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**Sent:** 2020-08-24 8:28 AM  
**To:** gphin / rmisp (PHAC/ASPC)  
**Subject:** GPHIN Daily Report (24 August 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 23 August 2020 at 19:00 EDT, a total of 124,896 cases have been recorded in Canada including 9,073 deaths. The cases are reported in Newfoundland and Labrador (268 confirmed cases, 3 deaths), Prince Edward Island (44 confirmed cases), Nova Scotia (1,080 confirmed cases, 65 deaths), New Brunswick (189 confirmed cases, 2 deaths), Quebec (61,673 confirmed cases, 5,740 deaths), Ontario (41,402 confirmed cases, 2,797 deaths), Manitoba (944 confirmed cases, 12 deaths), Saskatchewan (1,600 confirmed cases, 22 deaths), Alberta (12,748 confirmed cases, 230 deaths), British Columbia (4,915 confirmed cases, 202 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 24 August 2020, 11:24 GMT, there were 23,614,293 cases of COVID-19 and 813,001 deaths reported globally. Top 10 countries with the highest number of cases, by alphabetical order are: Brazil (3,605,783 cases, 114,772 deaths); Chile (397,665 cases, 10,852 deaths); Colombia (541,147 cases, 17,316 deaths); India (3,110,761 cases, 57,715 deaths); Mexico (560,164 cases, 60,480 deaths); Peru (594,326 cases, 27,663 deaths); Russia (961,493 cases, 16,448 deaths); South Africa (609,773 cases, 13,059 deaths); Spain (407,879 cases, 28,838 deaths); United States (5,874,295 cases, 180,605 deaths).

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

- [On 23 August 2020, Canada's Chief Public Health Officer in lieu of an in-person update to the media](#), indicated that limiting the impact of COVID-19 means taking care of our broader health and wellbeing. This includes keeping up with routine medical appointments for essential preventative health services like vaccinations, cancer screening tests, and dental care, as well as the ongoing management of chronic diseases. Health care providers and the colleges and professional bodies that regulate and inform their practices have worked hard to increase the availability and quality of virtual care in Canada over the last several months and they have put measures and guidance in place to protect you and your loved ones during in-person medical visits. Contact your health care provider to find out how they have adapted their practices so that you can access care safely.
- [On 22 August 2020, Canada's Chief Public Health Officer in lieu of an in-person update to the media](#), stated that average daily case counts range from 350 to 500 new cases reported and the number of hospitalisations and deaths remain low, indicating that we are currently keeping the infection rate to a manageable level and minimising severe illness and death due to COVID-19. Another indicator we are keeping a close watch on is the average number of people tested daily and the percent positive for COVID-19. Currently, laboratory testing is continuing at a high rate, with an average of 48,714 people tested per day, while we are maintaining a low percentage positive. Over the most recent seven days, the percentage of people who tested positive for COVID-19 was 0.8%, meaning that on average 125 people are being tested for every case we detect, as we continue to cast the surveillance net wide in an effort to find cases and stamp out transmission where it is occurring.
- [Seventy-two new cases of COVID-19 were announced in Manitoba](#), shooting past the province's previous record of 42 new cases set on 22 August, according to the province's top doctor. Forty-five of the new cases are in the Prairie Mountain Health region, which will see amped-up restrictions starting August 24th, including mandatory

masks in public and group sizes restricted to 10, according to a Chief Provincial Public Health Officer. Investigations suggest most of the cases in that region are linked to intentional testing done among known clusters in multiple Hutterite communities, noted Health Minister.

- [On 23 August 2020, Alberta Health Services confirmed that there is a COVID-19 outbreak at the Peter Lougheed Centre in Calgary.](#) AHS declared the outbreak on 20 August due to six positive cases in patients and staff on a mental health and addictions unit. Contact tracing is underway, the health authority said, and all patients and staff have been offered COVID-19 testing. According to the authorities, the situation is being closely monitored and reviewed by many health professionals, and patients and unit staff are being regularly screened for symptoms and signs related to COVID-19
- [A group of Quebec educators rallied against the provincial government's back-to-school plan,](#) indicating more needs to be done to ensure the safety of students and staff ahead of an unprecedented school year. According to the spokesman for Progressive Education Workers, the plan to return at full capacity is going to create a lot of new COVID cases with up to 30 kids in elementary school (classes) and 40 kids in high school. Quebec should consider what other regions are doing, introducing a hybrid model, dividing a class into two or three groups and combining home learning with a physical return to the classroom.
- [Canadian Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization-International Vaccine Centre \(VIDO-InterVac\) is notifying that lack of manufacturing capacity is slowing down their efforts at a made-in-Canada vaccine,](#) something that matters given concerns over vaccine nationalism, which could prevent access to a product that's not made at home, despite long workdays and promising early results. Regardless of the encouraging signs, the researchers were always at the mercy of external factors like global politics and manufacturing capacity. Now, the timeline of a VIDO-InterVac vaccine being ready to manufacture, has been delayed by both. Before vaccine can proceed to human clinical trials, the facility needs to complete more studies using higher-grade materials than what they needed for their early animal studies. But waiting for busy manufacturers to provide them is holding up the process. Now the team expects manufacturing to begin in June 2021 at the earliest.
- [Canada is facing criticism for funding a COVID-19 vaccine candidate developed by the Chinese company CanSino.](#) Although it was approved for human trials in Canada, it still hasn't arrived more than three-months after it was given the green light. There are concerns that rocky relations between the two countries may be to blame.
- [Indigenous Peoples and communities \(ISC\) is aware of these confirmed cases of COVID-19 for First Nations on reserve in provinces:](#) 428 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19, 35 hospitalizations, 408 recovered cases. There is a total of 17 confirmed positive cases in Nunavik, Quebec, and all have recovered. First Nations communities have been successful in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. When compared to the general Canadian population, the COVID infection rate, hospitalization rate, and death rate were lower in these communities. For example, the rate of COVID-19 reported among First Nations individuals living on reserve is currently one-quarter the rate of the general Canadian population. The epidemic curve continues to show signs of flattening, with the numbers of new and active cases dropping significantly in the most recent week.
- On 20 August 2020, [Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health](#) declared that while students are to be kept in strict cohorts that limit contact with other children, there might be scenarios where public health officials opt for broader, more proactive testing in schools. [COVID-19 testing could be conducted in some Ontario schools if local health officials are concerned that community spread of the virus presents a risk.](#)
- [In Ottawa, a staff member of a Goodlife Fitness centre in Gloucester has tested positive for COVID-19.](#) The employee was most recently at work on 13, 14, and 17 August 2020. The fitness centre confirmed in a statement that the employee informed the club right away and members of the gym have been informed.
- On 21 August 2020, [The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit reported two new COVID-19 cases.](#) The region has had a total of 2,454 confirmed cases of the virus, including 2,292 people who have recovered. Health unit officials confirmed that the new case is a resident in a retirement home and the other is still under investigation. Also, two agricultural workplaces in Leamington, Ontario are also experiencing outbreaks. There have been 71 deaths related to the virus in Windsor-Essex. Forty-nine are related to residents in long-term care homes and two are related to migrant workers.
- [The Saskatchewan Health Authority has expanded a COVID-19 exposure alert at the Turtleford SARCAN facility.](#) People may have been exposed from 4 August - 14 August. Previously, the health authority warned of possible COVID-19 exposure between 4 -6 August.
- As British Columbia continues to see inflated COVID-19 infection numbers, the Public Safety Minister is expected to announce tougher enforcement for those not following public health orders. [B.C.'s provincial health officials have been focusing their public messages on people throwing indoor private parties, which they report have been responsible for a majority of new cases of Covid-19.](#) B.C. Health Minister announced that enforcement responsibility will be shared by police, municipal bylaw officers, WorkSafe BC, and public health officials.
- [Community groups in Montreal indicate they had no choice but to go alone after the Quebec government went back on a pledge to collect race-based data to help trace the impact of COVID-19 on marginalized communities.](#) A Montreal entrepreneur, launched an online platform to collect information from Black, Indigenous and other people of colour across Canada about how the novel coronavirus has affected them and their families. Eighty-

nine people completed the anonymous online survey in the first 24 hours since The Colours of COVID was launched, where 80 to 90 per cent of respondents were in Quebec. The data, advocates argue, would help highlight underlying socioeconomic issues that often contribute to high infection rates and would pressure governments to take concrete action. According to The Colours of COVID the link between race and poverty, and the risks of contracting COVID-19, is clear.

- The [Peel District School Board \(PDSB\) is making masks mandatory for students in Grades 1 to 12, reducing class sizes by hiring extra teachers and may see a delayed start to the school year as classes resume amid the COVID-19 pandemic](#). Students will be required to wear masks while indoors at schools, including in classrooms and hallways. Masks are also strongly recommended for kindergarten students, per the advice of Peel Public Health. The board says it will also be accessing up to \$36 million in reserve funding unlocked recently by Ontario's education ministry in part to hire additional elementary and secondary school teachers to bring down class sizes. The board will also use the reserve funds to bring on more custodial staff, enhance ventilation, purchase cleaning supplies, implement health and safety training, provide special education and mental health supports as well as for distance learning. The board is looking into staggering students' return to the classroom, but that further details will be shared after a decision is made.
- [The Ontario's government has indicated it could extend its takeover of some long-term care homes as the 90-day temporary management contracts and orders giving local hospitals control of nearly a dozen facilities that struggled to contain deadly COVID-19 outbreaks, are set to expire in the coming weeks](#). Under the arrangements, companies will be permitted to take back control of the homes once the government is satisfied the outbreak risk to residents and staff have been mitigated. The province has appointed temporary management at 11 homes since the start of the pandemic as the facilities struggled to contain COVID-19 outbreaks.
- [Anyone caught violating B.C.'s public health rules, especially the order on large gatherings, will now face fines of up to \\$2,000](#). The Public Safety Minister announced the move, effective immediately, to help stop the spread of COVID-19 in the province amid a recent surge in cases. Police and bylaw officers will now be able to issue \$2,000 tickets to property owners and operators who host large house parties and unsanctioned events on streets or beaches if there are more than 50 people present. This also includes failing to provide appropriate hand sanitation and washroom facilities, failing to provide sufficient space in the venue for physical distancing, failing to obtain a list of names and contacts at a large event, and having more than five guests gathered in vacation accommodation.
- [The Jewish General Hospital, a designated COVID-19 treatment centre, will be tearing down one of its older buildings to make way for a 25-bed wing to be built in the next six months to treat patients during a potential second wave in the pandemic](#). The rationale behind the project is not only to limit the spread of the coronavirus at the Jewish General during a second wave, but to free up the hospital to carry out most of its clinical activities.

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

- [On 23 August 2020, US President announced that the Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\) has authorized convalescent plasma for emergency use](#) to treat patients sickened by the novel coronavirus. Experts have expressed optimism about the treatment, but former FDA Commissioner called the move incremental, noting that convalescent plasma is already available to thousands of patients, though the new announcement might make it somewhat more widely available.
- [On 21 August 2020, The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has dropped its recommendation that travelers quarantine for 14 days](#) after visiting overseas destinations or arriving in areas with a high number of confirmed coronavirus cases. The CDC website now notes, arriving travelers should stay six feet from other people, wear masks and wash hands frequently, the same recommendations for people who have not traveled. The website does indicate travelers should follow restrictions set by state, local and territorial governments, which may require arrivals to stay home for up to 14 days.
- On 21 August 2020, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updated](#) its [school resources and tools](#) that were released on 23rd July and 24<sup>th</sup> to align with the latest COVID-19 information available. The Considerations are intended to help school administrators: (1) promote behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19, (2) maintain healthy environments, (3) maintain healthy operations, and (4) prepare for when someone gets sick.
- On 20 August 2020, [The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services \(MDHHS\) reported 14 coronavirus outbreaks at schools](#). New Covid-19 cases have plateaued in the last two weeks, while deaths remain flat in Michigan. Testing has remained steady, with an average of more than 25,000 per day, with the positive rate between 3 and 4 percent. MDHHS declared that it has plans to publish outbreak data, including school outbreaks, at a regional level in the near future.
- The [FBI is investigating a data breach that may have compromised the identity of people with the COVID-19 virus in South Dakota](#). South Dakota Department of Public Safety Director has sent a letter to people who may have been affected by the 19 June breach. The letter indicates the state's fusion centre used Netsential.com's services to build a secure online portal this spring to help first responders identify people who had tested positive for the coronavirus so they could take precautions while responding to emergency calls. The South Dakota letter notes

police in the state weren't given names but could call a dispatcher to verify positive cases. Houston-based Netsentinals added labels to the files that might allow a third-party to identify patients and the breach could have compromised people's names, addresses and virus status.

- The FDA has released a temporary industry guidance entitled, [Manufacturing, Supply Chain, and Drug and Biological Product Inspections During COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Questions and Answers](#). The FDA recognizes the COVID-19 pandemic is not only impacting public health, but also drug development programs, ongoing manufacturing operations and the FDA's ability to conduct inspections. The questions and answers in the guidance provide information regarding inspections for facilities that manufacture pharmaceutical products and sites involved in the conduct of clinical, analytical and nonclinical studies.
- As part of the FDA's effort to protect consumers, the agency issued a joint warning letter with the Federal Trade Commission to [Living Senior, LLC](#) for selling fraudulent COVID-19 related products. Living Senior, LLC, sells cannabidiol (CBD) products with misleading claims that the products can mitigate, prevent, treat, diagnose, or cure COVID-19 in people. Currently, there are no FDA-approved products to prevent or treat COVID-19. FDA has requested that Living Senior, LLC, immediately stop selling these unapproved and unauthorized products. Consumers concerned about COVID-19 should consult with their health care provider. The FDA has issued a warning letter to [Predictive Biotech, Inc.](#), for marketing CoreCyte, an unapproved umbilical cord-derived product claiming to mitigate, prevent, treat diagnose and/or cure COVID-19. Additionally, the FDA, in conjunction with the Federal Trade Commission, issued a separate letter to [PA Green Wellness, LLC](#), for offering CoreCyte for sale to patients in the U.S. to prevent COVID-19.
- FDA, in partnership with OSHA, developed the [Employee Health and Food Safety Checklist for Human and Animal Food Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). The checklist will assist the food industry with operational changes it may have as a result of COVID-19. The checklist pulls guidance from the FDA, CDC, and OSHA; and serves as a quick reference in the areas of employee health, social distancing, and food safety for food operations that have been impacted during the pandemic.

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

- On 23 August 2020, [South Korean authorities reported the highest daily rise in novel coronavirus cases since early March](#), saying tougher social distancing rules may be needed as outbreaks continued to spread from a Seoul church and other gatherings. The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) reported 397 new infections as of midnight August 22, up from the previous day's 332 and marking more than a week of daily three-digit rises. From 23 August, the government extended second-tier social-distancing rules which had been in place in Seoul to other areas of the country, banning in-person church meetings and closing nightclubs, buffets and cyber cafes. Health authorities say they may eventually deploy the toughest stage 3 social-distancing rules, where schools and business are urged to close, if the rate of increase in new infections does not slow soon.
- On 21 August 2020, the [Pan American Health Organization asked countries in the Americas to step up efforts to ensure access to prenatal care services for pregnant women](#) due to recent studies that show an increased risk of severe forms of COVID-19. In a new Epidemiological Alert, PAHO notes that recently published results and studies based on COVID-19 surveillance data have indicated an increased risk among pregnant women of presenting with severe forms of COVID-19 and, therefore, of being hospitalized and admitted to intensive care units. It suggested that countries intensify efforts to ensure access to prenatal care services, as well as to implement preventive measures to reduce morbidity and mortality associated with COVID-19 across all levels of the health system, in order to maintain the commitment to reducing maternal and perinatal mortality and the progress achieved to date.
- [The World Health Organization hopes the planet will be rid of the coronavirus pandemic in less than two years, faster than it took for the Spanish flu](#). The WHO Director General indicated that, the world also now has the advantage of far better technology and additional tools like vaccines, that can make it possible to finish it in a shorter time than the 1918 flu.
- According to the media, [at least 41 schools in Berlin have reported that students or teachers have become infected with the coronavirus not even two weeks after schools reopened in the German capital](#). This event comes after a hotly contested debate of reopening and the possible risks of virus clusters building up in educational institutions and then spreading beyond to families and further into society. Education in Germany is not in the hands of the federal government, but under the auspices of the country's 16 states and thus there are many differing COVID-19 rules in place depending on each state, especially when it comes to wearing masks. Children are obliged to wear masks in the hallways, during breaks and when they enter the classroom, but they can take the masks off once they sit in their places and classes begin. Berlin was one of the first cities in Germany reopening its schools after the summer holidays.
- [On 20 August 2020, the Italian Health Ministry reported that in the last 24 hours 845 new infections were registered](#). Six people also died over the last 24 hours, bringing the death toll to 35,418 from nearly 257,000 cases of infection. Italy emerged from a severe lockdown in May after becoming one the first European countries to report cases of Covid-19. The highest number of cases were reported in the northern Veneto and Lombardy regions, with 159 and 154 and in Rome's Lazio region with 115.

- [Russia's plan to move upward its COVID-19 vaccine, even before full trials show how well it works](#), is prompting concern among virus experts, who warn a partially effective shot may encourage the novel coronavirus to mutate. Viruses, including the pandemic SARS-CoV-2, are known for their ability to mutate all the time, and often this has little or no impact on the risk posed to people. Nevertheless, some scientists are worried that adding evolutionary stress to the pathogen by deploying what might not be a fully protective vaccine could make things worse.
- [Papua New Guinea blocked the arrival of a flight carrying 180 workers from China as a precaution, after a Chinese mine operator confirmed that its employees were given a coronavirus vaccine in a possible unauthorized trial](#). PNG authorities stated on 21 August 2020 the ban of COVID-19 vaccine trials after Ramu NiCo Management (MCC) Ltd. confirmed the vaccination of its Chinese employees. Pharmaceutical companies in China and other countries are racing to develop a vaccine against the coronavirus. A Chinese drug company is testing a vaccine on volunteers in Indonesia, but none has been approved for general use. PNG authorities are requesting more information from the Chinese government. While in Beijing, a foreign ministry representative declared that he had no information about Papua New Guinea but defended China's drug development.
- [A partnership to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on Amazonian peoples, was concurred between WHO though PAHO with indigenous leaders from Amazonian peoples and experts from numerous international agencies](#). In a virtual dialogue with leaders of indigenous organizations from Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela, as well as other national and international organizations, PAHO experts discussed access to health for vulnerable populations in the context of the current pandemic. The meeting gave visibility to the situation of Amazonian indigenous peoples and presented the WHO/PAHO actions in the Amazon sub region in collaboration with the countries and indigenous organizations from the area. The main objective of these collaborations is to obtain a diagnosis of health gaps and ways to facilitate access to prevention and health services for populations affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A [team of three Israeli scientists has pioneered a coronavirus testing procedure that the scientists report is faster and more efficient than any now in use, testing samples in pools of as many as 48 people at once](#). The Israeli government plans to roll out the new method in 12 labs across the country by October, anticipating that another wave of coronavirus infections could coincide with influenza season with potentially calamitous results. The new pooled-testing method, which was formally approved for clinical use by the Israeli health ministry on 18 August, could allow schools, college campuses, businesses and airlines to clear whole groups of people far faster than has been possible until now.

#### **Studies Related to Coronavirus disease (COVID -19) Outbreak (Official and Media)**

- A [Canadian study suggests that bigger class could mean up to five times the COVID-19 infections](#). A mathematician and his collaborators have decided to plug some scenarios into a model. The experts stated that, a class sizes of the magnitude many provinces are allowing could lead to outbreaks lasting weeks or even months. The number of infections increased rapidly with the number of children in a primary school classroom or before-and-after school daycare program, according to the model. Policy makers planning for elementary school class sizes of 30 kids or more need to immediately reconfigure their school opening plans and switch to hybrid models of part in-person, part online, researchers stated.
- [In a survey conducted by the International Organization for Migration \(IOM\) to assess the COVID-19's Impact on Migrant Population in Central America and Mexico](#) concluded that over half (51 percent) of all migrants participating in the survey in the region Mexico, Central America lost their jobs due to the pandemic. Results show that 20 percent of migrants are currently working and about a third of all migrants in the region fail to gain any employment at all during their breaks. More than 1,600 people participated in this survey organized by [IOM](#), which was launched in June to measure and understand the impact of the pandemic on migration plans. The survey also probed the socio-economic situation, physical and mental health, and risk factors facing migrants from the region. The survey revealed that the mental health of migrants was affected as more than half of the interviewed declared they have faced situations such as widespread fear of contagion, isolation, uncertainty, socio-economic consequences, and concerns derived from the pandemic. Almost 60 per cent of those intending to migrate decided to postpone or cancel their plans due to the pandemic. About half of all migrants in Central America and Mexico lost jobs due to the pandemic, and 20 percent of those already living as migrants are considering returning to their country of origin as soon as their economic conditions or the health measures adopted by their countries allow them to.
- A [study by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has showed that transmission of COVID-19 from children or adults to other people in Rhode Island childcare programs occurred on only a limited basis](#). Such transmission was found in just four of the 666 childcare programs operating in the state, with 17 people becoming infected, according to the CDC analysis that covered 1 June to 31 July. While only limited transmission was detected in the childcare settings, the pandemic still had a major impact, with 853 children and staff members going into self-quarantine because an infected person had showed up at a facility. About three-quarters of the 891 childcare programs had been allowed to reopen under CDC guidelines that included reduced enrollment, universal use of masks for adults, daily symptom screening of adults and children, and enhanced cleaning and

disinfection. The COVID-19 transmission in the four programs was identified mainly in the last two weeks of July, when community transmission in Rhode Island had increased.

- [On 23 August 2020, Public Health England reported that Covid-19 infections and outbreaks were uncommon in English schools after they reopened in June.](#) A study released by the health agency found there were 67 individual cases, four co-primary cases and 30 outbreaks of Covid-19 in schools during June. Co-primary cases were defined as two or more confirmed cases with a common epidemiological link diagnosed at the same time, while outbreaks were defined as two or more epidemiologically linked cases where subsequent cases were diagnosed within 14 days. The 67 single cases were made up of 30 students and 37 staff. A total of 121 cases were linked to the outbreaks, 30 in children and 91 in staff. More than a million children attended school in the month. The study shows a strong correlation between the regional incidence of Covid-19 and the number of outbreaks in educational settings, which emphasises the importance of controlling community transmission.
- [On 23 August 2020, the scientist from Singapore indicated that coronavirus can survive on meat and fish](#) that has been frozen for at least three weeks. In the study, individual slices of salmon, chicken and pork from supermarkets in Singapore were sliced and a sample of the virus was added to them and were stored in freezing temperatures, between 4C, which is standard refrigeration temperature, and minus 20C, which is standard freezing temperature. After 21 days, researchers found the virus was still present in the fish and meat samples. Scientists argue transmission via contaminated food is not a major infection route, but the movement of contaminated items to a region without infections could potentially initiate a new outbreak. Scientists report this could explain why sudden outbreaks have happened in countries that have not had any cases for long periods.
- [An expert virologist in Thailand has indicated that a 14-day quarantine period is not enough to ensure full recovery from COVID-19.](#) The expert suggested that people need to self-isolate for another 14 days meaning almost a month to be sure the virus is gone. Based on the cases studied the virologist recommends that the incubation period of Covid-19 virus is usually two to seven days, but can also take as long as 14 to 21 days. Those who have already undergone 14-days quarantine are advised to self-isolate themselves for another 14 days to ensure they do not spread the disease.
- [A new study co-authored by Yale University found one likely explanation of staff members who work at multiple nursing homes increased infections of Covid-19.](#) The study published at the [National Bureau of Economic Research](#), used smartphone location data, observing that the movement of people among the facilities is associated with increased infections. They estimate that banning shared staff could reduce infections by 44%. Location data from 30 million smartphones between 13 March 2020, when the ban on visitors began, and 23 April 2020. The authors paired the location data with nursing home addresses and satellite building images to track when smartphones entered nursing homes. Previous studies have found that many nursing home staff work at multiple facilities as they work through staffing agencies, to supplement their income with additional jobs and are independent clinicians or technicians as well.
- A new study published in the [American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine](#) provides [possible explanations for COVID-19 patients who present with extremely low, otherwise life-threatening levels of oxygen, but no signs of dyspnea \(difficulty breathing\).](#) The study complement new understandings of the condition, known as silent hypoxemia that could prevent unnecessary intubation and ventilation in patients during the current and expected second wave of coronavirus. The study included 16 COVID-19 patients with very low levels of oxygen (as low as 50%; normal blood oxygen saturation is between 95 and 100%), without shortness of breath or dyspnea, and found that several pathophysiological mechanisms account for most, if not all, cases of silent hypoxemia. While acknowledging that further research is needed, the study concludes that features about COVID-19 that physicians find baffling become less strange when viewed in the light of long-established principles of respiratory physiology. As oxygen levels drop in patients with COVID-19, the brain does not respond until oxygen falls to very low levels at which point a patient typically becomes short of breath.
- [A new study led by University of Glasgow investigated the effects of multimorbidity and polypharmacy \(taking multiple medications\) on the risk of a serious coronavirus infection.](#) The study published in [PLOS ONE](#), is the first to link both multimorbidity and polypharmacy with the risk of having a positive COVID-19 test. These results will be important for public health and clinical decisions in the future, to continue to manage the health of those at greatest risk of a severe COVID-19 infection during this pandemic.

## Domestic Events of Interest

### [Canada - Fresh imported peaches recalled by Prima Wawona may be unsafe due to Salmonella \(Official\)](#)

On 22 August 2020, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is warning the public not to consume and retailers, distributors, manufacturers, and food service establishments such as hotels, restaurants, cafeterias, hospitals, and nursing homes not to serve, use, or sell the fresh peaches with various brand names by Prima Wawona, located in Fresno, California, due to possible Salmonella contamination. Various importers in Canada are conducting a recall of the affected products. Peaches with the same PLU numbers and that are Product of Canada are not affected. The Public Health Agency of Canada is investigating an outbreak of human illness.

## International Events of Interest

### [United States - Target recalls peaches, linking them to Salmonella outbreak \(Media\)](#)

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), along with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are investigating a multi-state outbreak of Salmonella Enteritidis infections linked to consumption of peaches supplied by Wawona Packing Company. MDH also is warning the public if they purchased at retail locations including Aldi and Target after linking Salmonella infections to the produce. According to a media report, at the moment there are 68 reported cases of Salmonella resulting in 14 hospitalizations in 9 states: Connecticut, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

### [Democratic Republic of Congo - Ebola outbreak in western Democratic Republic of the Congo reaches 100 cases \(Media\)](#)

The number of cases in the ongoing Ebola outbreak in western Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has reached 100, a near two-fold increase in a little over five weeks. The outbreak presents significant logistical challenges, with affected communities spanning large distances in remote and densely-forested areas of the province, which straddles the Equator. At its widest points, the outbreak is spread across approximately 300 km both from east to west and from north to south. It can take days to reach affected populations, with responders and supplies often having to traverse areas without roads, necessitating long periods of river boat travel. WHO and its partners have helped to screen more than 640 000 people across 40 points of control that were set up to help keep travellers safe when crossing into an affected area.

### [Yemen - Polio outbreak declared in Yemen \(Media\)](#)

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) announced that a circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 1 (cVDPV1) outbreak has been declared in Yemen. Fifteen cVDPV1 cases were reported week of 17 August. These genetically-linked VDPV1 were isolated from 14 AFP cases, with onset of paralysis ranging from 31 January to 18 June 2020 (with a further AFP case from June 2019 retrospectively confirmed). The cases are from different districts of Saada Governorate, a relatively densely populated area, which has also been affected in the past by conflict and access issues, in the north-west of the country. Officials say the isolates have 17-24 Nt changes from Sabin 1, suggesting circulation of potentially up to two years. WHO and UNICEF are supporting local health authorities to plan and launch an effective outbreak response to limit virus spread.

### [ECDC - West Nile virus - Multi-country \(World\) - Monitoring season 2020 \(Official\)](#)

According to [ECDC latest report](#), between 14 and 20 August 2020, EU Member States reported 34 human cases of WNV infection: Italy (17), Greece (11) and Spain (six). One case was reported from the province of Verbano-Cusio-Ossola, Italy, which had not been affected in previous transmission seasons. All other cases were reported from areas that have been affected during previous transmission seasons. This week, no deaths were reported. No human cases of WNV infection or deaths were reported from EU neighbouring countries. Spain is currently experiencing an outbreak of WNV infection in the province of Seville. Six confirmed human cases reported through TESSy and an additional 13 probable cases are being further investigated. As these probable cases have not yet been reported through TESSy they are not included in the list of the cases in the Surveillance Atlas. Additional patients with meningo-encephalitis are currently being tested.

## Researches, Policies and Guidelines

### [Selfies could be used to detect heart disease: New research uses artificial intelligence to analyse \(Study\)](#)

On 21 August 2020, the [European Heart Journal](#) published a study about sending a selfie to the doctor could be a cheap and simple way of detecting heart disease. In the study, trained research nurses took four facial photos with digital cameras: one frontal, two profiles and one view of the top of the head. The researchers interviewed the patients to collect data on socioeconomic status, lifestyle and medical history. Radiologists reviewed the patients angiograms and assessed the degree of heart disease depending on how many blood vessels were narrowed by 50% or more ( $\geq 50\%$  stenosis), and their location. This information was used to create, train and validate the deep learning algorithm. The researchers then tested the algorithm on a further 1,013 patients from nine hospitals in China, enrolled between April 2019 and July 2019. The majority of patients in all the groups were of Han Chinese ethnicity. The study found that the algorithm outperformed existing methods of predicting heart disease risk (Diamond-Forrester model and the CAD consortium clinical score). In the validation group of patients, the algorithm correctly detected heart disease in 80% of cases (the true positive rate or sensitivity) and correctly detected heart disease was not present in 61% of cases (the true negative rate or 'specificity'). In the test group, the sensitivity was 80% and specificity was 54%.

Best Regards | Sincères salutations  
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