

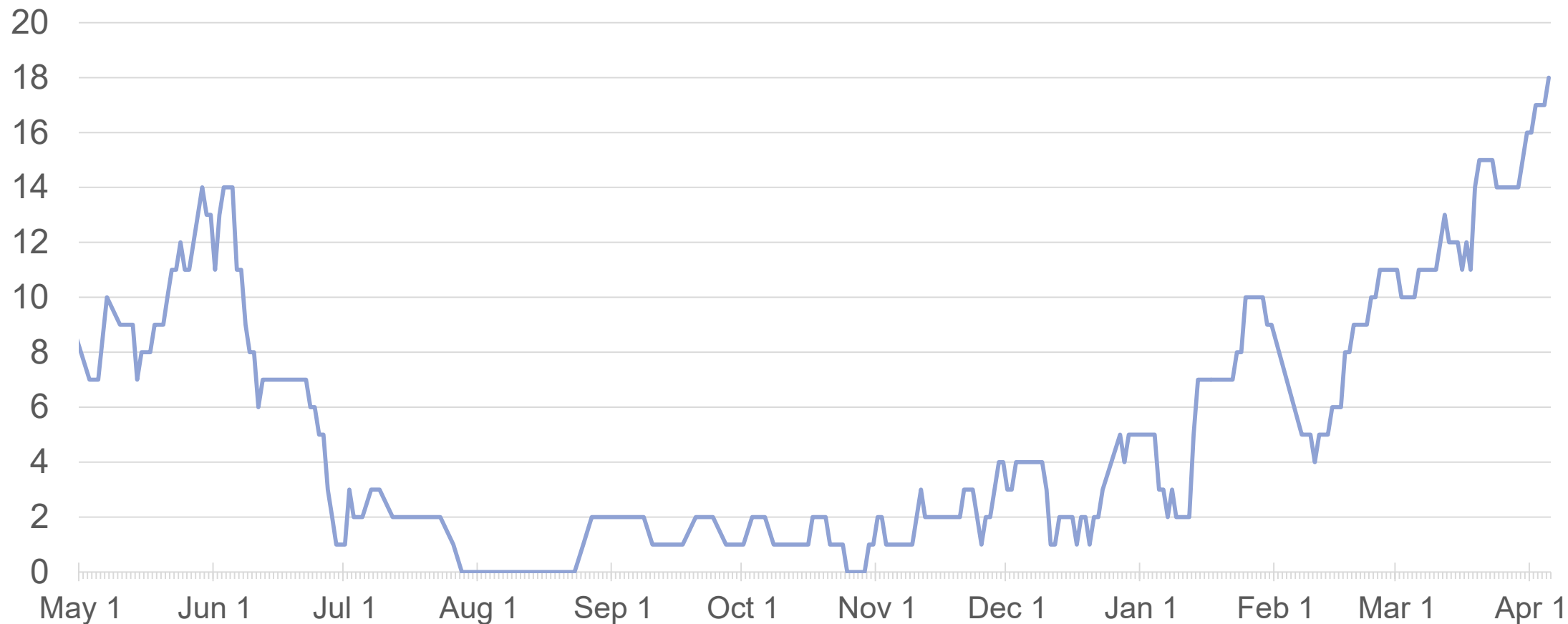
# City of Toronto COVID-19 Response for People Experiencing Homelessness

TAEH/SSHA Service Planning Forum

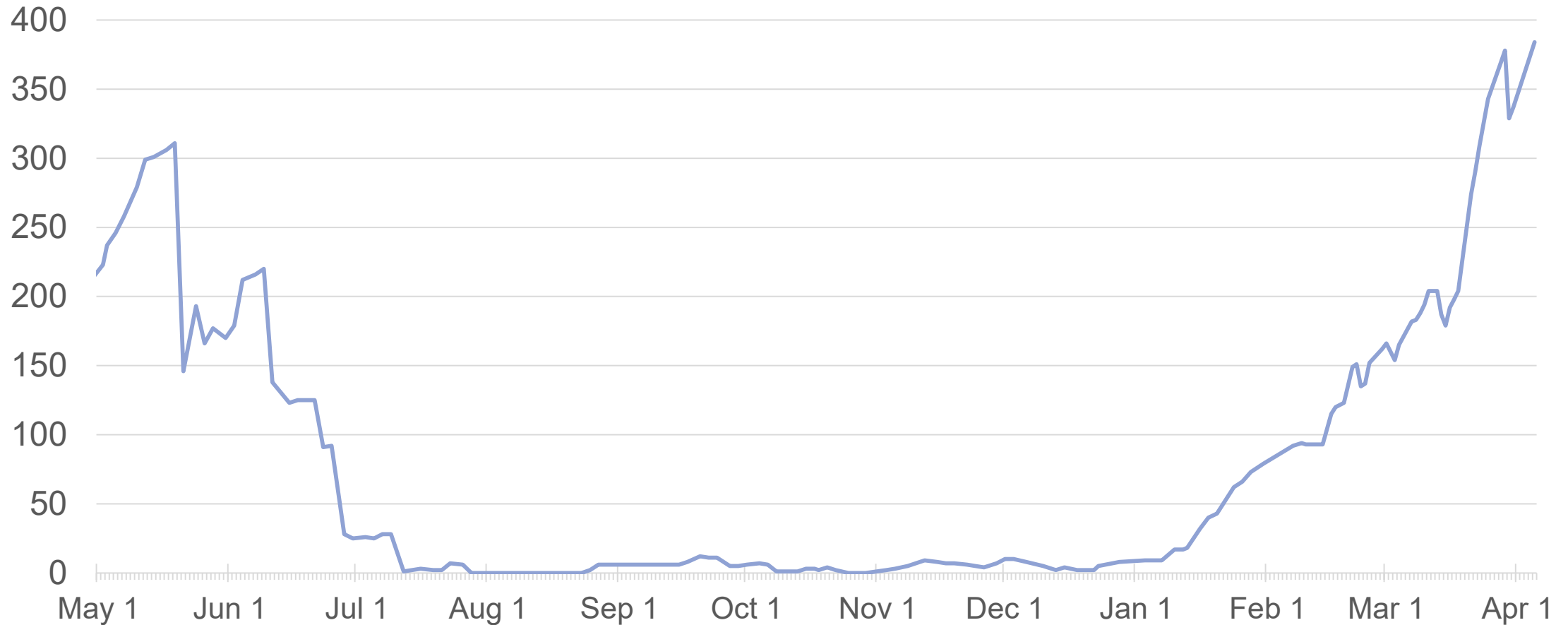
April 7, 2021



# Active COVID-19 outbreaks (shelters)



# Shelter cases (outbreak-related)



# Recovery Program

- The Recovery Program has been very busy over the last several weeks as shelter outbreaks have increased
- Contingency plans to expand isolation / recovery space have been actioned
- Additional spaces secured that will double existing capacity
- SSHA is working with our health and community partners at the current recovery site to operationalize these new spaces over the coming week

# Additional measures

- Additional funding provided for IPAC measures, wage enhancements, ventilation improvements
- Identification of IPAC lead/champion at each shelter
- Addressing testing fatigue e.g. through use of less invasive saliva based testing
- Pilot of rapid antigen testing as a screening tool
- Increasing supports and incentives for vaccination

# Recently announced funding

- \$1 million will go to drop-ins to expand the availability of daytime indoor space
  - Funding will be made available through a call for proposals in collaboration with Toronto Drop-in Network
- \$2 million will go to shelters, 24-hour respites and drop-ins for the following:
  - IPAC support including the purchase of PPE to implement updates to the current directive (eye protection for staff and three-layer masks for clients), additional cleaning support, training etc.
  - Wage enhancements during outbreaks to ensure staffing levels are maintained
  - Activities to improve ventilation, such as higher quality HVAC filters or portable air filters
  - Activities to support vaccine roll out, including incentives for client participation

# New Provincial IPAC requirements

- Emergency homeless shelters, including 24-hour respite sites, 24-hour women's drop-ins, temporary shelter facilities and hotels, are required to identify an individual in the organization to act as an IPAC lead
- The IPAC lead is required to complete [IPAC practices education and training](#)
- And are required to complete a self-audit in March 2021 using the [COVID-19 Preparedness and Prevention in Congregate Living Settings Checklist](#)

# Ontario Ministry of Labour Focused Inspection Initiative

- On March 30, 2021 the Ministry of Labour will be expanding its province-wide inspections to emergency homeless shelters most at risk of COVID-19.
- Inspections will focus on shelters that are currently in an outbreak or have had an outbreak so as to ensure that they are properly protected from COVID-19, through measures such as:
  - Raising awareness of COVID-19 health and safety requirements; and
  - Increasing compliance with workplace health and safety laws.
- Service providers are encouraged to review the [Develop your COVID-19 workplace safety plan](#) to ensure suitable recommended health and safety practices are in place.



# Saliva Based PCR testing

- **Effective but less invasive:** PCR test so just as effective as swab test but less invasive
- **Sites will be supported through process** by Testing Partners
  - Webinar will be available to show how to instruct clients to provide sample
  - IPAC safe - staff do not have to hold the container, but client deposits sample directly into tube
  - Testing team will drop off the kits and will arrange for pick-up
- Clients cannot drink/eat/smoke 30min prior to sample (*currently being investigated*)

# Rapid Testing

- The Provincial Antigen Screening Program allows priority settings to add an additional safety measure in high-risk and essential workplaces to help reduce the spread of COVID-19
- Rapid antigen tests may proactively identify cases of COVID-19 that may have otherwise been missed
- The antigen test is used as a screening tool (i.e. not a diagnostic tool) and takes approximately 15 minutes for results
- SSHA is working with TPH to pilot rapid testing in shelter settings and based on learning will explore further roll-out

# COVID-19 Vaccination Rollout for Clients

- Toronto's health care partners began vaccinating people experiencing homelessness starting the week of March 1, 2021, through clinics at shelters, day-time drop-ins and mobile clinics for people living outside.
- Ontario Health Teams have collectively immunized more than 1,200 clients at 54 clinics offered at City administered shelters and 24-hour respite sites
- Service providers are asked to continue to complete the [Vaccination Clinic Reporting survey](#) after every clinic

# COVID-19 Vaccination Rollout for Staff

- Staff can continue to book immunization appointments [online](#) or by calling 1-888-385-1910
- The Black Scientists' Task Force on Vaccine Equity is hosting a vaccine confidence webinar for the homelessness sector  
April 24, 2021 1:30 PM-3:30 PM  
Webinar link will be shared shortly

# SSHA/TPH COVID-19 Response for Homelessness Services Webinars

- Held every two weeks on Thursday at 2:30pm
- Latest updates and new developments
- Opportunity to ask questions and clarify information

Next webinar:

April 8 2:30 pm

<https://toronto.webex.com/toronto/onstage/g.php?MTID=e99697c662a5f300aceeb7fc9cac0662b>

Phone: 1-416-915-6530

Access code: 133 793 3613

# Updated Information and Resources

Please keep yourself informed of new developments by referring to credible sources of information:

- Toronto Public Health [website](#) – for updates on COVID-19 in Toronto including the [status of cases](#) in shelters and respite sites
- City of Toronto COVID-19 [website](#) for Homelessness Services – for resources, tools, protocols, and guidelines for homelessness service providers
- City of Toronto COVID-19 Changes to City Services [website](#) (Housing and Shelter) – for information about SSHA's COVID-19 response as well as any service updates

# Questions?

