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To: gphin / rmisp (PHAC/ASPC)
Subject: GPHIN Daily Report (01 September 2020)
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Good morning,

Please find below the daily Summary and articles collected by GPHIN for your review and risk assessment.

GPHIN Daily Report Email Summary

Special Section on Coronavirus

[Canada \(Update\) - Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) Outbreak \(Official\)](#)

As of 31 August 2020 at 19:00 EDT, a total of 128,948 cases have been recorded in Canada including 9,126 deaths. The cases are reported in Newfoundland and Labrador (269 confirmed cases, 3 deaths), Prince Edward Island (44 confirmed cases), Nova Scotia (1,085 confirmed cases, 65 deaths), New Brunswick (191 confirmed cases, 2 deaths), Quebec (62,492 confirmed cases, 5,760 deaths), Ontario (42,309 confirmed cases, 2,811 deaths), Manitoba (1,214 confirmed cases, 14 deaths), Saskatchewan (1,619 confirmed cases, 24 deaths), Alberta (13,902 confirmed cases, 239 deaths), British Columbia (5,790 confirmed cases, 208 deaths), Yukon (15 confirmed cases), Northwest Territories (5 confirmed cases), Nunavut (0 confirmed case), and repatriated travellers (13 confirmed cases). A detailed [epidemiological summary](#) is available. The risk will vary between and within communities, but given the increasing number of cases in Canada, the risk to Canadians is considered [high](#).

[International \(Update\) - Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) Outbreak \(Media\)](#)

As of 01 September 2020, 11:46 GMT, there were 25,644,096 cases of COVID-19 and 855,378 deaths reported globally. Top 10 countries with the highest number of cases, by alphabetical order are: Argentina (417,735 cases, 8,660 deaths), Brazil (3,910,901 cases, 121,515 deaths); Colombia (615,168 cases, 19,663 deaths); India (3,694,878 cases, 65,469 deaths); Mexico (599,560 cases, 64,414 deaths); Peru (652,037 cases, 28,944 deaths); Russia (1,000,048 cases, 17,299 deaths); South Africa (627,041 cases, 14,149 deaths); Spain (462,858 cases, 29,094 deaths); United States (6,212,174 cases, 187,742 deaths).

Canada – Coronavirus disease (COVID -19) Outbreaks and Outcomes (Official and Media)

- On 31 August 2020, [Prime Minister announced new measures to ensure the supply of future vaccines and therapies against COVID-19](#) and announced that agreements in principle have been reached with Johnson & Johnson and Novavax to procure millions of doses of experimental COVID-19 vaccines. These agreements add to those already reached with Pfizer and Moderna, which were made following the recommendations of the COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force. With these additional agreements in place, Canada has now secured access to four of the leading vaccine candidates. The government will continue to negotiate and sign other agreements with a number of leading pharmaceutical companies, to ensure the supply of potential vaccines in Canada. The Prime Minister also announced funding to establish a new biomanufacturing facility at the Human Health Therapeutics Research Centre in Montréal. Through a public-private partnership, the new building will enable the National Research Council of Canada (NRC) to increase vaccine manufacturing to up to two million doses per month by next year. This will help ensure the country's ability to produce enough doses of the vaccine for Canadians who need them, such as front line workers, long-term care workers, and those at risk of becoming seriously ill if they contract COVID-19.
- On 31 August 2020, [Canada's Chief Public Health Officer \(CPHO\) released a statement indicating](#) that laboratories across Canada tested an average of almost 48,000 people daily over the past week with 0.7% testing positive. An average of 435 new cases have been reported daily during the most recent seven days.
- On 31 August 2020, [the Canada Border Services Agency \(CBSA\) is reminding all travellers ahead of the upcoming Labour Day long weekend that travel restrictions](#) are still in place at all Canadian international border crossings. All travel of an optional or discretionary nature, including tourism, recreation and entertainment, is covered by these measures across all ports of entry in all modes of transportation: land, marine, air and rail. Asymptomatic immediate family members, spouses or common-law partners of Canadian citizens and permanent

residents who meet the immediate family member definition and are coming to Canada for a minimum of 15 days will be exempt from the prohibition from entering Canada for a discretionary/optional purpose. Unless exempt, boaters cannot enter Canadian waters (territorial sea and internal waters) or boundary waters for discretionary or optional reasons. These reasons include: touring, sightseeing and pleasure fishing.

- [On 31 August 2020, Manitoba announced that it would reintroduce restrictions on travel to the north](#), effective on 03 September, after a rise in COVID-19 cases in the southern parts of the Province; however there will be a number of exemptions to the travel restrictions. A previous northern travel restriction ended on 26 June.
- On 31 August 2020, [Ottawa Public Health \(OPH\) reported 21 new cases of the novel coronavirus, bringing the number of active COVID-19 cases in Ottawa to 218](#). The local Public Health Unit reported 156 active cases a week ago. There have now been 2,967 cases of the virus locally since the start of the pandemic in March. No new deaths linked to COVID-19 were reported. OPH's coronavirus dashboard shows 11 people are currently hospitalized with COVID-19, one of whom, a man in his 50s, is in the intensive care unit. Ottawa is currently facing 14 outbreaks of the virus in local care homes, daycares and shelters.
- [The Keg Steakhouse and Bar in the ByWard Market in Ottawa is closed for sanitation after two employees tested positive for COVID-19](#). The restaurant is expected to be closed until at least 6 September.
- On 31 August 2020, [A Winchester, Ontario, nursing home Dundas Manor has declared COVID-19 outbreak at their residence](#) following a positive test result. The Health Unit has declared an outbreak. According to the Eastern Ontario Health Unit (EOHU), there are two ongoing outbreaks in its region, as of its most recent update. There are 17 active cases of COVID-19 in the EOHU region, out of 198 cases total.
- [Public health officials declared a COVID-19 outbreak at the Haldimand-Norfolk REACH Child Care Centre at McKinnon Park Secondary School in Caledonia](#). According to the Health Unit, a child tested positive for the novel coronavirus and the agency is awaiting further test results from those who recently worked and attended the facility. Under a "public health management" plan, only those who attended the affected class have been told to stay home.
- [COVID-19 cases have been detected at a handful of schools across Quebec after most French-language schools resumed the week of 24 August](#). On 31 August 2020, the local Public Health stated that more than 80 students in Quebec City are in isolation after three cases of COVID-19 were confirmed at two high schools. Two positive COVID-19 cases were detected at Polyvalente de Charlesbourg and one case was confirmed at Ecole Jean-de-Brebeuf. The Health Agency Spokesman declared that 81 students from the two schools were told to isolate for 14 days beginning 28 August, adding that the infected students are considered "community cases" because all three contracted COVID-19 outside school. Four teachers at Polyvalente Deux-Montagnes have now tested positive after classes resumed last week. About 20 other staff members who were in contact with those cases were placed in isolation as a precaution. The Public Health Agency in the Laurentians region reported in an email that 12 students from the school would be told to isolate until 10 September.
- [Ontario's four major Teachers' Unions will file complaints with the Province's Labour Board](#) alleging the government's school reopening plan violates its own workplace safety laws. The unions, which represent 190,000 teachers and education workers, state the Ontario government has failed to address their concerns following a meeting last week. The Unions had asked the Ministry of Labour to issue a series of workplace orders to set safety standards in schools. Those standards include lowering class size, establishing maximum cohorts of 50 students, and setting busing standards, which take precautions against COVID-19. The Unions also note the Ministry should follow ventilation requirements already deemed safe for the province's courthouses.

United States - Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) - Communication Resources (Official and Media)

- [On 31 August 2020, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) issued an update on U.S. Contact Tracing for COVID-19 specific practices](#). Contact tracing will be conducted for close contacts (any individual within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) of laboratory-confirmed or probable COVID-19 patients. Remote communications for the purposes of case investigation and contact tracing should be prioritized; in-person communication may be considered only after remote options have been exhausted. Testing should be considered for all close contacts of confirmed or probable COVID-19 patients. Those contacts who test positive (symptomatic or asymptomatic) should be managed as a confirmed COVID-19 case. Asymptomatic contacts testing negative should self-quarantine for 14 days from their last exposure (i.e., close encounter with confirmed or probable COVID-19 case). If testing is not available, symptomatic close contacts should self-isolate and be managed as a probable COVID-19 case. Asymptomatic close contacts who are not tested should self-quarantine and be monitored for 14 days after their last exposure, with linkage to clinical care for those who develop symptoms.
- [On 31 August 2020, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updated COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Destination](#): Travelers Prohibited from Entry to the United States: With specific exceptions, foreign nationals who have been in any of the following countries during the past 14 days may not enter the United States: **China**; **Iran**; **Most European Countries** (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands,

Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Monaco, San Marino, Vatican City); [United Kingdom](#) (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland); [Republic of Ireland](#); and [Brazil](#). **Level 3:** COVID-19 Risk Is High – Please refer to the list posted in the page. **Level 2:** COVID-19 Risk Is Moderate - CDC recommends that older adults, people of any age with [certain underlying medical conditions](#), and [others at increased risk for severe illness](#) postpone all nonessential travel to the following destinations: [Bermuda](#), [Curacao](#), [Malaysia](#), [Northern Mariana Islands](#). **Level 1:** COVID-19 Risk Is Low - CDC recommends that older adults, people of any age with certain underlying medical conditions, and others at increased risk for severe illness talk to their healthcare providers before traveling to the following destinations: [Fiji](#), [New Zealand](#), [Saint Barthelemy](#), [Thailand](#). **No Travel Health Notice:** COVID-19 Risk is Very Low: American Samoa; Anguilla; Bonaire; Brunei; Cayman Islands; Dominica; Falkland Islands; Guernsey; Greenland; Grenada; Isle of Man; Laos; Macau SAR; Marshall Islands; Mauritius; Micronesia; Montserrat; New Caledonia; Palau; Saba; Saint Kitts and Nevis; Saint Lucia; Saint Pierre and Miquelon; Sint Eustatius; Taiwan; and Timor-Leste. In addition: **Level 3:** No Data Available-COVID-19 Risk is Unknown - CDC recommends that travelers avoid all nonessential travel to the following destinations because these countries have not reported COVID-19 data and risk is unknown: [Cook Islands](#), [Kiribati](#), [Nauru](#), [Niue](#), [North Korea](#), [Samoa](#).

- [On 31 August 2020, US CDC issued a travel notice - Warning – Level 3, COVID-19 risk in the British Virgin Islands](#) is high, and new cases are increasing. CDC recommends travelers avoid all nonessential international travel to the British Virgin Islands.
- [On 31 August 2020, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention presented a new look of COVID-19 Data Tracker](#) and a location to make the data easier to find and use. The data provides United States information for Case Trends, Laboratory (Testing, Serology Surveillance); Community Impact (Mobility, Social Impact and School Closures); Unique Populations (Healthcare Personnel, Pandemic Vulnerability Index, Correctional Facilities, and Underlying Medical Conditions).
- On 31 August 2020, the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) alerted health care facility risk managers, procurement staff, and health care providers that medical gowns sold by Laws of Motion PPE, including surgical gowns, have potential quality issues that affect the level of fluid barrier protection and should not be used as personal protective equipment at this time. The [Letter to Health Care Providers](#) includes information for reporting problems with the Laws of Motion PPE gowns, including surgical gowns. The FDA broadened the scope of the existing [emergency use authorization \(EUA\)](#) for the drug Veklury (remdesivir) to include treatment of all hospitalized adult and pediatric patients with suspected or laboratory-confirmed COVID-19, irrespective of their severity of disease. To date, the FDA has currently authorized 230 tests under EUAs; these include 186 molecular tests, 40 antibody tests, and 4 antigen tests.

WHO – Preventing and managing COVID-19 across long-term care services: Web annex (Official)

WHO has published a Web annex for preventing and managing COVID-19 across long-term care services. This publication forms part of the WHO policy brief entitled Preventing and managing COVID-19 across long-term care services. It presents a comprehensive set of actions for policymakers, national and local decision-makers and other actors. These key objectives and key actions are slightly modified but linked to the policy objectives from the policy brief. Their prioritization will depend upon the local context and situation.

WHO/EURO - Joint statement – Towards a consensus on safe schooling in the WHO European Region during the COVID-19 pandemic (Official)

Following a high-level meeting with representatives of Member States hosted by WHO/Europe and the Ministry of Health, Italy, on schooling during the COVID-19 pandemic, WHO Regional Director for Europe and the Minister of Health of Italy virtually with representatives of Member States to develop a framework to ensure the safety and well-being of children, their families and communities and to find a way forward to safely reopen schools for children. Although children can contract and transmit COVID-19, they have largely been spared from the direct health effects of the virus, with most cases of COVID-19 in children being mild or asymptomatic. Despite this, they continue to be negatively impacted by school closures, both in terms of their education and their health, including their mental health, social development and the risk and impact of being in an abusive home environment. The Statement offers measures to be considered such as hand hygiene, physical distancing, use of masks where appropriate, and staying at home if sick are cornerstones of safe schooling within the COVID-19 reality. Specific policies will need to be in place for at-risk children with special learning needs or health conditions, as well as for educators with health conditions that render them vulnerable to more severe infection. It is realistic to prepare and plan for online learning to be available to complement school-based learning in the coming scholastic year. This will be necessary during temporary closures, can be an alternative for children and educators with health conditions, may be needed during episodic quarantine and may complement school-based learning in circumstances where children alternate school presence to respect physical distancing needs in smaller classrooms. The important link between health and education sectors will continue to grow as countries navigate the new post-COVID-19 reality.

International - Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Outbreak and Outcomes (Official and Media)

- [On 31 August 2020, Phase 3 Clinical Testing in the U.S. of AstraZeneca COVID-19 Vaccine Candidate Begins.](#) A multi-site, Phase 3 clinical trial evaluating an investigational COVID-19 vaccine known as AZD1222 has begun. The trial will enroll approximately 30,000 adult volunteers at 80 sites in the United States to evaluate if the candidate vaccine can prevent symptomatic coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), and the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), are providing funding support for the trial.
- [One of U.S. President's Pandemic Medical Advisers is urging the White House to embrace a controversial "herd immunity" strategy to combat the pandemic,](#) while taking steps to protect those in nursing homes and other vulnerable populations. According to five people familiar with the discussions, the approach would entail allowing the coronavirus to spread through most of the population to quickly build resistance to the virus. The administration has already begun to implement some policies along these lines, according to current and former officials as well as experts, particularly with regard to testing. The Adviser has advocated that the United States adopt the model Sweden has used to respond to the virus outbreak, according to these officials, which relies on lifting restrictions so the healthy can build up immunity to the disease rather than limiting social and business interactions to prevent the virus from spreading.
- [The Institute of Microbiology of the San Francisco de Quito University \(USFQ\) detected the first case of reinfection of the new coronavirus in Ecuador,](#) in a patient who had tested positive in May and that has been infected again with another strain of the same pathogen. The Academic Center added that the virus' genomes present in an Ecuadorian with COVID-19 have been sequenced in May and again in August, showing that they were two different strains.
- As of 31 August 2020, those departing from countries with a high number of coronavirus cases, which have been marked as high-risk countries by the Swiss authorities, will no longer be able to transit through any of the international airports in [Switzerland](#), upon a decision taken by the Swiss Federal Council, amid an increasing number of infections in the country. The decision would however, not affect those reaching Switzerland from a non-high-risk country, even if they have a stopover in a high-risk country. The sole condition for these travellers is that they must not leave the international area of the airport. Swiss and Schengen/EU residents are not subject to the new changes, and they can enter Switzerland from any country in the world. Quarantine may be required according to the risk level of the country travelers are arriving from. Whereas the residents of Australia, Canada, Georgia, Japan, New Zealand, Rwanda, South Korea, Thailand, Tunisia, and Uruguay will be exempt from the change only in case they have to make a stopover in a high-risk country to change planes, due to absence of direct flights, under the condition of not leaving the internal area. For now, all countries outside the Schengen area are considered as high-risk countries with the exception of: Andorra, Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Georgia, Holy See, Ireland, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, South Korea, Thailand, Tunisia and Uruguay.
- [The European Commission indicated it would contribute 400 million euros \(\\$476m\) in guarantees to an initiative led by the World Health Organization to buy COVID-19 vaccines.](#) Countries wishing to be part of the WHO initiative, dubbed COVAX, have to submit expressions of interest.
- [Hong Kong will resume face-to-face school classes from 23 September 2020,](#) as authorities aim to wind back strict coronavirus restrictions, which kept around 900,000 students working at home for over four months. The City's Secretary for Education noted that the resumption would be phased with grades 1, 5 and 6 resuming for secondary schools, primary schools and upper kindergartens on 23 September, while other grades would open on 29 September.
- [On 31 August 2020, Health authorities in Portugal are allowing the country's Communist Party to let 16,500 people into its annual open-air festival next weekend,](#) an unusually high number for a gathering in Europe amid the coronavirus pandemic. The permit has caused an outcry because officials have for months slashed the number of people allowed into other public events, forcing many of them to be cancelled.
- [On 31 August 2020, authorities in the United Kingdom reported that 16 coronavirus cases have been linked to a flight that brought U.K. tourists back from Greece,](#) and everyone aboard has been told to self-isolate for two weeks. Public Health Wales affirms it is contacting almost 200 people, who were aboard the Tui flight from the Greek island of Zante to Cardiff.
- [On 31 August 2020, the Paris local municipality indicated that it would look to make free COVID-19 testing available in all of the capital's 20 districts,](#) or arrondissements, as authorities' battle against signs of a re-emergence of the virus in France. The Paris Mayor's Office stated that from 31 August onward, there would be three permanent laboratories set up to conduct free COVID-19 tests, as well as two other mobile laboratories that would go around the capital.
- [On 31 August 2020, in Russia, a small independent Teachers' Union is urging members not to be coerced into accepting shots of the "Sputnik V" coronavirus vaccine.](#) Ahead of Russian schools reopening on 01 September 2020, the teachers' union Uchitel has launched an online petition against making the vaccine mandatory for teachers before all clinical trials are complete. According to the petition, it is likely that school principals will be

under pressure for everyone to be vaccinated. A Senior Union official indicated that Uchitel represents only about 700 of Russia's 1.2 million school teachers, but affirms nearly 1,400 people have signed its petition.

- [On 31 August 2020, Private tuition centres shut for the first time in South Korea's capital](#) and traffic was light on the first working day of tighter physical-distancing rules aimed at halting a second wave of novel coronavirus infections.

Studies Related to Coronavirus disease (COVID -19) Outbreak (Media)

- Researchers at the University of Alberta are preparing to launch [clinical trials of a drug used to cure a disease caused by a coronavirus in cats that they expect will also be effective as a treatment for humans against COVID-19](#). The drug is a protease inhibitor that interferes with the virus's ability to replicate, thus ending an infection. Proteases are key to many body functions and are common targets for drugs to treat everything from high blood pressure to cancer and HIV. Their findings were published in the peer-reviewed journal [Nature Communication](#) on 27 August 2020.
- [Two studies published in Clinical Infectious Diseases highlight the role of airborne spread of COVID-19 and the importance of efficient ventilation systems](#). One study found that patients can exhale millions of viral RNA particles per hour in the early stages of disease, and the second tied an outbreak affecting 81% of residents and 50% of healthcare workers at a Dutch nursing home to inadequate ventilation. [In the first study](#), researchers in China analyzed exhaled breath samples from 49 COVID-19 patients from 10 countries, 4 hospitalized patients without COVID-19, and 15 healthy people from Beijing using reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction. The scientists also tested 26 air samples and 242 surface swabs from quarantine hotels, hospitals, and personal belongings. [In the second study](#), researchers in Rotterdam and Utrecht, the Netherlands, wrote a research letter documenting a COVID-19 outbreak that sickened 17 residents and 17 healthcare staff in one of seven wards in a nursing home for people with psychiatric or behavioral conditions. None of the 95 residents or 106 healthcare staff in the other six wards tested positive. The authors noted that the Netherlands was experiencing a low prevalence of COVID-19 the week of the outbreak, with only 493 of that country's residents testing positive, compared with 8,391 cases during the most intense week of the outbreak in April. To prevent coronavirus transmission, all healthcare workers were assigned to specific wards and required to wear surgical masks during patient care starting Apr 26. Residents lived in individual rooms and spent part of each day in shared living rooms; some residents were mobile.
- According to a study published today in [JAMA Internal Medicine, US counties with large declines in cell phone activity at workplaces, transit stations, and stores and concomitant increases in home activity during COVID-19 lockdowns had lower rates of coronavirus infections 5, 10, and 15 days later](#). The researchers made 22,124 to 83,745 daily observations of cell phone location data from 949 to 2,740 counties, depending on data availability, from Jan 22 to May 11 and compared them with COVID-19 growth rates. Growth of COVID-19 cases was 45.5% lower in counties in the lowest quartile of activity in retail stores than in those with the highest quartile, while counties with the most residential activity had a 19% lower COVID-19 growth rate at 15 days than those with the least.
- [People who refuse to follow rules on wearing face masks are more likely to have malevolent sociopathic traits, a study suggests](#). Researchers from Brazil asked about 1600 volunteers to fill in two questionnaires often used by psychologists to assess empathy and expose personality disorders. The investigators have also asked the volunteers about their attitudes on rules and guidelines designed to contain the virus. The researchers then divided their subjects into two groups. About 1200 people qualified for an "empathy group": those who had displayed an interest in understanding other people's feelings and motivations. These people also tended to be interested in "developing positive social interactions" with others. The second group, with about 400 people, had shown signs of anti-social tendencies. These people tended to look for ways in which their interactions with others could benefit them personally. They were more likely to feel "socially detached" and to engage in hostile behaviour. These people were also less likely to follow rules designed to limit the spread of the coronavirus.
- [A recent report in Science sheds some light on how SARS-CoV-2 may affect non-human animals and provides a path for future research to benefit humans and animals alike](#). In the study, researchers tested the effects of SARS-CoV-2 on ferrets, cats, dogs, pigs, chickens, and ducks. The researchers' objectives included gathering data on possible courses of infection in these animals as well as testing the possibility that they could transmit the virus to others of their species. The six species studies showed several different responses. Pigs, chickens, and ducks showed no susceptibility to SARS-CoV-2 infection, with the virus unable to establish itself in their bodies and remaining undetected thereafter. Dogs showed low susceptibility, with lower viral loads and evidence that the infection rapidly succumbed to their immune systems, leaving behind only non-infectious RNA fragments. Cats showed infection across multiple tissues, worsening as the experiment continued, as well as the ability to infect one another with respiratory droplets. These species were important to test because of their coexistence with humans in large numbers, whether as pets or farm animals. Knowing whether SARS-CoV-2 represents a danger to these animals may assist with plans regarding pets and our global food supply, could provide advance warning to veterinarians, and may indicate whether these animals might serve as viral reservoirs preventing the disease's eradication in humans. Additionally, ferrets are a common animal model for studying respiratory infections in

humans and so determining whether they can serve in that role for this novel coronavirus is important for SARS-CoV-2 vaccine research. This study shows that cats, dogs, and ferrets can at least temporarily sustain SARS-CoV-2 infection, ferrets may be useful experimental models for SARS-CoV-2 research, and that SARS-CoV-2 may represent a potential danger to household pets as well as to humans.

- Little is known about the prevalence and features of SARS-CoV-2 infection among frontline U.S. health care personnel. In a report published on 31 August 2020, in the [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#), researchers presented the seroprevalence of SARS-CoV-2 among frontline health care personnel in a Multistate Hospital Network, from 13 Academic Medical Centers. Among 3,248 personnel observed, 6% had antibody evidence of previous SARS-CoV-2 infection; 29% of personnel with SARS-CoV-2 antibodies were asymptomatic in the preceding months, and 69% had not previously received a diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 antibodies was lower among personnel who reported always wearing a face covering while caring for patients (6%), compared with those who did not (9%). A high proportion of SARS-CoV-2 infections among health care personnel appear to go undetected. Universal use of face coverings and lowering clinical thresholds for testing could be important strategies for reducing hospital transmission.
- [GlaxoSmithKline and partner Vir Biotechnology](#) have started testing their experimental antibody on early-stage COVID-19 patients, entering the race to find a winner in a promising class of antiviral drugs to combat the pandemic. On 31 August 2020, the British drugmaker reported that the long-acting single injection would be tested on recently diagnosed high-risk cases for its ability to prevent hospitalization, typically a life threatening disease stage. GSK, which in April moved to invest \$250 million in Vir and agreed to collaborate on the antibody, is behind some peers in developing the class. Regeneron, which is working on antibody manufacturing with Roche, expects initial data from ongoing trials of its COVID-19 two-antibody combination in September. Eli Lilly, working with biotech firm AbCellera, early this month started testing whether their antibody can prevent the infections in nursing homes. A separate trial testing the compound on recently diagnosed COVID patients may yield initial data in September or shortly after.

Domestic Events of Interest

[Canada - Statement from the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada on 31 August 2020 \(Official\)](#)

On 31 August 2020, Canada's Chief Public Health Officer (CPHO) indicated in a statement that 31 August, is International Overdose Awareness Day, a global event that aims to raise awareness of overdose and reduce the stigma of drug-related death. The ongoing opioid-related overdose crisis in Canada has claimed the lives of over 15,000 Canadians from all backgrounds since 2016 leaving too many members of communities across the country mourning the loss of loved ones. It is known that using drugs while alone is a major risk factor for experiencing a fatal overdose yet the majority of overdose deaths in Canada occur at home alone. Stigma plays a significant role. Negative attitudes towards people who use drugs can lead people to hide their substance use, and this stigma can also prevent people from seeking help. Public health measures designed to reduce the impact of COVID-19 may also increase isolation and create additional barriers for people to access the supports they need. People who use drugs need compassion and support now more than ever. In these difficult and unprecedented times, it is important that Canadians recognize substance use disorder as a health and social issue and that authorities treat people who use drugs with compassion and provide them the support they need. The country must continue to work together to prevent overdose deaths and reduce substance-related harms, just as authorities are working hard to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on Canadians.

International Events of Interest

Nil

Researches, Policies and Guidelines

Nil

Best Regards | Sincères salutations
The GPHIN Team / L'équipe du RMISP

Global Public Health Intelligence Network | Health Security Infrastructure Branch
Public Health Agency of Canada, Government of Canada

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