

Daily Update – 15 April 2021

Ontario could see over 18,000 new COVID-19 cases per day by end of May

Ontario could see well over 18,000 new daily COVID-19 infections — despite continuing vaccinations — if current trends continue according to media reports. New modelling details show additional public health measures could bring that number down closer to 10,000 new cases per day sources say, however those measures would have to be considerably more restrictive to curb the rate of infection. The modelling also shows up to 1,800 patients in intensive care by the end of May, according to the sources.

The Ontario cabinet is meeting this afternoon/evening and is considering the following proposals:

- Proposal to close all non-essential retail, no curbside pick-up or delivery
- Proposal to further restrict retail hours of operation
- Proposal to restrict curbside pick-up (only permit non-essential retail to deliver)
- Proposal to shut down non-essential construction, warehouses and manufacturing not related to health, food or automotive
- Proposal to prohibit all outdoor gatherings for non-family members in the same household
- Proposal to tighten capacity of indoor events like places of worship, weddings and funerals
- Proposal to increase fines, increase policing powers

No other news has filtered out of the Cabinet meeting but CFA expects Premier Ford to make an announcement about further restrictions on Friday.

BC Ban on indoor dining to may be extended into May

B.C.'s ban on indoor dining at restaurants and pubs is set to be extended as COVID-19 numbers continue to surge, according to the B.C. Restaurant and Foodservices Association.

The current restrictions, introduced as part of the province's three-week "circuit breaker" plan, had been set to expire on April 19.

But a statement from the BCRFA says industry representatives met on Tuesday with Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry and her deputy, Dr. Brian Emerson, and learned the ban will be extended into May.

Cargill meat plant in London shut for 2 weeks amid COVID-19 outbreak affecting 82 workers

Cargill's London Ontario meat-processing plant with 900 employees has been shut down temporarily to deal with a growing COVID-19 outbreak, with the number of active cases now at 82. The plant, which processes poultry, was closed for 14 days effective immediately as a precaution, authorities said.

A company spokesperson said the number of active cases involving employees is now at 82. A handful of cases was first reported about two weeks ago.

Conservatives announce plan to replace Liberal carbon tax with a lower levy of their own

Conservative Party leader Erin O'Toole unveiled a climate plan today which will put a price on carbon for consumers. But instead of the Liberal carbon-tax-and-rebate system, O'Toole is proposing to charge a levy on fuel purchases and use the money to fund personalized savings accounts which Canadians can use for environmentally friendly purchases.

Under O'Toole's plan, Canadians would pay a carbon levy, initially amounting to \$20 per tonne of greenhouse gas emissions, every time they buy hydrocarbon-based fuels, such as gasoline.

Under the Conservative plan rebates would be diverted in "personal low carbon savings accounts." Under the current Liberal plan the money is direct into rebates for Canadian households.

Consumers could then draw on those personal low carbon savings accounts for "things that help them live a greener life," the document says. "That could mean buying a transit pass or a bicycle, or saving up and putting the money towards a new efficient furnace, energy efficient windows or even an electric vehicle."

After safety review, Health Canada says people shouldn't hesitate to get AstraZeneca vaccine

Following reports of rare blood clotting events among some who have received the AstraZeneca vaccine, Health Canada officials said today they still believe the product is safe — and Canadians should have no qualms about rolling up their sleeves for it when the time comes.

Speaking to reporters at a technical briefing, Dr. Supriya Sharma, Health Canada's chief medical adviser, said there is a "very low risk" that some patients could develop blood clotting with low platelets following vaccination.

Sharma said that with a third wave of COVID-19 raging — and with the risk of hospitalization and death still much greater than the risk of developing clots following an AstraZeneca shot — the benefits of this vaccine clearly outweigh any risks.

Pointing to evidence from the U.K., where the AstraZeneca shot has been administered 20 million times, Sharma said the chance of developing these clots is roughly 1 in 250,000.

While there are other numbers circulating about the frequency of these clots, Canada is relying on the British data because the U.K. has a robust safety monitoring system and has administered a lot of shots, Sharma said.

Meanwhile, Sharma said, the odds of developing a "regular" clot — and not this rare, vaccine-induced [thrombocytopenia](#) (VIPIT) in people with low platelets — are 1 in 5 for people hospitalized with COVID-19.

The risk of a woman between the ages of 15 and 45 developing any sort of blood clot is 1 in 3,300. If they take birth control, the odds are 1 in 1,600. If a woman is pregnant, the risk is 1 in 300, Sharma said.

'Get whatever vaccine is available to you. It's that simple,' Dr. Supriya Sharma says