

COVID-19 BRIEF: Social Gatherings at Thanksgiving November 2, 2020

PURPOSE

- To determine the impact of the Thanksgiving holiday weekend (October 9-12, 2020) on SMDHU's COVID-19 case and high risk contact numbers.

INTERPRETATION NOTES

- Results include confirmed COVID-19 cases that reside in Simcoe County or the District of Muskoka unless otherwise specified.
- The number of out of jurisdiction (OOJ) confirmed cases (those not residing in Simcoe County or the District of Muskoka) that may have attended or hosted gatherings are to be considered preliminary; available information is incomplete.
- Results represent a snapshot in time and may be an underrepresentation of confirmed COVID-19 cases attributed to gatherings over the Thanksgiving long weekend.
- Often, information is incomplete regarding the number of attendees at each Thanksgiving gathering. Therefore, the number of high risk contacts and the range of gathering sizes are to be considered an estimate.

RESULTS

- Prior to the Thanksgiving weekend (up to and including October 8), SMDHU had 1,006 lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- From October 9 to October 30 inclusive, SMDHU had an additional 340 cases for a total of 1,346.
- Of these additional cases, 47 (14%) can be attributed to 23 separate Thanksgiving gatherings. An additional 15 OOJ confirmed cases have also been identified for a grand total of 62 cases.

Results presented from this point forward exclude OOJ cases

- **Demographics**
 - 27 Females, 20 Males
 - Most cases (43%) are between the ages of 45 to 64 years, while 10 cases (21%) have been reported among those aged 35-44 years. (Table 1)

Table 1. Age and Sex

Age Group	Male	Female	Total
0-17 years	1	1	2
18-34 years	1	8	9
35-44 years	4	6	10
45-64 years	10	10	20
65+ years	4	2	6
Total	20	27	47

Data source: Case Investigator emails and Case and Contact database, extracted October 30, 2020

Note: All cases investigated by Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit are included in the above confirmed case count, excludes OOJ cases.

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- **Geography**

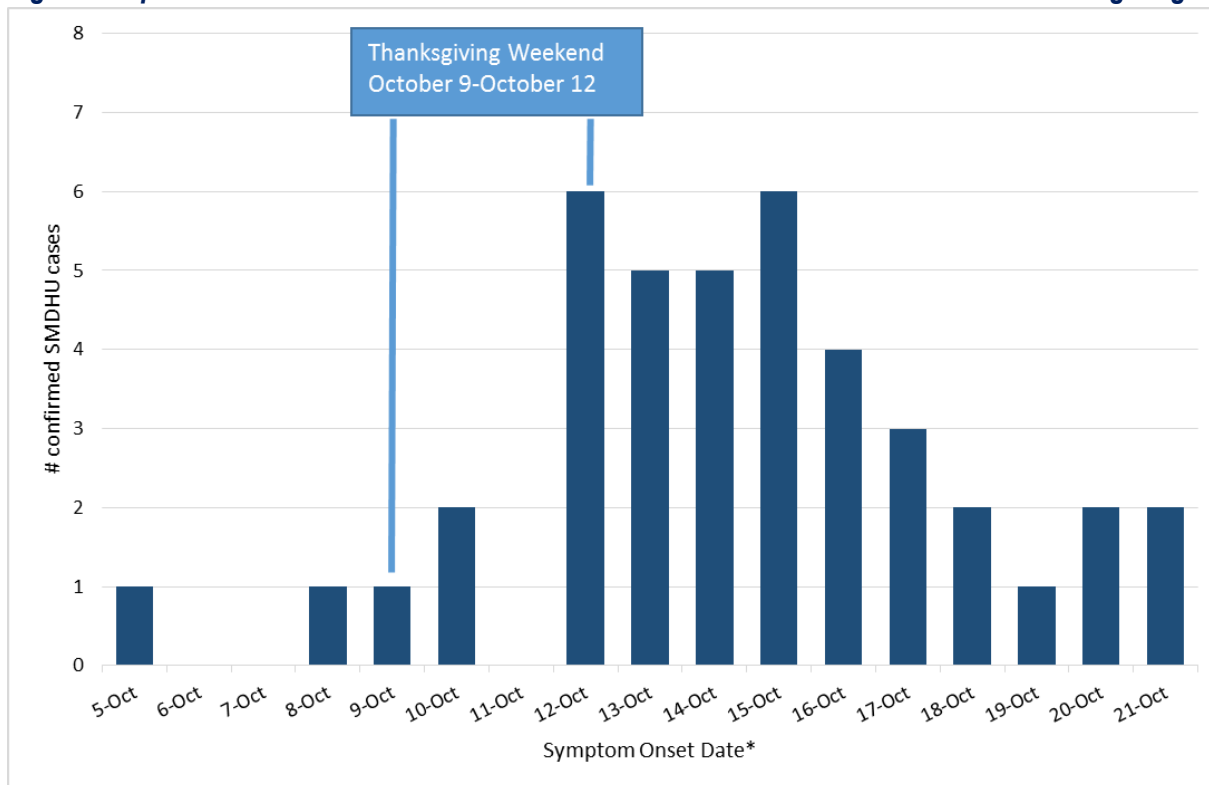
- 41 (87%) of the 47 cases reside in Simcoe County, the remaining 6 live in Muskoka District.
 - 16 are from Barrie.

- **Cluster Characteristics**

- Most gatherings consist of members from the same household along with visiting extended family members.
- The number of attendees (all confirmed cases plus high risk contacts) range from 2 to 18 with an average of 6.
- The number of confirmed cases associated with each cluster range from 1 confirmed case to 5 confirmed cases.
- All clusters identify high risk contacts (HRC). Range from 1 HRC to 17 HRCs.

- The COVID-19 incubation period ranges from 1 to 14 days. The median is 5 to 6 days between exposure and symptom onset. Most people (97.5%) develop symptoms within 11.5 days of exposure.¹
 - The peak in cases at the end of the Thanksgiving weekend and into the following week corresponds with the median length of the incubation period.

Figure 1. Epidemic Curve for Simcoe Muskoka Confirmed Cases associated with Thanksgiving Gatherings



Data source: Case and contact management. Extracted by SMDHU October 30, 2020

*Where possible, cases are reported based on the date of onset of symptoms. Date of lab testing, or reported date may be used when symptom onset is unknown.

Excludes 5 asymptomatic cases and 1 case with missing onset date. Excludes out of jurisdiction confirmed cases associated with gatherings.

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- Additional Information
 - These types of social gatherings involving multiple generations can have serious consequences.
 - 1 individual was hospitalized with COVID -19 symptoms.
 - Possible acquisitions and transmissions – the impacts are far-reaching.
 - Workplaces: mentions of positive cases at workplaces
 - School associations
 - The same potential workplace acquisition (out of jurisdiction) source identified in 2 separate clusters
 - Links to an existing outbreak at a manufacturing facility
 - Links to an existing outbreak at a retirement home.

METHODOLOGY

- With the change from the use of the Integrated Public Health Information System (iPHIS) to the Case and Contact Management (CCM) system for capturing all confirmed cases and high risk contacts, data entry practices along with data extraction difficulties do not yet allow us to pull the data as we normally do.
- Therefore, to gather the data included in this brief, two data sources were used – case investigator emails and CCM. This involved searching for the word ‘Thanksgiving’ or ‘family gathering’ with corresponding dates of Oct 9 - 12 as well as data mining the CCM clinical notes.

¹ Government of Canada. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): For health professionals. URL: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals.html>. October 26, 2020.

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Data current to October 30, 2020