



**COVID-19 IMMUNITY
TASK FORCE**

Spotlight on **CITF-FUNDED RESEARCH**



CITF Events



COVID-19
IMMUNITY
TASK FORCE

GRUPE DE TRAVAIL
SUR L'IMMUNITÉ
FACE À LA COVID-19



CanCOVID

Seminar Series | Research Results & Implications

COVID-19 vaccine safety



May 5, 2022 | 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. EDT

REGISTRATION COMING SOON

Our 7th CITF/CanCOVID research seminar brings together experts affiliated with the CITF to discuss vaccine safety – a topic of concern for everyone. Our presenters will report on:

- Results of ongoing vaccine safety monitoring in Canada, in both adults and children;
- Details about serious adverse effects in Canada, including their frequency after various vaccine doses;

- Measures to mitigate the occurrence of serious adverse events;
- The latest research on myocarditis and pericarditis;
- Vaccine safety in pregnant people;
- More!

Following the presentation, our experts will engage in a question-and-answer session with the attendees.

Presenters include:

- **Julie Bettinger, MPH, PhD**, Professor, University of British Columbia; Principal Investigator, Canadian National Vaccine Safety (CANVAS), Canadian Immunization Research Network (CIRN); CITF-funded researcher.
- **Scott Halperin, MD**, Professor, Dalhousie University; Principal Investigator, CIRN; member of the CITF Leadership Group and Chair of the CITF Vaccine Surveillance Working Party.
- **Jeff Kwong, MD, MSc, CCFP, FRCPC**, Senior Scientist, ICES; Scientist, Public Health Ontario; Professor, Department of Family & Community Medicine and Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto; CITF-funded researcher.
- **Karina Top, MD, MSc, FRCPC**, Associate Professor, Dalhousie University; Principal Investigator, Special Immunization Clinic (SIC) Network at CIRN; and co-PI, Canadian Immunization Monitoring Program, ACTIVE (IMPACT) Project; CITF-funded researcher.

And hosting on behalf of the CITF:

- **Timothy Evans, MD, PhD**, Executive Director, COVID-19 Immunity Task Force

Registration coming soon. Consult our [website](#) for further details.



CITF-Funded Research Results

Elevated levels of anxiety and psychological distress among Vancouver school staff in 2021

New results from a CITF-funded study led by University of British Columbia researchers Drs. Pascal Lavoie and Louise Mâsse, and published in the *Journal of Affective Disorders Reports* indicates that 18.7% of school staff in Vancouver reported moderate to severe symptoms of anxiety. This rate is significantly higher than that of Canadian adults (15%) surveyed during a similar period (February to May 2021). The study also found that 5.8% of school staff reported an elevated degree of psychological distress - a higher rate than among Canadian adults pre-pandemic (between 1.6% and 3%). While most Canadian elementary and high schools switched from in-person to virtual learning for parts of the 2020-21 academic year, Vancouver schools stayed open the entire time. As frontline workers, teachers' mental health were impacted during the pandemic.

[Read More](#)

COVID-19's toll on South Asians living in Ontario

Nearly a quarter (23.6%) of a sample of South Asians living primarily in Ontario's Peel Region had evidence of prior infection with SARS-CoV-2 by the end of the third viral wave in July 2021. In a pre-print, not yet peer reviewed, Dr. Sonia Anand from McMaster University expands on the factors that render this region a hot spot for COVID-19, including the high concentration of people whose jobs required that they work in person during the pandemic and multi-generational family homes.

[Read more](#)

Lower vaccination rates among people who use drugs could lead to serious outcomes from COVID-19

Preliminary findings from a CITF-funded study investigating vaccine confidence among people who use drugs in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and Downtown South neighbourhoods revealed that by the end of January 2022, 64% of those surveyed reported having received two vaccine doses, while 9% had also received a booster dose. 16% were unvaccinated. In comparison, as of February 2022, vaccination rates in British Columbia's general population were 81.1% fully vaccinated, 45.1% had received a booster dose, and 14% remained unvaccinated. Many people who use drugs face multiple overlapping barriers to accessing healthcare, such as stigma,

discrimination, and criminalization. The results were issued in a news release and have not yet been subject to peer review.

[Read more](#)



Pre-print to Publication

Vancouver public school staff were not at higher risk of COVID-19 infection in schools in 2020-2021, before Delta and Omicron

In a study now published in *BMJ Open*, Drs. Pascal Lavoie and Louise Mâsse and their team at the University of British Columbia found that school staff were not at increased risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection at school, compared to in their local communities, in the 2020-2021 school year. The authors attribute this, in part, to the appropriate public health measures being in place. This study predates the emergence of most variants of concern in Canada, including Delta and Omicron. Participants in the serosurvey were employed with the Vancouver School Board, which maintained in-person schooling during the period in question.

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