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Sent: 2020-09-02 8:30 AM
To: gphin / rmisp (PHAC/ASPC)
Subject: GPHIN Daily Report (02 September 2020)
Attachments: GPHIN Daily Report 20200902 MP.docx

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 01 September 2020 at 19:00 EDT, a total of 129,425 cases have been recorded in Canada including 9,132 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 (62,614 confirmed cases, 5,762 deaths), Ontario (42,421 confirmed cases, 2,812 deaths), Manitoba (1,232 confirmed cases, 14 deaths), Saskatchewan (1,622 confirmed cases, 24 deaths), Alberta (14,066 confirmed cases, 241 deaths), British Columbia (5,848 confirmed cases, 209 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 02 September 2020, 11:20 GMT, there were 25,935,511 cases of COVID-19 and 861,900 deaths reported globally. Top 10 countries with the highest number of cases, by alphabetical order are: Argentina (428,239 cases, 8,919 deaths), Brazil (3,952,790 cases, 122,681 deaths); Colombia (624,069 cases, 20,052 deaths); India (3,773,483 cases, 66,491 deaths); Mexico (606,036 cases, 65,241 deaths); Peru (657,129 cases, 29,068 deaths); Russia (1,005,000 cases, 17,414 deaths); South Africa (628,259 cases, 14,263 deaths); Spain (470,973 cases, 29,152 deaths); United States (6,258,028 cases, 188,907 deaths).

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

- An [outbreak in the Squamish Nation in British Columbia has grown to 19 confirmed cases on the North Shore and in the Squamish Valley](#). Other people are awaiting test results. According to the Nation's advisory, anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19, who lives with someone who has tested positive or who is waiting for test results is self-isolating.
- An [outbreak of COVID-19 in British Columbia's Nass Valley has prompted an alert from the Northern and First Nations health authorities](#). The warning goes out to anyone who attended gatherings between 21- 25 August 2020 in the valley. A statement from the Nisga'a government affirms all those who attended a memorial, funeral or settlement feast need to contact their community clinic. The B.C. government also announced it is extending the provincial state of emergency until the end of the day on 15 September.
- [The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit \(WECHU\) is warning the public an employee at the Spirit Halloween store in Devonshire Mall has tested positive for COVID-19](#). According to the media, WECHU updated the COVID-19 cases, with 24 new positive cases of COVID-19 detected in Windsor-Essex County on 30 August 2020, bringing the total number of cases to 2,517.
- The [Windsor-Essex County Health Unit has reported two new possible COVID-19 exposures at businesses in the region](#). The Health Unit lists Xaco Taco restaurant on Cabana Road for the dates of 24 – 25 August and a second case at Xanadu Health Club on 22, 23, 24, 27, 29 and 30 August 2020.
- [Yukon University shut down its Whitehorse campus on the first day of class on 01 September, after learning two students did not self-isolate after crossing the territorial border and moving into residence](#). The students did not have symptoms and are now isolating in a government facility. The campus is closed to students for 48 hours,

and is expected to re-open on 04 September. Most Yukon University classes are online this semester, however, and will not be affected.

- According to the [Nova Scotia government, a university student infected with COVID-19 did not self-isolate after arriving in the Province to attend Université Sainte-Anne in Church Point, N.S.](#) Public Health officials are working to identify close contacts of the student, who travelled from outside Atlantic Canada and is one of six active cases of the virus in the province. A spokesperson with the Department of Health indicated that the Province estimates 6,500 university students will come from outside Atlantic Canada this year, [all of whom will be required to self-isolate and be tested](#) for COVID-19.
- [Ottawa-Carleton District School Board \(OCDSB\) is again changing when its students will be expected to return to in-person classes.](#) Grade 9 students will be the first to go back, they will have orientation on 8-9 September. Then, on 10-11 September, all high school students, who have been split into two cohorts, will return to classes. The OCDSB explains that cohort groupings will be determined and communicated by each school. Elementary students attending classes in person will now have a multi-day start with dates ranging from 14-16 September, younger grades will start first. Students in remote learning will have access to some scheduled orientation and/or learning activities during the week of 14-18 September. On 18 September, remote learning classes will begin for elementary and secondary students. Extended Day Program Third-party and OCDSB operated programs will start on the first day of the identified start dates for each elementary school. Students may only attend the Extended Day Program (EDP) program on the days that they are attending school.
- [Canada's Chief and Deputy Chief Public Health Officers affirm widespread vaccination of Canadians is the only way to corral COVID-19 and allow life to return to a semblance of its pre-pandemic state.](#) According to the Deputy Chief Public Health Officer, it is not clear the percentage of Canadians who need to get a vaccine to achieve broad immunity, but the official notes it is important for as many as possible to get vaccinated.
- [Health Canada is prepared to consider approving home COVID-19 tests to screen for the virus.](#) This is an improvement for assessing the spread of COVID19, in the past public health, experts and doctors have debated that frequent and inexpensive testing could beat back the pandemic. This is a shift in the position of Health Canada position back in June 2020, where it was indicated that it would not review applications for home test kits, the concern of the Health Ministry was that people might misuse home tests or misinterpret the results.
- A [Modelling research](#) published on 1 September 2020 in the [Canadian Medical Association Journal](#) indicates that the estimated time to clear surgeries postponed due to the pandemic is 84 weeks, with a target of 717 surgeries per week. According to the authors, the data will play an important role in health planning moving forward, and the modelling framework can be adapted to other jurisdictions.
- The [British Columbia government and City of Vancouver are partnering to build 450 new supportive homes for people experiencing homelessness.](#) The officials announced plans to build 98 temporary modular homes just a few blocks from Strathcona Park where a homeless encampment has been growing. Another 350 units of permanent supportive housing are planned for other city-owned lands with locations to be announced in the next few months. The goal is to open the temporary units next spring pending a public information session, and the units will remain in place for about five years with an option to renew the lease for another five. According to Vancouver's Mayor, the COVID-19 crisis and physical distancing measures have reduced space in places like shelters. The Mayor affirmed that the City plans to move people camping at Strathcona Park into housing in a similar process as was undertaken at Oppenheimer Park.
- [Ontario's Premier is defending the Province's Chief Medical Officer of Health amid growing calls for new leadership as the Province enters a critical new stage of the COVID-19 pandemic.](#) The CEO of the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO) is calling for Ontario's Medical Officer to be taken off the job immediately, whether by removal, resignation or retirement.

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

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has updated its [Considerations for Use of SARS-CoV-2 Antigen Testing in Nursing Homes.](#) [This guidance](#) expands upon the recently published "[Interim Guidance for Rapid Antigen Test for SARS-CoV-2](#)" and it should be used to guide the interpretation of antigen testing results in the following circumstances: testing of symptomatic residents and healthcare personnel (HCP); testing of asymptomatic residents and HCP in facilities as part of a COVID-19 outbreak response; and testing of asymptomatic HCP in facilities without a COVID-19 outbreak as required by CMS regulation. CDC has also developed a [printable algorithm](#) that visually proceeds through the considerations for testing asymptomatic and symptomatic residents or HCP. It also provides clarification for when, and if, a confirmatory RT-PCR test is needed. Please note, this algorithm should be used as a guide, but clinical decisions may deviate from this guide if indicated.
- The CDC has updated its [Interim Additional Guidance for Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 in Outpatient Hemodialysis Facilities.](#) [This guidance](#) is provided to clarify SARS-CoV-2 infection prevention and control (IPC) recommendations that are specific to outpatient hemodialysis facilities. This information complements, but does not replace, the general CDC IPC

recommendations for SARS-CoV-2 available in [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Pandemic](#).

- The CDC has released a guidance on [Limiting Workplace Violence Associated with COVID-19 Prevention Policies in Retail and Services Businesses](#). The information is intended for use by employers and employees in retail, services, and other customer-based businesses. This guidance offers strategies to limit violence towards workers that may occur when businesses put in place policies and practices to help minimize the spread of COVID-19 among employees and customers. These policies may include requiring [masks](#) to be worn by employees and customers, asking customers to follow [social distancing rules](#), and setting limits on the number of customers allowed in a business facility at one time.
- The credibility of two leading U.S. Health Agencies has been questioned after they made controversial coronavirus-related decisions under possible political pressure, according to a report by the Associated Press (AP). [The Head of the Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\) overstated the therapeutic effect of a plasma therapy for COVID-19 authorized by his agency, drawing criticism from scientists, who dispute that it was an exaggeration of the benefits](#). On 26 August 2020, the White House Coronavirus Task Force revised CDC's testing guidance to reflect current evidence without giving further details. Meanwhile, the report notes that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has quietly revised its guidelines, suggesting that fewer Americans need to be tested for the virus. This means that according to CDC's new guidance, people who have been in close contact with COVID-19 patients do not have to be tested if they do not feel sick. This approach breaches the scientific consensus that large-scale testing is needed to curb the pandemic.
- With COVID-19 cases in children having increased by 21 percent in the United States since early August, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and others are continuing to work to better understand the multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C). In support of this effort, [NIH recently announced \\$20 million in research funding dedicated to the development of approaches that identify children at high risk for developing MIS-C](#).
- The White House press secretary has announced that the United States [will not participate in COVAX's international initiative to develop, manufacture and distribute a new type of coronavirus vaccine](#). The United States will continue to work with other international partners.
- The [US federal government is deploying extra coronavirus testing materials, including Abbott's new rapid test kits, to areas of the country recently hit hard by natural disasters](#). Hurricane Laura in Louisiana and the wildfires on the West Coast have prompted the evacuation of hundreds of thousands of people.
- [Healthcare workers and first responders who are at the highest risk of contracting COVID-19 should be at the front of the line for vaccines when they become available](#), an independent expert panel tapped by U.S. health officials has revealed. The draft report, issued by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, recommends vaccines be rolled out in four phases, with the first "Jumpstart" phase focused on managing what is expected to initially be a scarce supply of vaccines. To address individuals in high-risk groups, the panel looked at underlying factors that increase their risk of infection.

[PAHO - Epidemiological Alert: COVID-19 among health workers - 31 August 2020 \(Official\)](#)

In light of the increase in cases and deaths of COVID-19 among healthcare workers in the countries and territories in the Region of the Americas, the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) urges Member States to strengthen the capacity of healthcare services across all levels and to equip healthcare workers with the appropriate resources and training in order to ensure an adequate and timely response to the pandemic within the healthcare system. As of 19 August 2020, according to available information from 191 countries in the Region of the Americas, a total of 569,304 cases of COVID-19, including 2,506 deaths, have been reported among healthcare workers. Of these, 72% are female, and the age groups with the highest proportions of confirmed cases are 30-39 years and 40-49 years.

[PAHO - The Region of the Americas accounts for majority of new COVID-19 deaths worldwide \(Official\)](#)

According to a new Epidemiological Update published by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Region of the Americas accounted for 64% of the new deaths reported globally over the prior two months, numbering more than 213,000 new deaths, though it only makes up about 13% of the global population. The epidemiological update notes that the majority of the new deaths globally were reported by Brazil, with 19%, the United States of America, with 16%; India, comprising 13%; and Mexico, making up 12%. The number of cases worldwide has increased by 158%, with some 14 million additional cases, since the PAHO report published 23 June. Deaths rose by 72%, comprising some 300,000 additional deaths. However, daily notifications of cases in the United States of America and Brazil are trending downwards. In Central America, cases and deaths increased by over 300% since June, (cases went from 61,058 to 266,000 and deaths rose from 1,580 to 7,203). In the Caribbean there was a 230% increase in cases (reaching more than 100,000 new cases) and a 123% increase in deaths (reaching 1,384 deaths) compared with what they reported in June. South America has reported more than 5.6 million cases and 186,000 deaths report, nearly three times the number of cases and twice the deaths since last June.

[PAHO – PAHO offers a series of virtual courses and webinars on COVID-19 for health professionals \(Official\)](#)

Nine virtual courses and more than 60 webinars in Spanish and English on different aspects of COVID-19 are being offered free of charge through the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) Virtual Campus of Public Health. The educational offer includes a course on basic precautions of hand hygiene in health facilities, which summarizes WHO guidelines on hand hygiene; another on how to put on and remove personal protective equipment, which aims to help health personnel protect themselves properly from COVID-19; and another course on the prevention and control of infections caused by the new coronavirus.

[WHO - WHO warns that 'no country can just pretend the pandemic is over' \(Media\)](#)

On 31 August 2020, the Director-General of WHO outlined four essential things that all countries, communities and individuals must focus on to take control over the pandemics. 1). Countries should prevent amplifying events, which many countries have linked to large gatherings at stadiums, nightclubs and places of worship. 2). Countries and people can find creative ways to be social. 3). Countries should prevent deaths by protecting vulnerable people, including older people, people with underlying conditions and essential workers. This will help save lives and alleviate the burden on countries' health systems. 4). Individuals must play their part by wearing masks, social distancing and washing their hands frequently. An additional recommendation is that governments can avoid stay-at-home orders by implementing targeted responses to outbreaks through testing, contact tracing and isolating.

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

- [According to a poll conducted by the European Council on Foreign Relations in 9 European \(ECFR\) countries \(Denmark, Bulgaria, Germany, Italy, France, Poland, Spain, Portugal and Sweden\), European countries need to protect more their borders amid the coronavirus pandemic.](#) At the same time, the respondents agreed that the respect for human rights, rule of law, and democracy should also be supported. ECFR's poll, which was conducted in April, counted over 11,000 participants citizens. Twenty-six per cent of citizens included in the poll indicated that the European Union should hold more control over borders between member states when the Coronavirus situation comes to an end. The percentage was higher in Portugal, where 48 per cent of persons believe the EU impose more border controls between the countries, once the COVID-19 crisis is over. The discussion of border protection amid the COVID-19 in European countries, often causes polemics. A large share of countries is seeking to find alternatives to the border closure in a bid to prevent the further devastation of the economic sector.
- On 1 September 2020, [Chong Kun Dang \(CDK\) Pharmaceutical Corp.](#) indicated that even it is not known which country will first get hold of its final product, once the clinical trials are successfully completed through phase three, it will apply for an expedited approval process with drug authorities both in Korea and overseas. [CDK mentioned that Russia's Drug Ministry have approved of its clinical phase two trial design targeting some 100 seriously afflicted COVID-19 pneumonic patients in Russia.](#) CDKs treatment Nafamostat has demonstrated strong antiviral qualities in previous tests, and the results from this phase two clinical trial will be known by end of 2020. Nafamostat is an anticoagulant and acute pancreatitis treatment undergoing a clinical phase two as a potential COVID-19 treatment. Nafamostat's potential to be repurposed as a COVID-19 treatment was found through research carried out by Institut Pasteur Korea (IPK) and supported by the local ministries for drugs and science. IPK had noted that Nafamostat could better restrain SARS CoV-2 viral infection than remdesivir.
- On 1 September 2020, [a poll done by Ipsos for the World Economic Forum showed about three quarters of the respondents in the world would like to get a COVID-19 vaccine if it becomes available.](#) The survey included responses from nearly 20,000 people from 27 countries, with the most enthusiasm in China and the least in Russia.
- On 2 September 2020, [China's CanSino Biologics announced it has initiated the phase III clinical trial for its recombinant novel coronavirus vaccine \(Ad5-nCoV\).](#) The company has cooperated with NPO Petrovax Pharm to conduct the phase III clinical trial for the vaccine in Russia. The Corporation has received approval from the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation, and it has began enrollments. In addition, the drugmaker is currently driving the international multi-center phase III clinical trials and plans phase III clinical trials in several countries.
- [Some experts has affirmed that gigh-profile COVID-19 vaccines developed in Russia and China share a potential shortcoming:](#) they are based on a common cold virus that many people have been exposed to, potentially limiting their effectiveness. CanSino Biologics' vaccine, approved for Military use in China, is a modified form of adenovirus type 5, or Ad5. The company is in talks to get emergency approval in several countries before completing large-scale trials. A vaccine developed by Moscow's Gamaleya Institute is based on Ad5 and a second less common adenovirus. Gamaleya has said its two-virus approach will address Ad5 immunity issues.
- [The Government of Brazil's President has stressed that the vaccine against the new coronavirus will not be mandatory in Brazil.](#)
- The Center for Medicinal Chemistry (CQMED) of the State University of Campinas (Unicamp), the Genomics Laboratory Mendelics and the Brazilian Industrial Research and Innovation Company (Embrapii) have just signed an agreement for the improvement of the saliva test for COVID-19. [Unicamp Center will design and produce the](#)

[saliva test enzymes for COVID-19](#). The test called RT-LAMP #PARECOVID brings safety in returning to presential work activities, in schools and to leisure.

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

- [Researchers at the University of Saskatchewan \(Uof S\) are working on a way to test Saskatoon's sewage for COVID-19](#), a step they hope could help health officials track the spread of the virus on a community level. The U of S team is one of roughly 30 members of the Canadian Water Network's COVID-19 Wastewater Coalition studying whether they can develop an effective test to estimate how many people in a given center have the virus based on a sewage sample.
- On 1 September 2020, [Ottawa researchers indicated that they would eventually like to see wastewater surveillance expanded to pilot projects across the province that could test communities as well as schools and long-term care homes in real time](#). University of Ottawa Engineering Professor and a team of researchers have produced one paper, not yet peer reviewed or published, showing that their analysis of wastewater in Ottawa and Gatineau is useful in tracking the number of COVID-19 cases in a community. Research being led by the CHEO Research Institute's MacKenzie, could make that surveillance tool more accurate and potentially give public health officials an even earlier warning system by tracking proteins instead of RNA.
- [MediciNova Inc. has created prototypes of an intranasal vaccine for Covid-19 that has induced strong antibody responses in mice](#). The company, along with Japanese partner BioComo, is preparing to begin manufacturing the vaccine candidate for toxicology tests and clinical trials.
- According a study published in the journal *Diabetes Care*, [when a patient had diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity, they were 3.4 times as likely to die in the hospital than a patient without metabolic syndrome](#). Researchers looked at data from 287 people who needed treatment for coronavirus at University Medical Center and Tulane Medical Center from 30 March – 5 April. The investigators divided the patients into two groups, those who had metabolic syndrome and those who did not. Almost all of the study subjects (85%) were Black, and the average age was 61. Just over half of hospitalized patients with metabolic syndrome required intensive care, compared with about 1 in 4 without it. When it came to ventilator usage, half of metabolic syndrome patients needed one compared with only about 1 out of 5 without it. The fatality rate was much higher as well: 26% of metabolic syndrome patients died compared with 10% of those without it. When patients had just one of the conditions, mortality risk was not increased. But, having obesity or diabetes was associated with increased risk of ICU admission and the need for a ventilator. It is still not clear why the coronavirus hits people with these conditions harder.
- [Antibodies that people make to fight the new coronavirus last for at least four months after diagnosis and do not fade quickly as some earlier reports suggested](#), scientists have in a study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The new study was done by Reykjavik-based deCODE Genetics, a subsidiary of the U.S. biotech company Amgen, with several hospitals, universities and health officials in Iceland. The country tested 15% of its population since late February, when its first COVID-19 cases were detected, giving a solid base for comparisons. The study also found that testing through the bits-of-virus method that's commonly done in community settings missed nearly half of people who were found to have had the virus by blood antibody testing. That means the blood tests are far more reliable and better for tracking spread of the disease in a region and for guiding decisions and returning to work or school. Nearly a third of infections were in people who reported no symptoms. Nearly 1% of Iceland's population was infected in this first wave of the pandemic, meaning the other 99% are still vulnerable to the virus. The infection fatality rate was 0.3%. That is about three times the fatality rate of seasonal flu and in keeping with some other more recent estimates. The new study does not establish how much or which type of antibody confers immunity or protection, that remains unknown.
- [Less than 4% of about 3,400 close contacts of people with COVID-19 in the early days of the pandemic in China were infected with SARS-CoV-2](#), researchers reported in *Annals of Internal Medicine*. Most of the secondary infections occurred at home, and patients with more clinically severe disease were more likely to infect their close contacts. According to experts unaffiliated with the study, the findings reinforce the need for physical distancing and other basic prevention efforts to slow transmission.
- Many think that Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) is not a direct result of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, but seems more likely to be due to an [intense autoimmune response](#). Indeed, a recent study in *Nature Medicine* offers some of the first evidence that MIS-C is connected to specific changes in the immune system that, for reasons that remain unknown, sometimes follow COVID-19. The researchers enlisted 25 children, ages 7 to 14, who developed MIS-C in connection with COVID-19. In search of clues, the scientists at Evelina London Children's Hospital, London, in United Kingdom examined blood samples collected from the children during different stages of their care, starting when they were most ill through recovery and follow-up. The children had increased levels of various inflammatory molecules alongside raised levels of other markers suggesting tissue damage. It has been noted that MIS-C bears some resemblance to [Kawasaki disease](#). While there are similarities, this new work shows that MIS-C is a distinct illness associated with COVID-19. In fact, only two children in the study met the full criteria for Kawasaki disease based on the clinical features and symptoms of their illness. Another [recent study](#) from the United Kingdom, reported several new symptoms of MIS-C. It will now

be important to learn much more about the precise mechanisms underlying these observed changes in the immune system and how best to treat or prevent them.

- [The National Institutes of Health has launched a study to track the prevalence and impact of SARS-CoV-2 infection among approximately 16,000 pregnant women in seven low- and middle-income countries.](#) The study will follow women through pregnancy and 12 months after childbirth to compare maternal, fetal and newborn outcomes of participants who have been infected with the virus to those of pregnant women who have not been infected. At delivery, women enrolled in the study will receive an antibody test to determine if they have been exposed to SARS-CoV-2. Researchers hope to determine if infection increases the risk of complications such as preterm birth, fetal growth restriction, stillbirth, newborn death and birth defects. The scientists also hope to assess participants' knowledge and attitudes of COVID-19 during pregnancy. The study is being conducted by the Global Network for Women's and Children's Health Research, a group of clinical sites funded by NIH's Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). The participating countries are Guatemala, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia.
- New research findings published on 1 September in the [BMJ](#) help to shed light on [the risks of COVID-19 for pregnant women and their babies](#). The paper suggests that pregnant women seen at the hospital with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are less likely to experience a fever or muscle pain, but if they develop severe disease they are more likely to need intensive care than non-pregnant women with COVID-19. This is first paper of a 'living systematic review'; ongoing, global, research which is collecting and synthesising data on the situation for pregnant women with COVID-19 in countries worldwide. The study has been led by researchers at the University of Birmingham, UK, the World Health Organization, and the Special Programme HRP alongside other collaborators.
- On 1 September 2020, the French pharmaceutical company [Sanofi announced it was halting trials for its rheumatoid arthritis drug Kevzara after it failed to prove an effective treatment for COVID-19](#). International Phase 3 clinical tests of the drug for serious cases of COVID-19 had proved inconclusive, with the most recent trials showing adverse effects including pneumonia infections and even death. Sanofi, which produces the drug with its American partner Regeneron, noted neither company anticipated further clinical tests of Kevzara for the treatment of COVID-19.
- [Two new studies have found that tests that look for the virus in samples of saliva are about as reliable as tests that require a sample from the back of the nose.](#) In one of the new studies, a team from Yale identified 70 hospital patients with COVID-19 whose infections had been confirmed with the traditional nasopharyngeal swabs. Each time a health care worker carried out additional nasal swab tests, the researchers asked the patients to give themselves a saliva test as well. The researchers found the saliva tests did a better job of detecting the SARS-CoV-2. In the first five days after diagnosis, 81 per cent of the saliva tests came back positive, compared with 71 per cent of the nasopharyngeal tests. A similar gap remained through the 10th day after diagnosis.
- A study, published in the peer-reviewed [Emerging Infectious Diseases journal](#), found [that a passenger on an evacuation flight from Milan to Seoul appears to have contracted the disease after sharing the same restroom as an asymptomatic patient](#). As the passenger was isolating at her home in Italy by herself for three weeks prior to the travel, inflight contact with the asymptomatic patient is suspected as the point of infection.

Domestic Events of Interest

[Public Health Notice: Outbreak of *Salmonella* infections linked to red onions imported from the United States](#) (Official)

As of 31 August 2020, there have been 457 confirmed cases of *Salmonella* Newport illness linked to this outbreak in the following provinces: British Columbia (107), Alberta (257), Saskatchewan (33), Manitoba (25), Ontario (11), Quebec (23) and Prince Edward Island (1). Individuals became sick between mid-June and early August 2020. Sixty-six individuals have been hospitalized. One individual has died, but it is not known if *Salmonella* contributed to the cause of death. Individuals who became ill are between 1 and 100 years of age. The majority of cases (55%) are female. Individuals who became ill reported eating red onions at home, in menu items ordered at restaurants and in residential care settings. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is conducting a food safety investigation and has issued related food recall warnings. Additional food recall warnings in Canada are possible. More information on recalled products is available on CFIA's website. The U.S. CDC is also investigating an outbreak of *Salmonella* Newport illnesses that have a similar genetic fingerprint to illnesses reported in this outbreak. Investigators in Canada and the U.S. continue to collaborate to exchange information and identify commonalities in the outbreak information that may identify additional sources of illness or help to identify the cause of contamination in the red onions.

[New Brunswick - CERB payments fueling illicit drug market in Moncton](#) (Media)

Harvest House Shelter in Moncton reports that some people are using Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) cheques to support their addiction, which could have a long-term impact on the City's most vulnerable. The Executive Director of the shelter has stated that in the last few months, four people dropped out of the rehab program and started using again after receiving CERB funds when they did not even qualify for it. A Physician from Salvus Clinic in Moncton

has indicated that some of her clients on income assistance were also getting CERB checks even though they should never have qualified. The Doctor worries about the impacts on the vulnerable population once the benefit runs out later in September 2020.

[Nunavut - Whooping cough outbreak declared over in Sanikiluaq \(Media\)](#)

Nunavut's Health Department has announced that a whooping cough outbreak that started in Sanikiluaq this spring is now over. Officials declared the outbreak in June, after the disease was confirmed to be in the community in May.

[Prince Edward Island - New P.E.I. survey aims to measure illicit drug use during pandemic \(Media\)](#)

A group that promotes harm reduction for Islanders who use drugs is hoping a new survey will help them better understand how the global health pandemic has changed illicit drug use on P.E.I. The survey, called COVID Check-in with PEERS Alliance For Everyone Who Uses Drugs, is aimed at anyone who consumes illicit drugs, whether that is occasionally or habitually. The program Coordinator with PEERS Alliance notes that there has been an increase in drug-related harm nationwide since the start of the pandemic. The survey will be available online through the PEERS Alliance social media accounts until 18 September.

International Events of Interest

[United States - FDA provides guidance to industry for detecting and preventing nitrosamines in drugs \(Official\)](#)

FDA has published a guidance [Control of Nitrosamine Impurities in Human Drugs](#) for immediate implementation. This guidance recommends steps, including a comprehensive risk assessment strategy and other actions that manufacturers can take to reduce or prevent the presence of nitrosamine impurities in their drugs.

[Sudan - Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 \(Official\)](#)

On 9 August 2020, the Federal Ministry of Health, Sudan notified WHO of the detection of a circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) in the country. According to the notification, the virus is genetically-linked with Chad (sequencing results showed 12 to 19 nucleotide changes). Two Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) cases were notified. Initial investigation indicates these cases are linked to cVDPV2s from the CHA-NDJ-1 emergence group, which was first detected in October 2019 and is currently circulating in Chad and Cameroon. Eleven additional suspected cases have also been confirmed as cVDPV2 and field investigation reports are being consolidated. These cases are in the following states: Red Sea, West Darfur, East Darfur, White Nile, River Nile and Gezira. Hence, between 9 August and 26 August 2020, there have been a total of 13 cVDPV2 cases reported. Additionally, three cVDPV2-positive environmental samples from Soba, Elgoz and Hawasha sites from Khartoum were detected. Sequencing of viruses isolated in Sudan so far reflects that the viruses are related with viruses reported earlier in neighboring Chad from where there were multiple separate introductions into Sudan from Chad. There is local circulation in Sudan and continued sharing of transmission with Chad. Following the detection of cVDPV2 in the country, the health officials have planned and/or implemented response activities in the country.

Researches, Policies and Guidelines

[United States - Flu study highlights difficulty of achieving covid-19 'herd immunity' \(Media\)](#)

A new study from researchers at the University of California, San Francisco found that self-reported flu vaccination rates were as low as 16 percent among people without health insurance. Researchers noted that insurance status, having a personal doctor, and age were among the biggest determining factors in whether Americans receive an annual flu shot. The study also noted that fewer than half of U.S. adults received the flu vaccine during the 2017–2018 season, when 61,000 Americans died from influenza. According to researchers, flu vaccination rates varied widely based on demographics and other factors. The investigators highlighted that women are more likely than men to get a flu shot. The experts added that whites and Asians also have higher rates of immunization. Researchers affirm that some of the steps taken to prevent spread of COVID-19, such as mask wearing, handwashing, and physical distancing, also should help prevent the spread of seasonal flu.

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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