

COVID-19 UPDATES

Stage 3 reopening guidance

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) has developed a [Stage 3 reopening guide](#) for community physicians and clinics.

The document details guidelines and recommendations for COVID-19-related topics including vaccination, point-of-care risk assessments and personal protective equipment. Recommendations include:

- Employers should facilitate opportunities for staff and volunteers to pursue vaccination against COVID-19 (such as providing time off).
- When patients present for COVID-19 symptom assessments, or patients cannot or will not wear a mask, clinics should offer virtual appointments or dedicate specific times and rooms for in-person assessments.
- Ensure hand sanitizer is available to patients throughout the facility.
- Continue to remove all communal items that cannot be easily cleaned.
- Minimize the need for patients to wait in the waiting room; attempt to facilitate physical distancing.
- It is strongly recommended that any physician or clinic personnel who are allowed an expedited return to Canada still use heightened caution if they return to work in the 14 days after their arrival.
- Clinics may continue to ask patients about their recent travel history during point-of-care risk assessments to assist in diagnosis and in strategizing treatment options.

The CPSA has also released an [FAQ](#) for community providers.

Video: 19 to Zero town hall

Calgary family physician, Dr. Christine Luelo, and pharmacist, Dr. Heather Scarlett-Ferguson took part in a provincial 19 to Zero town hall on Tuesday, June 29, to answer Albertans' questions about COVID-19.

Public health guidelines, the vaccine roll-out and community supports were among the topics covered.

Patients can [watch the video here](#).

180 clinics join vaccination campaign

About 180 family doctors' offices in Alberta have now joined the community vaccination campaign, which offers patients the choice of being immunized by their trusted health-care provider.

A search tool has been added to the [Alberta Find a Doctor website](#) to allow patients to find out if their physician is part of the program. Users can search via the clinic directory or enter an address and [search using a map](#).

The community vaccination initiative is a partnership between the Alberta Medical Association, Primary Care Networks and Alberta Health.

Togetherall mental health resources

AHS has partnered with Togetherall to offer a free online peer-to-peer mental health support network for anyone aged 16 and over.

Albertans can register for the moderated service at togetherall.com. Please also reference the [FAQ](#), [referral script](#) and [poster](#).

General surgery tele-advice not available

General surgery tele-advice will not be available on Specialist LINK in July. Physicians seeking general surgery advice are advised to contact the general surgeon on call via hospital switchboards.

A review is being conducted into surgical tele-advice services available through Specialist LINK. Tele-advice continues to be available at this time for colorectal surgery, endocrine surgery, hepatobiliary, surgical oncology and upper GI bariatrics.

Requesting tele-advice is simple: Visit specialistlink.ca and select the preferred service or call 403-910-2551. Calls are returned within one hour during business hours (Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.).

Quick links

Save the date: Post-COVID webinar

On Tuesday, July 20, from 1–2:30 p.m., the Rehabilitative Care Alliance will host a webinar called *Rehab for Post COVID-19 Condition: Learning from experiences to date*. Registration details will be released shortly, at rehabcarealliance.ca.

Real time release of labs webinar

On Wednesday, July 21, from 5 – 6 p.m., the Alberta Medical Association will host a webinar on the planned release of microbiology, pathology, and genetics results to the My Health Record portal, which is scheduled to take place in August and September. [Register](#).

Choosing Wisely Alberta: Forum for the future

On Friday, October 15, from 8:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Choosing Wisely Alberta is hosting an online *Forum for the Future* via Zoom. [Sign up for notifications.](#)

Learn more about the Home to Hospital to Home Transitions initiative

A newsletter has been published by the team behind the Home to Hospital to Home Transitions project. [Download it here](#) to find out more about the joint AHS-Alberta Health-AMA-PCN initiative, which focuses on the smooth flow of information between acute care and primary care providers.