care and vaccine providers. This webinar is hosted by the National Collaborating Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCCID), in collaboration with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC).

Presentation highlights:

- Identify the national surveillance systems that detect and track SARS-CoV2 variants, including variants of concern (VOCs) in Canada
- Discuss key findings on vaccine efficacy and effectiveness against VOCs, internationally and in Canada
- Summarize how predictive epidemiological models can inform Canadian forecasts and response to SARS-CoV2

English event:

June 23, 2021

12:00pm-1:00 pm EDT

Register: [Click here](#)

French event:

June 28, 2021

12:00pm-1:00 pm EDT

Register: [Click here](#)

Moderator for English event: Dr. David Alexander, PhD, Assistant Professor, University of Manitoba, Max Rady College of Medicine, Department of Medical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases

Presenters for English event:

- Dr. Gary Van Domeselaar, PhD, Head Bioinformatics, National Microbiology Laboratory, Public Health Agency of Canada
- Dr. Victoria Ng, PhD, Senior Scientist, Public Health Risk Sciences Division, National Microbiology Laboratory, Public Health Agency of Canada
- Eva Wong, MPH, Senior Epidemiologist, Public Health Agency of Canada
- Lindsay Whitmore, MHSc, Manager COVID-19 Epidemiology and Surveillance, Public Health Agency of Canada

Please note, due to time limitations, not all questions can be answered. The same webinar will be presented in English and in French. The webinars will be recorded and available on the NCCID website shortly following each event. For any registration difficulties, please contact NCCID: nccid@umanitoba.ca

CDA Advocacy and Federal Government Announcements

Update: Budget 2021 – Small Business Tax Provisions: The 2021 Federal Budget includes provisions which allow for the immediate expensing of some capital costs incurred by some small businesses. This responds to a recommendation made by CDA in its pre-budget submission.

Since the existing proposal has some drawbacks, the CDA has reached out to federal officials to encourage them to amend the proposal in a way that better, and more fairly, supports dental offices having made significant investments in maintain the safest possible dental care environments for patients and staff through COVID-19. The implementation of these measures was not included in Bill C-30, the government's first Budget Implementation Act.

CDA anticipates that the Department of Finance will consult on these and other tax measures included in Budget 2021 over the summer, and the results will be included in a second Budget Implementation Act in the Fall. CDA will ensure to provide feedback to finance officials as part of any consultations on these measures. Additionally, in the event of an election interrupting the Fall sitting of Parliament, CDA will encourage the government to continue moving forward with these important supports.

New! HEAL: Organizations for Health Action – Meeting with Canada's Minister of Health: CDA is a member of the HEAL (Organizations for Health Action Coalition), founded in 1991. The Coalition consists of roughly 40 national health organizations who have dedicated to help improve the health of Canadians and the quality of care they receive.

At a meeting of member organizations earlier this month, HEAL hosted the Hon. Patty Hajdu, Canada's Minister of Health, for an hour-long discussion which focused on the post-pandemic recovery and how to be better prepared for future pandemics or health emergencies.

Minister Hajdu outlined the investments in Budget 2021 of a \$4 billion top-up to the Canada Health Transfer for provincial and territorial health systems, \$1 billion to fund COVID-19 immunization campaigns, and a longer-term \$3 billion investment for improvements to long-term care for seniors. The conversation also touched on the topics of burnout among health workers, managing the backlog of procedures postponed due to COVID-19, and the challenges faced when trying to establish consistent health and safety guidelines across provinces and territories.

Minister Hajdu noted that given the success and cost reductions seen by the Federal Government once it began bulk-buying necessary materials and equipment on the international market (rather than letting provinces and territories do so individually), this may be a way to make longer-term improvements to health care in Canada, including driving down costs. CDA will report further updates, as new information becomes available.

Knowledge and Information Broker:

[CDA Oasis](#) is CDA's primary channel of communication for delivering urgent information to the dental community during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following discussions have been recorded since CDA's last COVID-19 update. Be sure to check these out:

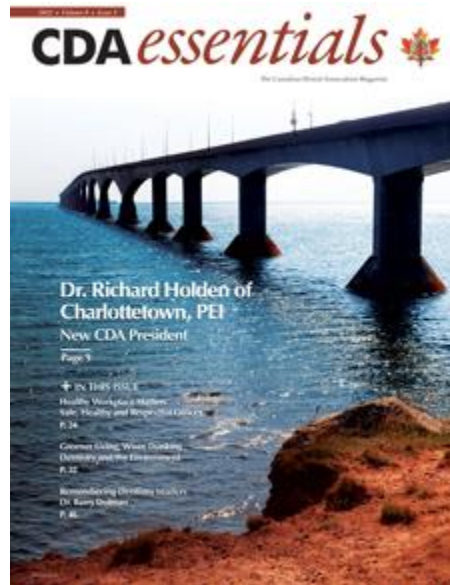
- [COVID-19 Update – How Effective are Vaccines?:](#)
Dr. Mark Donaldson gives a well-informed overview of the vaccination effort so far, including key metrics on efficacy rates, the durability of individual vaccines, and the effectiveness of vaccines against variants. He also touches upon the potential benefits of heterologous vaccination. [Download](#) a copy of Dr. Donaldson's PowerPoint in PDF format. **(June 17, 2021)**
- [The Legality of Mandating COVID-19 Vaccines in the Dental Practice:](#)
In this series of short, informative videos, Ms. Raquel Chisolm, an employment and labour law expert from Emond Harnden LLP, unpacks this complex and multilayered issue. **(June 14, 2021)**
- [Dental Biofilm of Symptomatic COVID-19 Patients Shelters SARS-CoV-2:](#)
The present study aimed to investigate the presence of SARS-CoV-2 RNA in the dental biofilm of symptomatic patients who tested positive in nasopharyngeal and oropharyngeal samples. Dr. Sabrina Carvalho Gomes speaks about the study and its findings. **(June 14, 2021)**
- [Aerosols Modification with Hydrogen Peroxide Reduces Airborne Contamination by Dental Handpieces:](#)
Dr. Andrei Ionescu presents key findings from his recently published paper *Aerosols Modification with H₂O₂ reduces airborne contamination by dental handpieces*. **(May 28, 2021)**
- [Sources of SARS-Cov-2 and Other Microorganisms in Dental Aerosols:](#)
Dr. Purnima Kumar walks through the methodology and key findings of her study, and suggests that based on the initial evidence, dental aerosols are not a primary source of the COVID-19 virus carried in the saliva. **(May 26, 2021)**
- [A Proposed Oral-Vascular-Pulmonary Route of COVID-19 Infection:](#)
Dr. Shervin Molayem talks about his recently published article on a new COVID-19 systemic transfer pathway. The article aims to present a hypothesis on a vascular route of transfer of SARS-CoV-2 from the oral cavity to the lungs. **(May 21, 2021)**

This week's **CDA Oasis Bulletin** collated relevant and timely "[news that you can use](#)" related to COVID-19.

New! CDA Essentials, Issue 3 is available [online](#). Here are some of the edition's highlights pertaining to the pandemic:

- [Your COVID-19 Questions Answered](#)

- [Dentists' Experiences as Vaccinators](#)



Click image to access CDA Essentials, Issue 3, 2021

Mental Health and Wellness:

Mental health is more than the absence of a mental health condition or illness: it is a positive sense of well-being, or the capacity to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face.

The Members' Assistance Program (MAP) is available: Individuals can access mental health and wellness support by calling CDSPI's Members' Assistance Program (MAP) at **1.844.578.4040** or visiting www.workhealthlife.com. MAP provides a variety of resources to help individuals deal with life's challenges. It is a confidential counselling, referral and information service for individuals who are dealing with mental health challenges or need advice on topics such as physical fitness, nutrition or parenting. MAP services and resources are offered through Shepell, Canada's largest provider of Employee and Family Assistance Programs.

Check out this tip sheet for [10 things you can do right now to reduce anxiety, stress, worry related to COVID-19.](#)



Free counselling, referral and information service for dentists, dental office employees, and their families.

COVID-19 Practice Recovery Task Force (“The Task Force”):

The Practice Recovery Task Force includes representatives from all Corporate Member provincial dental associations (PDAs). The Task Force continues to meet and work together to discuss deliverables for:

1. information exchange on return-to-practice status across the country;
2. strategies for obtaining and securing PPEs; and
3. communications to the public on dentists returning to practice.

Ongoing: Mental Health in the Workplace. Safeguarding your mental health and overall wellness is important - especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Task Force continues to coordinate the evaluation of a short course on mental health in the workplace from the Mental Health Commission of Canada to see if there would be value in adapting this for dentistry. More information to follow this Fall.

Any specific expectations or special requests of the Task Force should be fed forward by Corporate Member PDAs to their PDA member Task Force representative.

Beware of Phishing Scams:

Over the last few weeks, there has been an increase in COVID-19-related and other phishing scams targeting both large and small businesses. Examples of these scams tempt users:

- to buy face masks and other PPE;
- with phony medical cures; and/or
- to give up personal bank or government login credentials to access federal funds as part of Canada's COVID-19 Federal Economic Response Plan or other financial programs.

Please visit CDA's website for [tips on how to spot phishing emails](#). Remember, be vigilant when opening or responding to emails. It's smart to avoid advertisements seeking to take advantage of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic or other trending events.

CDA continues to actively promote these tips via social media. Corporate Members are encouraged to like and share these posts to help create a greater awareness on the matter, and/or to repurpose content from the [CDA webpage](#) to promote to member dentists, as deemed appropriate.



Reminder: LEXI-COMP Being Phased Out:

CDA has noticed a steady decline in the number of individuals using the CDA Edition of the LEXI-COMP drug information database. CDA statistics showed that less than 8% of individuals access LEXI-COMP on a regular basis. Therefore, LEXI-COMP is being phased out on **November 23, 2021**.

Many dentists are now accessing information from other credible sources that are readily available on the Internet. Try search terms such as “free drug interaction checker” or “free drug database” to find similar tools. Alternatively, simply enter the name of the drug in a search engine (e.g., Google) to obtain links to a variety of sources of information about a drug.

The CDA COVID-19 Response Team works diligently on a range of fronts to help minimize and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the dental profession. CDA is working to address scientific, clinical, economic and business-related matters impacting dentistry, including efforts to increase awareness about the mental health and wellness of dentists, their families and dental office employees during these challenging times. CDA will communicate regular updates as new information becomes available.



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