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**To:** gphin / rmisp (PHAC/ASPC)  
**Subject:** GPHIN Daily Report (14 October 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 12 October 2020 at 19:00 EDT, a total of 184,881 cases have been recorded in Canada including 9,654 deaths. The cases are reported in Newfoundland and Labrador (283 confirmed cases, 4 deaths), Prince Edward Island (63 confirmed cases), Nova Scotia (1,092 confirmed cases, 65 deaths), New Brunswick (284 confirmed cases, 2 deaths), Quebec (87,791 confirmed cases, 5,970 deaths), Ontario (60,692 confirmed cases, 3,017 deaths), Manitoba (2,779 confirmed cases, 35 deaths), Saskatchewan (2,174 confirmed cases, 25 deaths), Alberta (20,956 confirmed cases, 286 deaths), British Columbia (10,734 confirmed cases, 250 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 14 October 2020, 10:48 GMT, there were 38,426,539 cases of COVID-19 and 1,091,759 deaths reported globally. Top 10 countries with the highest number of cases, by alphabetical order are: Argentina (917,035 cases, 24,572 deaths), Brazil (5,114,823 cases, 151,063 deaths); Colombia (924,098 cases, 28,141 deaths); France (756,472, 32,942 deaths); India (7,241,517 cases, 110,645 deaths); Mexico (825,340 cases, 84,420 deaths); Peru (853,974 cases, 33,419 deaths); Russia (1,340,409 cases, 23,205 deaths); Spain (925,341 cases, 33,204 deaths); United States (8,093,600 cases, 220,900 deaths).

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

- On 13 October 2020, according to the media [Canada's Middlesex-London surpassed 1,000 COVID-19 cases](#). A total of 886 people have not required hospitalization after testing positive, while 86 people have spent time in hospital outside of the Intensive Care Unit and 33 people have required treatment in the ICU. Outbreaks have been declared at Craigwiel Gardens, Earls Court Village, Extendicare, Henley Place, McGarrell Place, and Meadow Park Care Centre. There are currently 93 active cases in London and Middlesex County. Provincially, more than 1,500 new cases were recorded over the past two days. The province did not report figures on 12 October 2020 because it was a holiday, so on 13 October 2020 the report covers two days. There were 807 new cases recorded on 12 October and 746 on 13 of October.
- [Canadian Farmers and other agri-food businesses in Ontario can now apply for federal funding aimed at keeping workers safe during the COVID-19 pandemic](#). Canadas Federal government announced \$11.6 million to help with improvements for Ontario farms such as building physical barriers for worker separation, upgrading HVAC systems and improving hand-washing facilities Agri-food workers, especially in the Windsor-Essex region, were hit hard by the pandemic's first wave, with several outbreaks on farms. The announcement is part of a \$35 million investment announced in last month's throne speech to help the country's agricultural sector weather the pandemic.
- [On 13 October 2020, the number of known active cases of COVID-19 in Ottawa held steady and the number of recoveries nearly matched with the number of new confirmed cases](#). OPH reported 116 new cases of COVID-19 in Ottawa, a slight decline from the 119 reported on Thanksgiving 12 October 2020. Some testing facilities were closed over the Thanksgiving long weekend, which may have contributed to a lower number of tests; however, Ontario's testing backlog has been cut nearly in half since their last update on 11 October 2020. OPH reports 839 active cases of COVID-19, up one from 12 October 2020 report. The number of active cases is the number of

total laboratory-confirmed infections minus the numbers of resolved cases and deaths. A case is considered resolved 14 days after known symptom onset or positive test result.

- On 13 October 2020, according to the media [Travel agency wants to expand COVID-19 Atlantic bubble to include Cuban resort](#). A Nova Scotia travel agency wants to extend the bubble to a resort in Cuba this winter. The plan would provide a potentially COVID-free vacation for Atlantic Canadians looking to escape the winter weather for the sunny beaches of the Caribbean. Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador in which residents are free to travel without having to self-isolate when they cross borders.
- According to the media [Quebec raises coronavirus alert level for more regions as 815 new cases reported](#). Quebec moves three more regions into red alert level as cases rise. Quebec Premier announced on 13 October 2020 that the regions of Montréal, Centre-du-Québec and Capitale-Nationale will be moving to a red alert level as more cases of COVID-19 being recorded. He asked people to avoid indoor gatherings of more than 15 minutes and continue to make sacrifices to bring the spread under control.

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

- [The U.S. Food and Drug Administration granted permission to the drug maker and German partner BioNTech SE to enroll the younger participants as young as 12](#), according to an update on 12 October 2020 on the U.S. Company's website. Johnson & Johnson, Moderna Inc and AstraZeneca Plc to develop a safe and effective vaccine for the coronavirus. Pfizer Inc will enroll participants as young as 12 in its large, late-stage COVID-19 vaccine trial to understand how it works in a wider age group. Pfizer last month scaled up its trial to about 44,000 participants, from up to 30,000, to enroll people as young as 16 and those with chronic, stable HIV, hepatitis C and hepatitis B. The trial, which is being conducted in four countries including the United States, has enrolled 37,864 participants as of Monday, with 42 per cent overall participants from ages 56 to 85.
- According to two studies published online 12 October 2020 in the [Journal of the American Medical Association](#) the number of expected [U.S. deaths increased considerably from March through July 2020, with 67 percent of these excess deaths attributed to COVID-19](#); and the United States has experienced high COVID-19-associated mortality compared with other countries. Previous studies of excess deaths (the gap between observed and expected deaths) during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic found that publicly reported COVID-19 deaths underestimated the full death toll, which includes documented and undocumented deaths from the virus and non-COVID-19 deaths caused by disruptions from the pandemic. A previous analysis found that COVID-19 was cited in only 65% of excess deaths in the first weeks of the pandemic (March-April 2020); deaths from non-COVID-19 causes (e.g., Alzheimer disease, diabetes, heart disease) increased sharply in 5 states with the most COVID-19 deaths. This study updates through 1 August 2020, the estimate of excess deaths and explores temporal relationships with state reopening's (lifting of coronavirus restrictions).

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

- [Mexico recorded its first confirmed case of a person infected with COVID-19 and influenza at the same time](#). The patient is a 54-year-old woman with a history of autoimmune disease, cancer, obesity and COPD, who is hospitalized in stable condition at the Salvador Zubirán National Institute of Medical Sciences and Nutrition (INCMNSZ), in Mexico City. The Director General of Epidemiology described that the patient was first admitted by COVID-19 and was discharged on 6 October 2020, but returned to the hospital on 8 October 2020 for a relapse from influenza. The UNAM spokesman for coronavirus, stated that regarding the severity of infecting both viruses, there is still insufficient scientific evidence to claim that the risk is higher.
- [Chinese authorities are investigating the source of the infections in eight patients at Qingdao's Municipal Chest Hospital and one family member](#). The Chinese National Health Commission stated that the whole city will be tested within five days. [China to test 9 million people as coronavirus cluster detected in city of Qingdao](#). China, where the pandemic emerged in December 2019, has reported 4,634 deaths and 85,578 cases, plus nine suspected cases that have yet to be confirmed.
- On 13 October 2020, [India reported 66,732 new coronavirus cases in the past 24 hours, driving the country's overall tally to 7.1 million](#). The Health Ministry on 12 October 2020 also reported 816 deaths in the past 24 hours, taking total fatalities to 109,150. India is seeing fewer new daily cases of the virus since mid-September 2020 when daily infections touched a record high of 97,894 cases. It's averaging more than 70,000 cases daily so far this month. Health experts have warned that congregations during major festivals later this month and in November have the potential to spread the virus. They also caution that coming winter months are expected to aggravate respiratory ailments.
- Starting 14 October 2020, [Malaysia will restrict movements in its biggest city, Kuala Lumpur, neighboring Selangor state and the administrative capital of Putrajaya to curb a sharp rise in coronavirus cases](#). Malaysia Defense Minister announced that all schools in these areas will be shut and all religious, sports and social activities will be halted for two weeks. The Minister confirmed that economic activities can continue but with strict health measures. The move comes just over four months after Malaysia lifted a three-month nationwide lockdown to control the pandemic. It has experienced a new wave of cases following increased travel for an election last month in eastern Sabah state, a hotspot on Borneo Island. Several politicians, including a Cabinet minister,

tested positive for the virus after returning from Sabah. Malaysia Prime Minister had to isolate himself for two weeks after coming into contact with the minister. Other restrictions include a limit of two people leaving each household to purchase groceries. Malaysia has reported more than 16,000 cases with 157 deaths.

- [Authorities in Indonesia's capital have moved to ease strict social restrictions despite a steady increase in cases nationwide](#). Jakarta imposed large-scale social restrictions from April to June 2020, then eased them gradually. The city brought back strict restrictions last month as the virus spread. Jakarta Governor announced that his administration decided to ease the restrictions from 12 October 2020 because the increase in infections has stabilized. The move came days after Indonesia President urged local administrations to refrain from imposing lockdown measures that could cause crippling economic damage in Southeast Asia's largest economy.
- [Sri Lankan officials stated that they have suspended the repatriation of citizens stranded overseas by the coronavirus because the country's quarantine facilities are full](#). A Sri Lankan Army Commander, who heads the task force to control the virus, says a steep rise in COVID-19 patients in the past week has filled the quarantine facilities. Sri Lanka earlier announced it had successfully contained the virus, with no local infections reported for two months. But a cluster originating in a garment factory earlier this month has resulted in 1,307 new cases in just one week. The country has reported a total of 4,791 cases, including 13 deaths.
- [South Korea has confirmed 97 new cases of the coronavirus, a modest uptick from the daily levels reported last week](#). The increase comes as officials ease social distancing restrictions after concluding that transmissions have slowed following a resurgence in mid-August 2020. The figures released by the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency on Monday brought the number of infections since the pandemic began to 24,703, including 433 deaths. South Korea relaxed its social distancing guidelines beginning Monday, allowing high-risk businesses like nightclubs and karaoke bars to open as long as they employ preventive measures. Spectators will also be allowed at professional sports events, although teams will initially be allowed to only sell 30% of the seats in stadiums.
- On 13 October 2020, [Netherlands National Institute for Public Health confirmed an 89-year-old Dutch woman, also sick with a rare form of bone marrow cancer, had recently died after contracting COVID-19 for a second time](#), according to a case report in *the Lancet Infectious Diseases* medical journal. The case of a man in the United States infected twice with the virus that causes COVID-19 shows there is much yet to learn about immune responses and also raises questions over vaccination. The report was published just hours after U.S. President Donald Trump, who was hospitalized with COVID-19 earlier this month, said he felt "so powerful" and believes he now has immunity.
- On 13 October 2020, [Mexico's Health Secretary announced that Chinese-made covid-19 coronavirus vaccine could begin to be applied in Mexico next December 2020 or no later than January 2021](#), also clarifying that the vaccine must first be ensured to be safe. The announcement was presented at the President's morning press conference. Mexico will buy eventual vaccines for 39 million people from AstraZeneca PLC of the U.K., as many as 17 million from Pfizer Inc. and 35 million from China's CanSino Biologics Inc. It is also participating in the international vaccine alliance Covax, through which it expects to obtain doses for about 26 million people.
- [Europe launches new coronavirus restrictions as cases spike](#), the governments across Europe ratcheted up restrictions on 13 October 2020, in an effort to contain the spread of the coronavirus as the continent recorded its highest weekly number of new infections since the start of the pandemic. The World Health Organization said there were more than 700,000 new COVID-19 cases reported in Europe last week, a jump of 34% compared to the previous week, with Britain, France, Russia and Spain accounting for more than half of new infections recorded in the region.

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

- [On 13 October 2020, Novavax Inc announced that it has set up a team of company veterans as it seeks U.S. regulatory approval for its seasonal influenza vaccine and to help develop a combined influenza/COVID-19 vaccine for use after the pandemic](#). The flu vaccine, NanoFlu, met the primary and secondary goals in late-stage comparison study with Sanofi's influenza vaccine Fluzone Quadrivalent earlier in the year. Novavax is among global drugmakers racing to develop a vaccine for COVID-19 and last month started a late-stage trial of its experimental vaccine, NVX-CoV2373, in the United Kingdom.
- In the earlier report titled "[Unusual Features of the SARS-CoV-2 Genome Suggesting Sophisticated Laboratory Modification Rather Than Natural Evolution and Delineation of Its Probable Synthetic Route](#)", researches disproved the possibility of SARS-CoV-2 arising naturally through evolution and instead proved that SARS-CoV-2 must have been a product of laboratory modification. It also strengthens the earlier assertion that SARS-CoV-2 is a product of laboratory modification, which can be created in approximately six months using a template virus owned by a laboratory of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). These viruses (the RaTG13 bat coronavirus, a series of pangolin coronaviruses, and the RmYN02 bat coronavirus) reportedly share high sequence homology with SARSCoV-2 and have altogether constructed a seemingly plausible pathway for the natural evolution of SARSCoV-2. In-depth analyses of the available data and [literature to prove that these novel animal coronaviruses do not exist in nature](#) has been used.

- On 13 October 2020, the [trial to test if Vitamin D protects against COVID-19](#). Scientists are looking for volunteers to take part in a trial to see if taking vitamin D can give the immune system a boost against COVID-19. People who join would be sent pills in the post to take daily for six months if a finger-prick test shows they are deficient in the sunshine vitamin. UK residents are already advised to consider taking supplements over winter when vitamin D levels can dip.
- On 13 October 2020, [Eli Lilly pauses COVID-19 antibody trial due to safety concern](#). The US pharmaceutical company announces it is pausing enrolment in its COVID-19 antibody treatment trial out of an abundance of caution. The ACTIV-3 independent data safety monitoring board (DSMB) has recommended a pause in enrollment. Lilly is supportive of the decision by the independent DSMB to cautiously ensure the safety of the patients participating in this study.
- [Johnson & Johnson pause Covid-19 vaccine trial due to study participant illness](#). [Johnson & Johnson](#) has confirmed it has temporarily paused its COVID-19 vaccine candidate clinical trials due to an unexplained illness in a study participant, delaying one of the highest profile efforts to contain the global pandemic. The participant's illness is being reviewed and evaluated by an independent data and safety monitoring board as well as the company's clinical and safety physicians, the company said in a statement. J&J said that such pauses are normal in big trials, which can include tens of thousands of people. It said the study pause in giving doses of the vaccine candidate was different from a regulatory hold required by health authorities.

## Domestic Events of Interest

### [Canada - Illicit drug overdose deaths increase in north while other BC regions decline](#) (Media)

According to British Columbia Public health officials, Northern Health has the highest rate of illicit drug overdose deaths in the province, with the Northeast, North Interior, and Prince George particularly hard hit. In addition, according to B.C. Coroners Service, for the second month since the pandemic began, the number of people who died of illicit drug overdoses in the province dropped, even as it continued to rise in the North. The number of people who died of overdose had been reducing from peak levels in 2017 and 2018 until the pandemic hit. Overdose deaths in B.C. escalated from 73 people in February 2020 to around 180 people in each of May, June and July of 2020. August saw the first substantial decline of deaths – 147 people – since COVID-19 public health measures were implemented.

### [Canada - Permanent CTS site set to open in Kitchener as region sees overdose deaths rise](#) (Media)

A permanent consumption and treatment services (CTS) site opens in Kitchener on 14 October 2020 as Waterloo region sees an increase in overdose deaths. Waterloo region's acting medical officer of health, stated the site represents one piece of a larger harm reduction and opioid strategy to reduce fatal overdoses in Waterloo region. The officer stated in a virtual statement on 9 October 2020, that the opioid crisis continues to be one of the most important public health concerns across Canada, across Ontario and in Waterloo region, up to 8 October 2020, 68 people in the community lost their lives to suspected opioid overdose — surpassing the total number of deaths in 2019. The concern that opioid overdoses continue to happen because of the unpredictability of the illicit drugs supply — often containing fentanyl — and because of the stigma and shame associated with addiction and how that influences a person's decision to use alone.

### [Canada - With demand increasing, Quebec pharmacies fear flu vaccine shortage](#) (Media)

Doses of flu vaccine haven't even arrived yet and some pharmacies in Quebec are already facing shortages due to pandemic-induced interest, says the head of the association representing pharmacy owners in the province. Quebec pharmacies more than doubled their order of flu vaccine for seniors and anyone else who's eligible for a free flu shot this year to 650,000 doses from just over 300,000 last year in anticipation of greater demand

### [Canada - Montreal public health says Legionnaires' outbreak in LaSalle under control](#) (Media)

A total of eight people have been hospitalized in Montreal in connection with a probable outbreak of Legionnaires' disease. At the end of September, Montreal public health (DRSP) indicated that seven cases had been reported between 9-22 September, among LaSalle borough residents. The latter was reported in the same area on 30 September, but the person had begun to fall ill on 15 September. While eight people were hospitalized, no deaths were reported.

## International Events of Interest

### [Sudan - 56 die of fever in northern Sudan](#) (Media)

More than 2,000 people in Sudan's Northern State have suffered from high fevers and bleeding in the past two weeks. 56 people have died. The Northern State's Ministry of Health reported in a press statement that it is directly supervising the situation in 13 hospitals and 47 health centres in Ed Debba and Merowe localities. Two weeks ago ten people had already died. The Ministry further stated it will organise awareness campaigns to prevent the spread of the disease. In the past, fevers accompanied by bleeding turned out to be chikungunya, a mosquito-borne fever that can cause death. Two years ago, dozens of people died in Kassala as a result of chikungunya infections. Last week, 41 cases of chikungunya were reported in West Darfur.



### **South Sudan - South Sudan denied reports of an Ebola outbreak following the mysterious deaths of three people in the northwestern town of Raja (Media)**

Local media reported that three people died of suspected hemorrhagic fever in Raja county, raising fears of an Ebola outbreak in the conflict-torn east African country. During the Health Ministry's weekly briefing on 12 October, director of preventive health services at South Sudan's Ministry of Health stated that there is no Ebola outbreak in the country. The official reported, all the suspected cases were tested for Ebola and the results turned out negative. The Ministry of Health informed the public that the samples tested negative for Ebola Virus Disease and other forms of Viral Hemorrhagic Fever. According to the official, the Health Ministry is working with partners to establish the cause of death of the three people and also strengthen preventive measures as South Sudan's western neighbor, Democratic Republic of Congo continues to battle the Ebola virus.

## **Researches, Policies and Guidelines**

### **Canada- New research finds thousands of long-stay home-care clients did not get flu shot in 2019 (Media)**

An estimated 61,000 long-stay home-care clients in Ontario and thousands more across Canada did not get a flu shot in 2019, according to the research led from the University of Waterloo. The scientists from the School of Public Health and Health Systems, informed that the number for Ontario is 18,000 more than the 2007 figure, when around 43,000 long-stay home-care clients did not get a flu shot. The study, which covered Alberta, BC, Ontario and Newfoundland in Canada, also included Belgium, New Zealand and the United States. It included individuals living in their communities who need on-going supports from the government's home-care system.

### **Canada - Fresh produce industry never likes testing such as that now imposed by Canada (Media)**

On 13 October 2020, it was reported that the program that started on 7 October 2020 and continuing at least through 31 December 2020, shipments of romaine lettuce grown in the Salinas Valley must be tested for *E. coli* O157:H7 before Canada will accept them as imports. Importers must either prove that romaine being imported to Canada is not from Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, San Benito, or Monterey counties, or else provide certificates of analysis from an accredited laboratory that confirms the lettuce has below-detectable levels of *E. coli* before it is distributed in Canada. Testing can be accomplished in the U.S. or Canada so long as the lab is accredited. The reoccurring *E. coli* outbreaks, prior to 2020, are the reason for Canada's cautionary approach for the current import season. Import requirements for U.S. romaine are now being continuously updated by the Arizona and California Leafy Green Marketing Agreements, the Canadian Horticultural Council, the Canadian Produce Marketing Association, the Produce Marketing Association in the U.S., the United Fresh Produce Association, and Western Growers.

### **United States - CDC and the American Mosquito Control Association Collaborate on First-ever Comprehensive Resources for Mosquito Control in Areas Affected by Natural Disasters (Official)**

On 13 October 2020, effectively controlling mosquitoes after a natural disaster can help communities recover more quickly and avoid potential infectious disease outbreaks from endemic viruses, such as West Nile. The resources in the issue will provide local and state entities with information to help them prepare and respond to natural disasters as it relates to mosquitoes and mosquito-borne diseases.

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

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