



# North Carolina Academy of Family Physicians

NC Department of Health and Human Services

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Secretary

**April 1, 2022**

# Responding to and Recovering from a Global Pandemic

- Moving Forward Together in North Carolina's Pandemic Response
- Recovering Stronger

## Next phase: Focus on recovery while staying prepared for future variants

### Core Principles



**Empowering individuals**



**Prioritizing Equity**



**Maintaining Health System Capacity**



**Collaborating with Local Partners**

### Operational Preparedness

#### ***Health System Capacity***

- ❖ Working with GA on changes needed for regulation flexibilities after SOE sunset

#### ***Vaccines Everywhere***

- ❖ “Vial in Every Fridge” Provider Campaign

#### ***Funding Testing Programs***

- ❖ Building supply to meet future surge needs

#### ***Accessible Treatment***

- ❖ Promoting access and awareness of how to access COVID treatment

#### ***Managing Outbreaks***

- ❖ Working with partners and directly supporting outbreak response in high priority settings

#### ***Refocusing Contact Tracing***

- ❖ Shifting focus to high priority settings

# Updated metrics will allow us to most effectively guide response

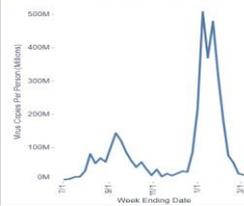
Starting 3/23 the following metrics will be displayed on the summary page of the public dashboard

## Wastewater

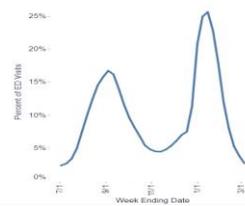
## CLI

### Early Warning Indicators This Week

**76M** Previous Week 22M  
COVID-19 Virus Copies per Person  
(millions) in Wastewater Samples



**3%** Previous Week 4%  
Emergency Department Visits for  
COVID-like Illness (CLI)



## Early Warning Indicators

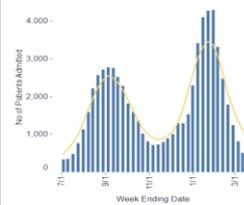
- **Wastewater Surveillance** data serves as an early warning indicator since the virus can appear in wastewater 4-6 days prior to case identification
- **COVID like Illness (CLI)** in the ER can give an early indication of rising COVID levels and early insight to impact on health systems

## Hospital Admissions

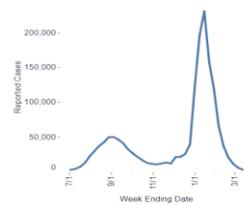
## Cases

### Current COVID-19 Status This Week

**516** Previous Week 811  
Number of Confirmed Patients  
Admitted



**3,559** Previous Week 6,469  
Weekly COVID-19 Reported Cases  
By Date of Specimen Collection



## Trends in Indicators of Current Status

- **Hospital admissions** show us how COVID-19 is impacting health systems
- The trend in overall **COVID-19 cases** can help us understand the spread of disease in specific communities or groups overtime

# Updated metrics will allow us to most effectively guide response

Starting 3/23 the following metrics will be displayed on the summary page of the public dashboard

## Vaccination Coverage

76%

Percent of Adult Population Vaccinated with at Least One Dose

71%

Percent of Adult Population Vaccinated with Two Doses or One Dose J&J

19%

Percent of Children Ages 5-11 Vaccinated with at Least one Dose

50%

Percent of Total Population Vaccinated with at Least One Booster/Additional Dose

## Vaccination Coverage

- **Staying up to date with the COVID-19 vaccine is still the best protection from severe illness**
- Monitoring vaccine data gives insight to the level of immunity in the state

## Surveillance of Variants

What COVID-19 variants are being detected in North Carolina?



## Surveillance of Variants

- Graph that shows changes in variants and when a new variant is detected
- **Early detection of new variants helps the state inform response**



## Current Status of CDC COVID-19 Community Level

- **Weekly map categorizing counties as low, medium, or high**
- This map will help people understand COVID levels in their community and inform their actions

**Low**  
Limited impact on healthcare system, low levels of severe illness

**Medium**  
Some impact on healthcare system, more people with severe illness

**High**  
High potential for healthcare system strain; high level of severe illness

# Recover Stronger

## *North Carolina's success has been driven by grounding ourselves in:*

- Strong Collaborative Partnerships.
- Robust Data Infrastructure and Accountability.
- Transparent Communications Focused on Earning Public Trust.
- Adapting to Evolving Science and Research.

## *The pandemic exacerbated existing challenges*

Behavioral Health	Children and Families	Workforce
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nearly 1 in 5 North Carolinians have a mental illness.</li><li>• During the pandemic, approximately 1 in 3 North Carolinians reported symptoms of depression and/or anxiety</li><li>• Alcohol-related ED visits increased 13% from 2019 to 2020.</li><li>• Opioid overdose deaths increased 40% from July 2019 to July 2020.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of children experiencing food insecurity rose from 1 in 5 pre-pandemic to as high as 1 in 3 children in rural NC</li><li>• Rate of children in NC discharged from EDs with a behavioral health condition increased by ~70% in the pandemic.</li><li>• ~25% of families missed a child's preventive visit due to the pandemic</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NC early childhood education staff decreased by ~10% between March 2020 and November of 2021.</li><li>• Currently over 15,000 nurse vacancies in NC &amp; nationally, nursing turnover rates were 15.8% between August 2020 and 2021 (McKinsey).</li><li>• In August 2020, 66.2% of public health workers nationwide reported feeling burnout (NIH).</li></ul>

# Recover Stronger

*These priorities and our work across the department are grounded in **whole-person health**, driven by **equity**, and responsive to the lessons learned responding to the greatest health crisis in more than a generation.*

## Behavioral Health & Resilience



We need to offer services further upstream to build resiliency, invest in coordinated systems of care that **make mental health services easy to access** when and where they are needed and **reduce the stigma** around accessing these services.

## Child & Family Wellbeing



We will work to ensure that North Carolina's children grow up safe, healthy and thriving in nurturing and resilient families and communities. **Investing in families and children's healthy development builds more resilient families, better educational outcomes and, in the long term, a stronger society.**

## Strong & Inclusive Workforce



We will work to strengthen the **workforce that supports early learning, health and wellness by delivering services** to North Carolina. And we will take action to be an equitable workplace that lives its values and ensure that all people have the opportunity to be fully included members of their communities.

***The health insurance coverage gap coupled with insufficient access to affordable care disproportionately impacts Historically Marginalized Populations who have also experienced worse outcomes than others under COVID-19. Medicaid expansion would help close the health insurance coverage gap.***