

Calgary Zone

COVID-19 UPDATES



PCN webinar: Checking In, Checking Up

A recording of the Calgary Zone's *Checking In, Checking Up* webinar can now be [watched online](#).

The two-hour COVID-19 and mental health virtual event, which took place on Monday, October 18, featured a panel discussion on the pressures facing local physicians as they battle the fourth wave.

The recording features the following:

- Eating disorders and primary care, with Dr. Monique Jericho ([skip to 7:19](#))
- The latest on COVID-19 science, featuring Dr. Jim Kellner (skip to [36:04](#), or [review the slides](#))
- Fleur Yumol from the Alberta Medical Association's Physician and Family Support Program ([skip to 1:07.32](#)). [Fleur's slides](#) | [Video: Substance use disorder](#)
- Panel discussion: Taking the pulse of physicians during the fourth wave ([skip to 1:24.34](#))

A [physician Q&A](#), featuring answers to questions asked during the event, is also available. The next webinar in the series will take place on Monday, November 22, from 6-8 p.m. [Register](#).

Lab booking tool for physicians

Physicians can now use an [online booking tool](#) to request time-sensitive lab appointments for patients who need to be seen quickly.

The service is designed for cases where a faster turnaround time for lab results – between seven and 21 days – is needed to facilitate treatment, diagnosis or ongoing monitoring of medications. Examples could include:

- Tests that will have a direct impact on a patient's need for specialist access
- Follow-up from an emergency room or hospital visit where lab work was requested but not booked
- Repeating abnormal lab work when a patient has experienced testing delays or not been able to access specialty follow-up
- Concerns about a possible cancer diagnosis or investigation of ongoing symptoms
- Chronic disease management that has been delayed due to COVID-19 and for which lab work is needed to determine ongoing care

For urgent testing, or when patients are immunocompromised or require other special considerations, call the Alberta Precision Labs' patient appointment line at 1-877-868-6848.

[More details.](#)

Influenza campaign kicks off

Alberta's influenza immunization campaign is underway, with community physicians receiving influenza and pneumococcal-23 vaccines from Accuristix via the Alberta Vaccine Inventory (AVI) system.

The process is very similar to the one used for ordering COVID-19 vaccine. [Program registration information.](#)

More information is available, for [patients](#) and [health providers](#).

Continuing care restrictions

New public health restrictions have been introduced at continuing care centres to help reduce the risk of residents getting COVID-19.

Effective Monday, October 25, masking will be required for all visitors, while residents will be required to quarantine after being admitted to the facility or returning from hospital until they test negative for COVID-19.

Unvaccinated friends and family members are strongly encouraged not to visit residents in person. Facility operators have the option of implementing additional rules, such as requiring proof of vaccination. [More details.](#)

Long COVID posters, pathway updates

Posters explaining long COVID symptoms to patients are now available for download. Designed for waiting and exam rooms, they are available in [letter size](#) and [11x17](#).

With the development of the Calgary Zone's [long COVID pathway](#) for physicians and nurse practitioners, the [COVID-19 adult pathway](#) has been updated to include long COVID links and resources.

Surgical tele-advice services resume

Six Specialist LINK surgical tele-advice services that have been temporarily unavailable in recent months are now back online, effective Monday, October 25.

With COVID-19 creating additional pressure on surgical staffing, some of the six surgical sub-specialty tele-advice lines were not available this fall and were consolidated into one general surgery line at the start of October. The following six services are now available again, Monday to Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

- Colorectal surgery
- Endocrine surgery
- General surgery
- Hepatobiliary
- Surgical oncology
- Upper GI bariatrics

Requesting Specialist LINK tele-advice is simple: Visit specialistlink.ca and click on the desired speciality or sub-specialty. Enter a direct phone number or cell and have the patient's personal health number at hand. Calls are returned within one hour. Tele-advice can also be requested by calling 403-910-2551.

For more information about what you can call about, or additional resources, please consult our [tele-advice guide](#).

Quick links

Advice on aggressive patients, vaccine exemption requests

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta has released new advice on managing threatening and violent patient behaviour. [Read it here](#). The document was produced in the wake of increasing reports of aggressive behaviour related to requests for vaccine exemptions. A guide to terminating the physician-patient relationship can be [read here](#).

Ivermectin report

The AHS COVID-19 Scientific Advisory Group has released a new rapid evidence report on ivermectin. [Read the report](#).

Falling Through the Crack's Story

On Tuesday, November 9, at 8 a.m., there will be a free virtual screening of *Falling Through the Cracks: Greg's Story*, a film that has sparked important conversations about challenges related to transitions in health-care. [Watch the trailer](#). [Register](#).

COVID Corner

On Wednesday, November 10, from 7-9 p.m., COVID Corner returns with *Mental Health in the Pandemic: Early Detection and Intervention*. [More details](#).