



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

Honourable Adrian Dix
Minister of Health
Room 337, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, B.C. V1V 1X4

January 11, 2021

Dear Minister Dix,

On behalf of the Official Opposition, we are writing to express our deep concern about the lack of transparency concerning the public reporting of COVID-19 data by your government.

As we enter the second year of this pandemic, the need for transparency has never been more important to British Columbians. Access to clear, consistent, and easy-to-understand data helps people better understand the risks posed by the virus, helps better inform their decision making, and helps promote greater public compliance with public health orders.

In recent months, there has been a steady call for more detailed COVID-19 data from educators and parents of school-aged children, community leaders, seniors care advocates, family members of seniors in long-term care, local governments, and members of the media.

Parents are asking for more information so they can make the best possible decisions for their children's education. Families are asking for more information so they can make sure they are providing the best possible care for elderly parents and grandparents. Data helps shape people's understanding of this pandemic, it serves as a tool to help inform people's decision-making and, right now, British Columbians do not believe enough information is being shared with them to make those evidence-based decisions.

Although we have seen some progress on this in recent weeks, British Columbia's COVID-19 data reporting still lacks transparency when compared to other provinces like Ontario, Alberta, and Saskatchewan. Concerningly, jurisdictions across the country have found ways to provide frequent, granular data to the public — while B.C. has not.

To quote Mario Possamai, author of *A Time of Fear*, the October 2020 report commissioned by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Union that examines Canada's response to COVID-19 and its impact on our healthcare workers, "The most problematic jurisdiction may be British Columbia. Its publicly disclosed data has been incomplete, inconsistent and on occasion, seemingly contradictory."

As a result of gaps in B.C.'s data reporting, it has been left up to independent researchers, scientists, parents, and journalists to compensate for the lack of information being disclosed by your government.

BC Liberal Official Opposition
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4



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In full consideration of our concerns about the transparency of the public reporting of B.C.'s COVID-19 data, we are calling on you to start providing the following:

1. Daily updates on the number of vaccinations delivered and administered in each health authority.
2. Daily updates on the number of rapid tests delivered and administered in each health authority.
3. Detailed daily case breakdowns for:
 - a. schools (identified by staff/student populations);
 - b. long-term care homes and assisted living facilities (identified by resident/staff populations; and
 - c. health care facilities (identified by doctor/nurse/health-care worker populations).
4. A daily breakdown of total MSP-billable (public) and non-MSP-billable (private) tests performed and an immediate end to the inclusion of private testing data in the reporting of B.C.'s daily positivity rate.
5. Race-based data to help better understand the impacts of the virus on racialized communities and marginalized populations.

For the health, safety, and confidence of British Columbians, we hope you take immediate efforts to provide the COVID-19 data we have requested and, ultimately, trust British Columbians with this information that they deserve to have access to during these difficult times.

Sincerely,

Renee Merrifield
MLA, Kelowna-Mission
Official Opposition Critic for Health

Jackie Tegart
MLA, Fraser-Nicola
Official Opposition Critic for Education