



COVID-19 Technical Assistance for Schools

April 7, 2022

Webinar housekeeping

- All participants will be muted throughout the webinar
- Please type questions into the chat box for the Q & A portion of the webinar
 - Questions should be directed to “everyone” in the chat
- The webinar will be recorded and available as soon as possible at the following link:

<https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/school-resources>



Webinar Agenda

- BA.2 Variant/Epidemiology Update
- Contact Tracing Update
- Considerations for Fields Trips and School Outings
- Q&A

The next webinar will be held on May 5, 2022



COVID-19 Variant and Summary

Monique Duwell, MD, MPH

COVID Variants

- Viruses constantly change through mutation and sometimes these mutations result in a new variant of the virus.
- Some variants emerge and disappear while others persist.
- New variants will continue to emerge.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/omicron-variant.html>

COVID Variants in United States

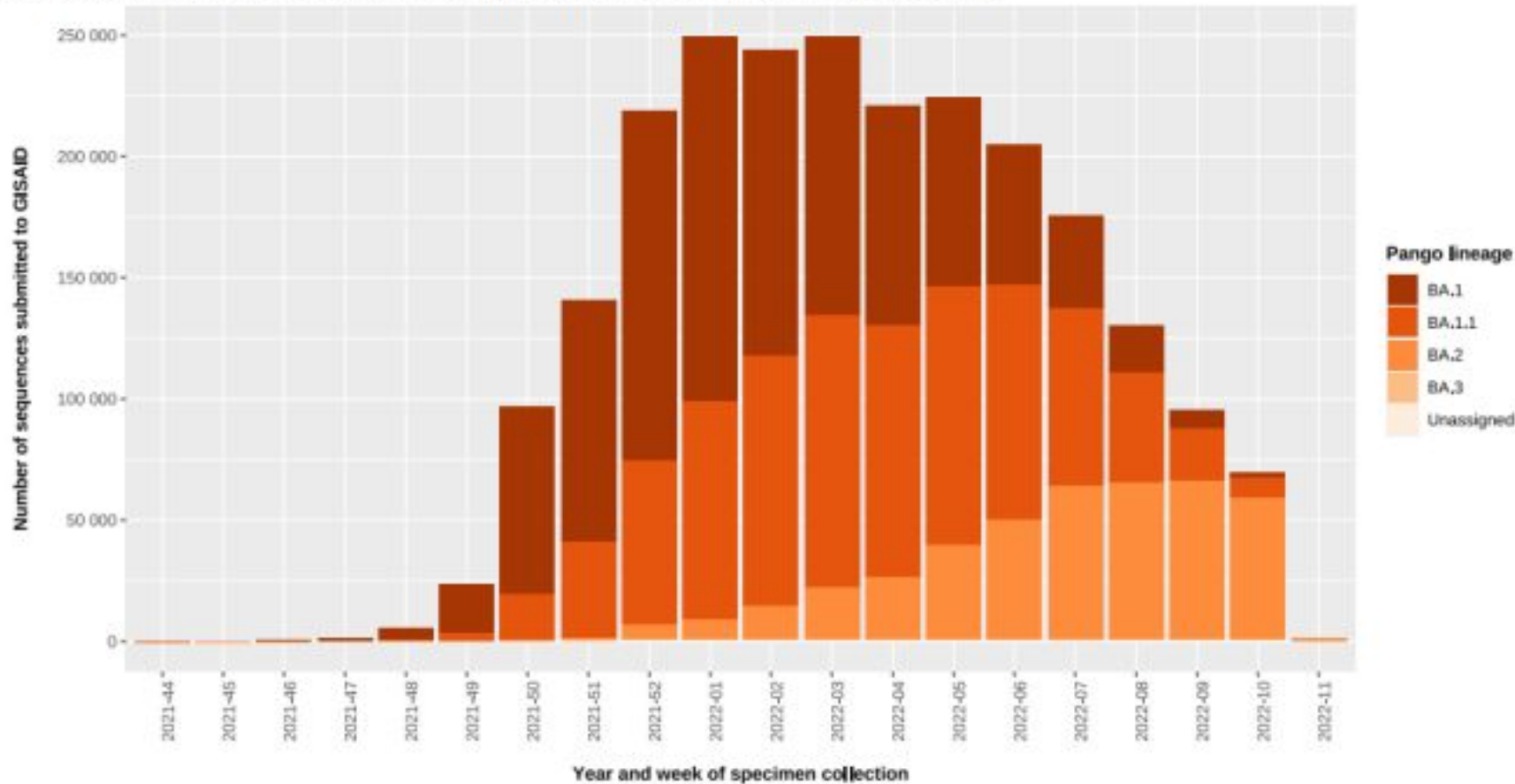


Omicron Variant

- The Omicron variant is comprised of a number of lineages and sublineages. The three most common lineages of Omicron currently are BA.1, BA.1.1 and BA.2.
- The Omicron variant spreads more easily than earlier variants of the virus that cause COVID-19, including the Delta variant.
- Omicron infection generally causes less severe disease than infection with prior variants. Preliminary data suggest that Omicron may cause more mild disease, although some people may still have severe disease, need hospitalization, and could die from the infection with this variant.

Worldwide Incidence of Omicron Lineages

Panel B. Incidence of Omicron lineages by week of specimens collection.



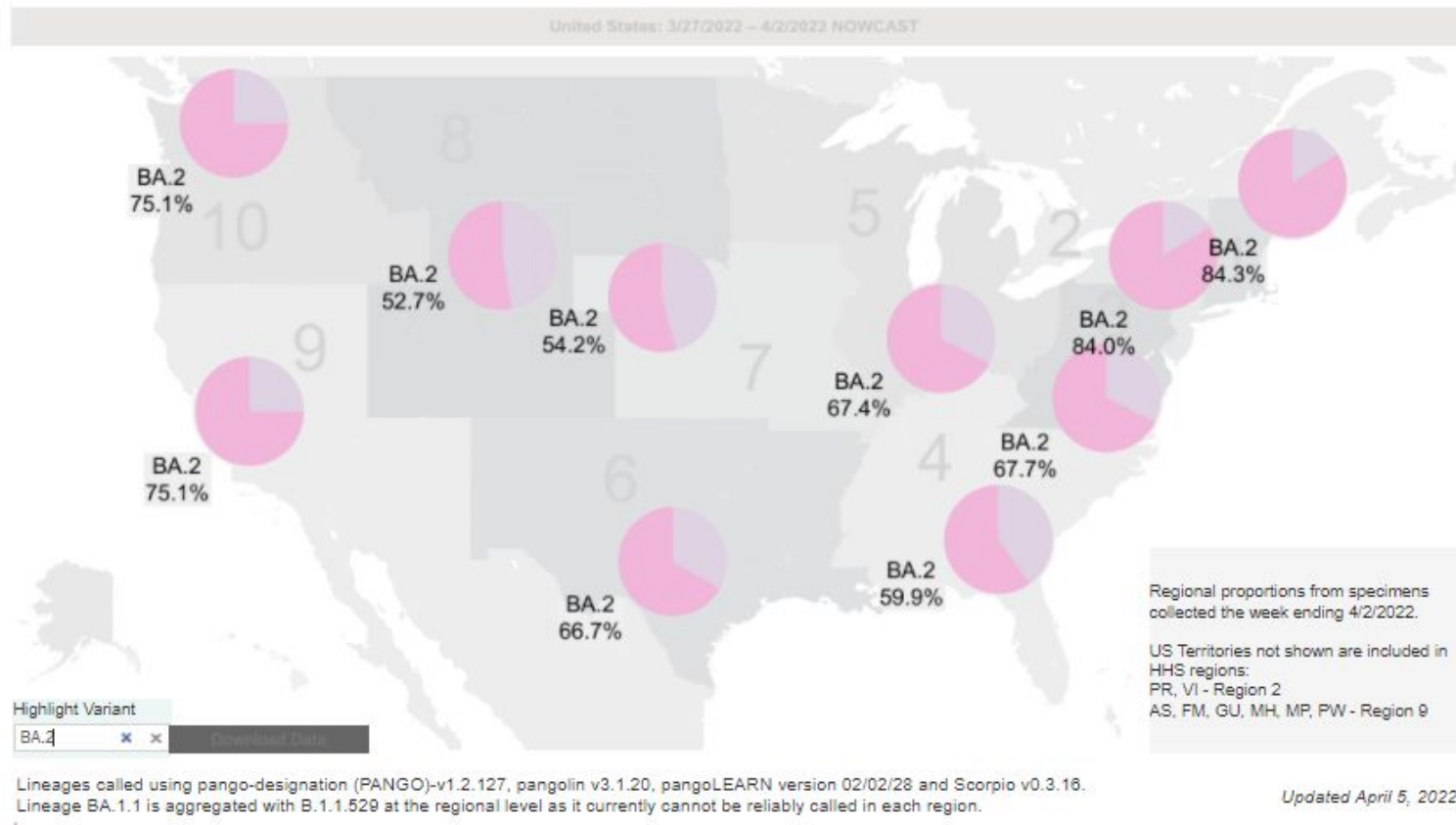
BA.2 compared to other variants

- Evidence suggests BA.2 is more transmissible than BA.1
- Investigations regarding BA.2 severity, diagnostic performance, vaccine effectiveness and reinfection risk are ongoing

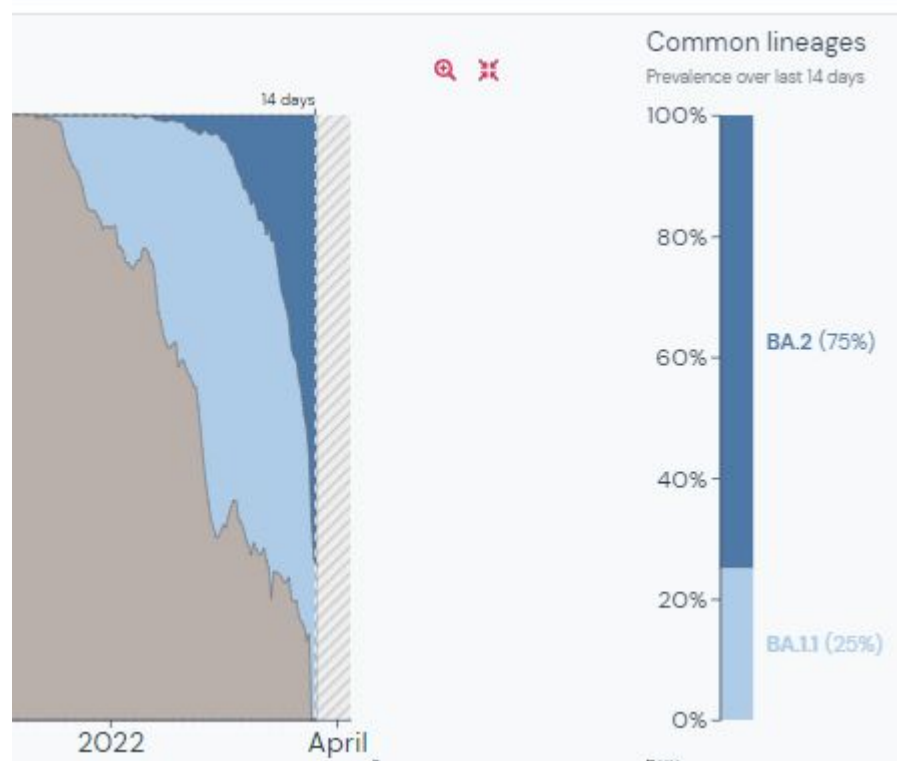
U.S.: COVID-19 Variant Proportions



U.S.: COVID-19 Variant Proportions



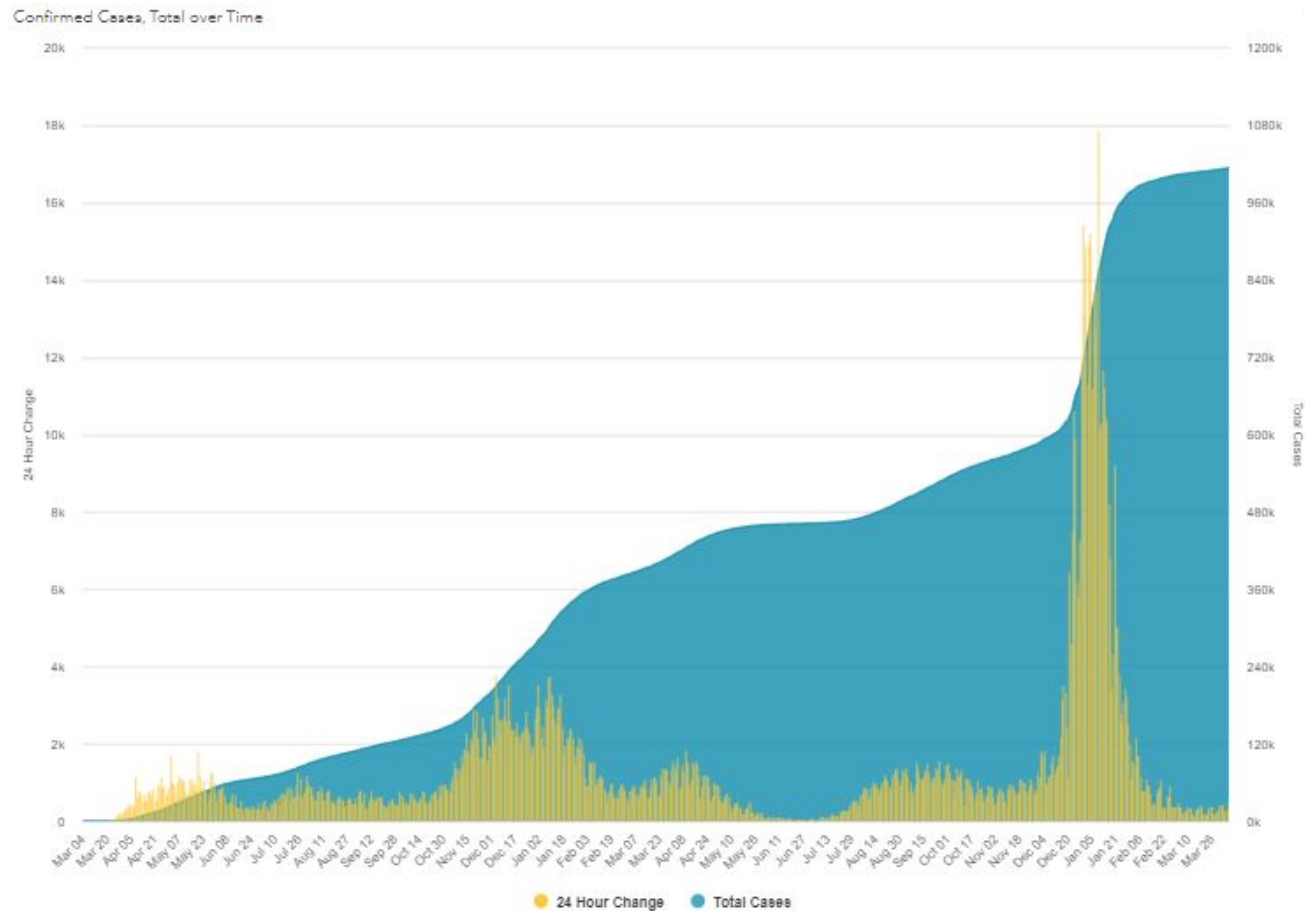
Maryland: COVID-19 Variant Proportions



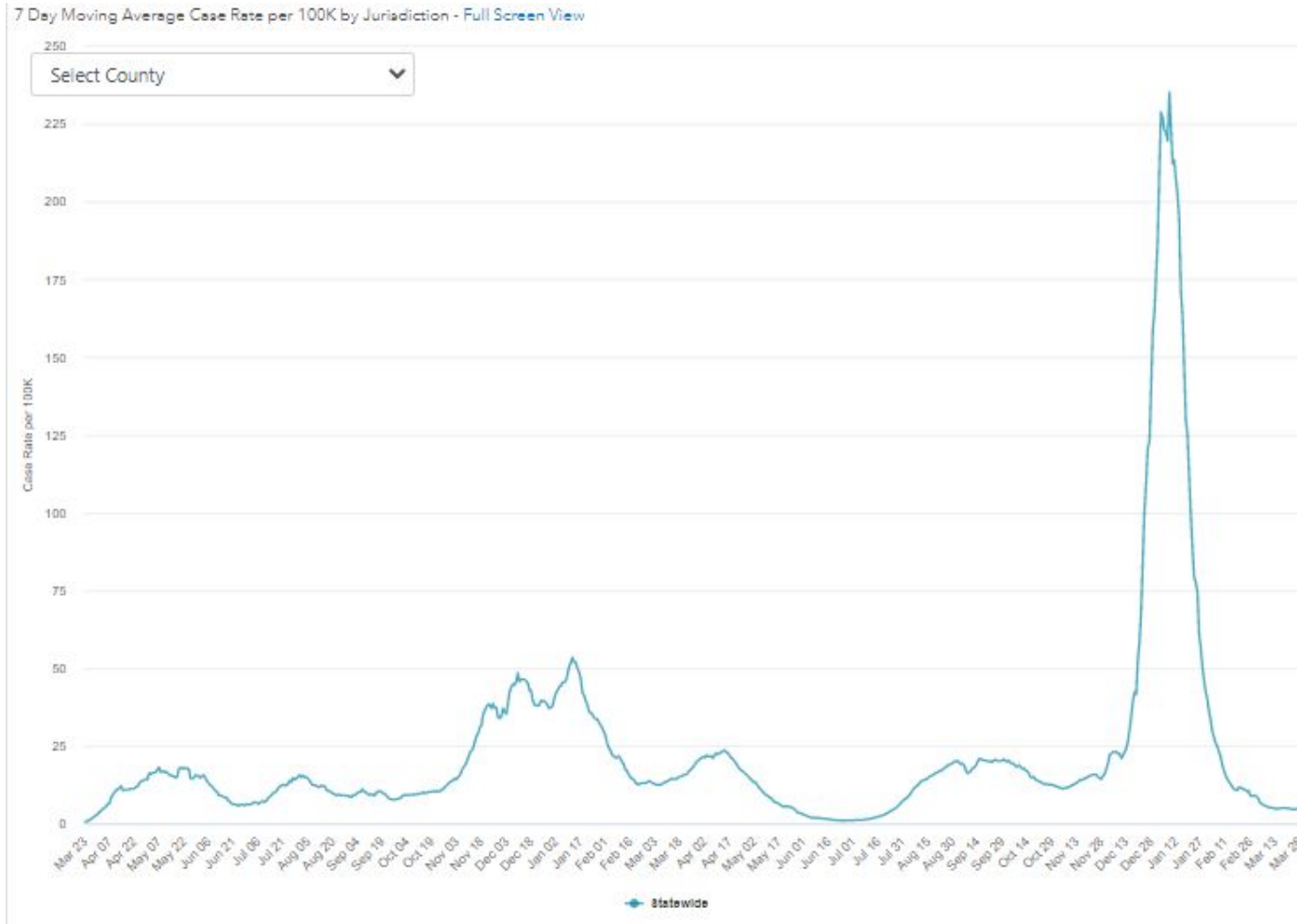
Maryland: COVID-19



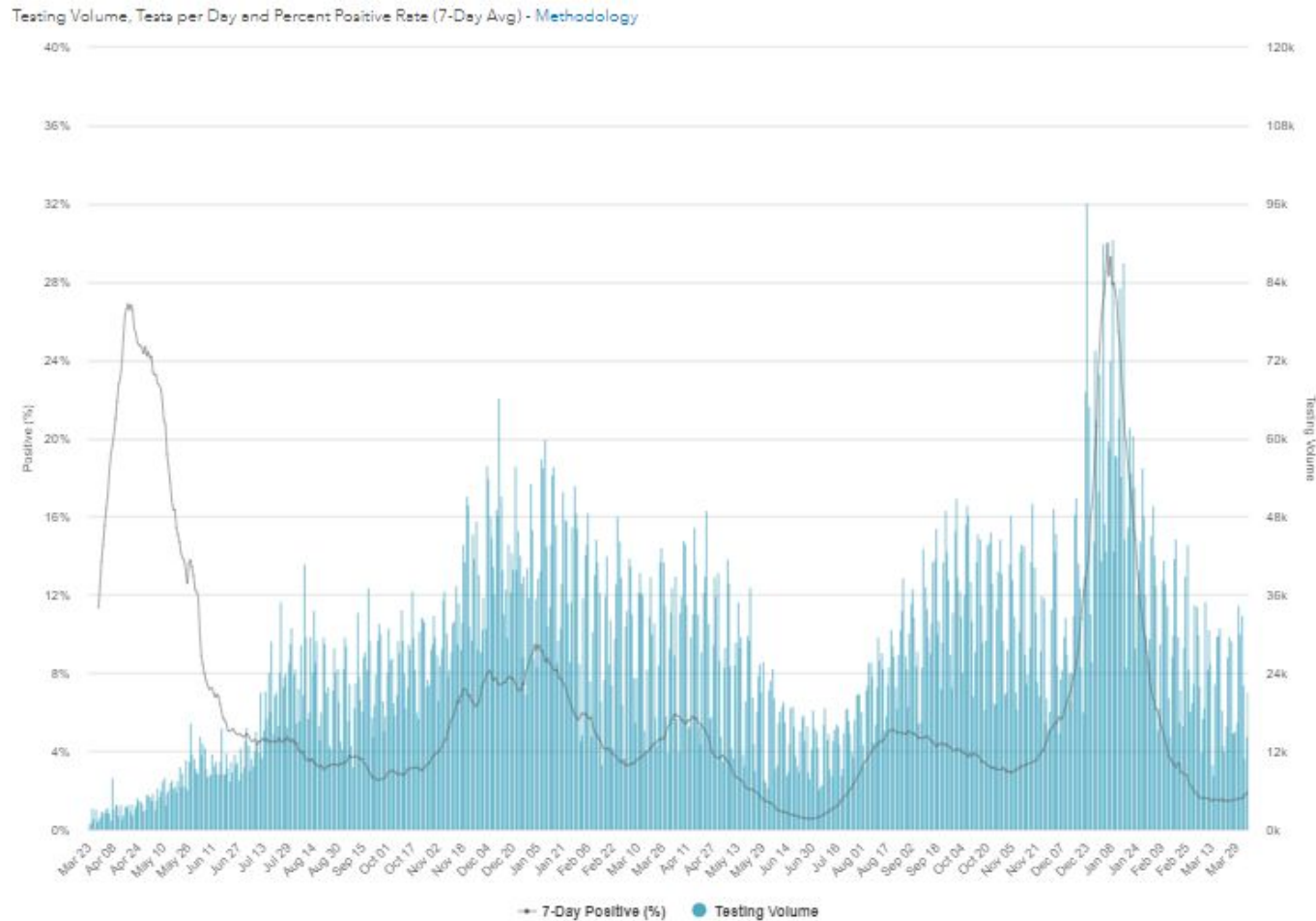
Maryland: COVID-19 Confirmed Cases



Maryland: COVID-19 7-Day Moving Average Case Rate per 100,000

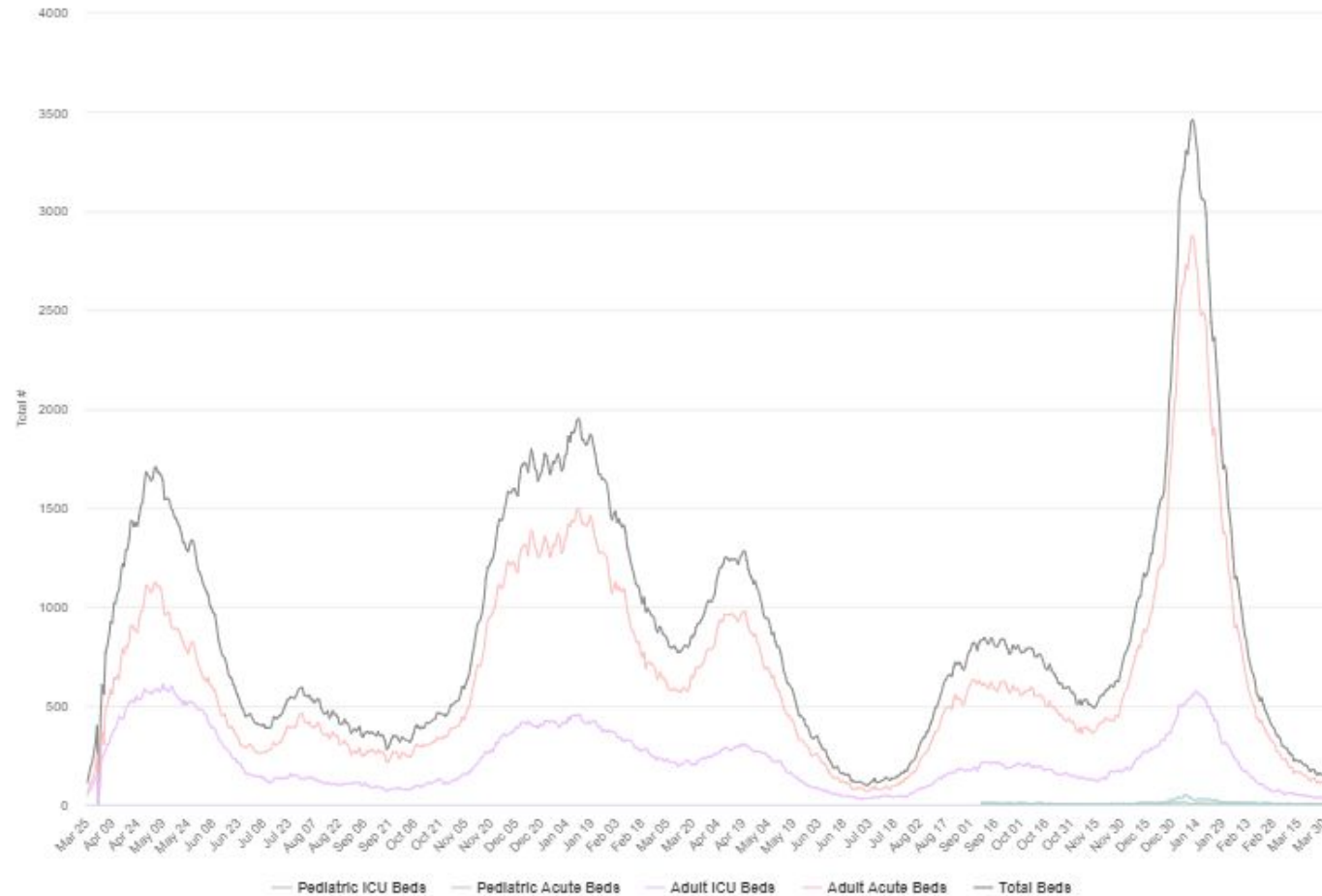


Maryland: COVID-19 Percent Positive

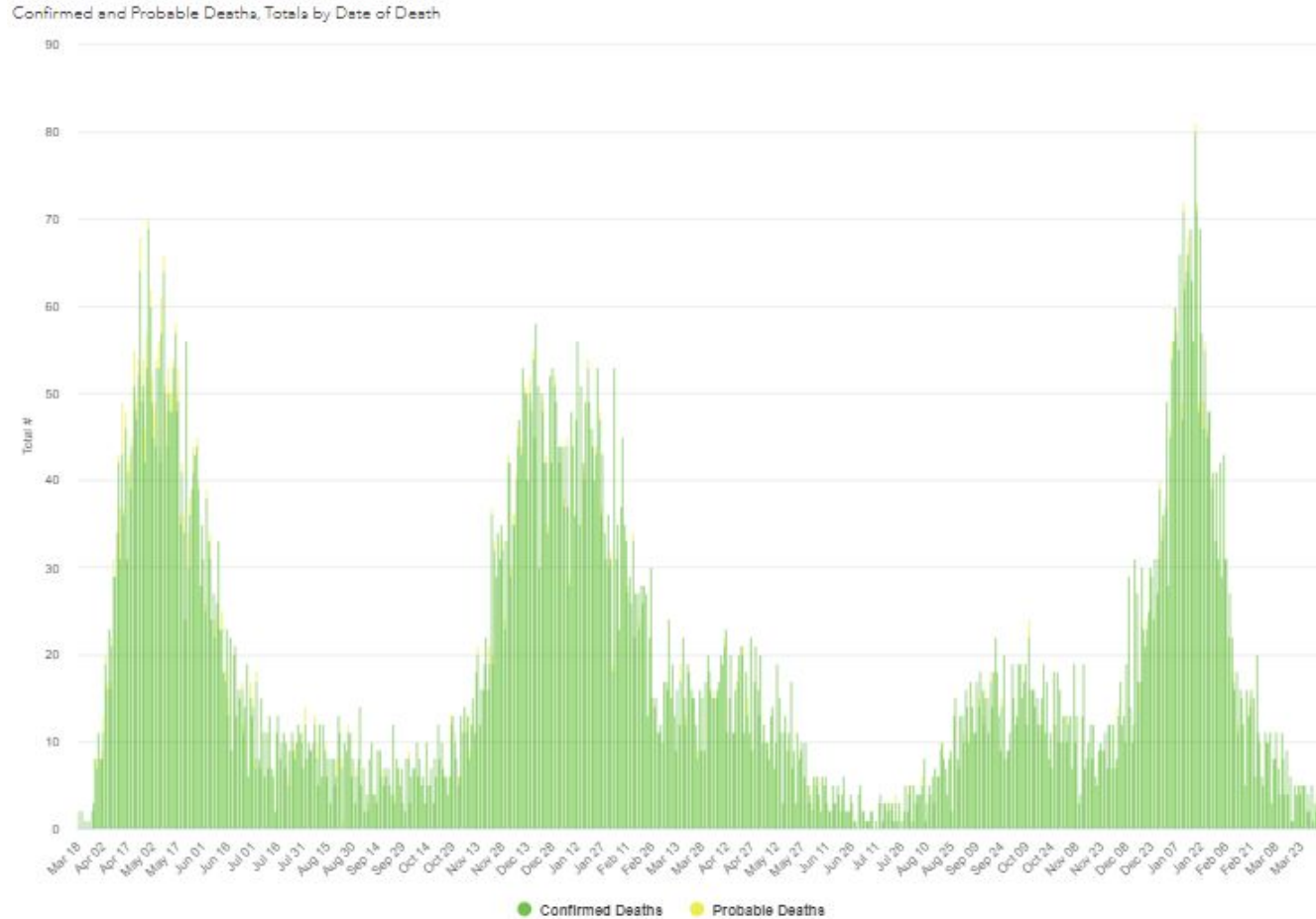


Maryland: COVID-19 Hospitalizations

ICU and Acute Hospital Beds for COVID-19, Currently in Use



Maryland: COVID-19 Deaths





Contact Tracing Update for Public/Non-Public Schools

April 7, 2022

mdh.contacttracing@maryland.gov

Contact Tracing Updates

- Changes to Maryland Contact Tracing
- Web Survey Launch for Minors
- Maryland COVID Positive At-Home Test Report Portal
- Isolation and Quarantine Resources

Changes to MD Contact Tracing

- More targeted approach focused on individuals and settings at risk of severe outcomes/outbreaks
- Outbound calls:
 - those 65 and older,
 - those with a known comorbidity, and
 - those under age 13 (for the next few weeks)
- All other reported cases and those not reached by phone will receive a personalized web survey link
- Only close contacts at risk of severe outcomes will be elicited and will be contacted by phone
- The inbound line remains available
 - (240) 466-4488 or (800) 559-6410

Web Survey Launched 1/21/22



0%  100%

English ▾

Hello, we are contacting you because was recently tested for COVID-19 and their test result was reported to the Maryland Department of Health.

Are you ?

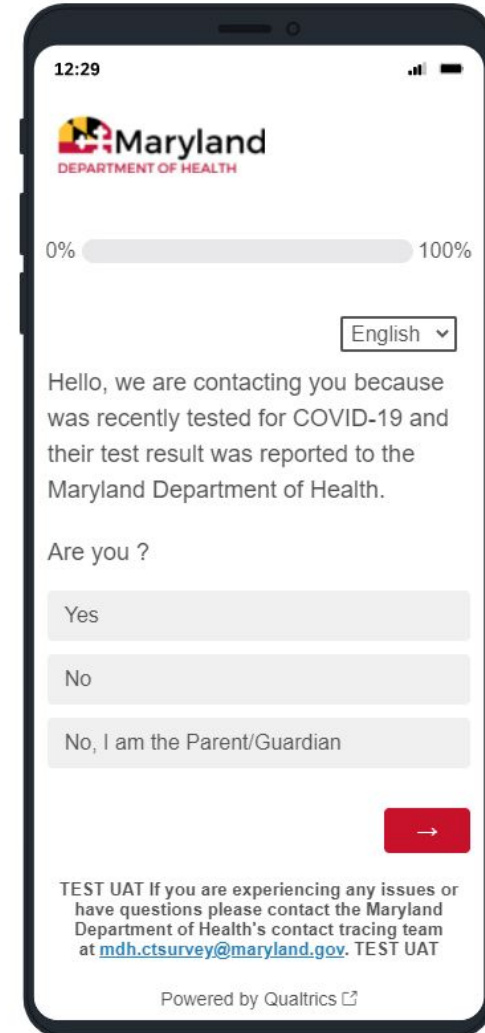
Yes

No

No, I am the Parent/Guardian



If you are experiencing any issues or have questions please contact the Maryland Department of Health's contact tracing team at mdh.ctsurvey@maryland.gov



Web Survey Process

- Newly reported cases receive a personalized web survey link via text and/or email when their positive test is reported to contact tracing
 - Click the link and complete the brief survey
 - Receive an excuse letter and resources
 - Enroll in automated follow-up monitoring
 - Receive a release letter when monitoring is complete

Web survey for ages 13-17 will launch 4/8

Web survey for ages 12 will launch by 5/1

Reporting At-Home Test Results

COVID-19 self-tests are one of many risk-reduction measures, along with **vaccination**, **masking**, and physical distancing, that **protect you and others** by reducing the chances of spreading COVID. If you take an at-home test and your results are positive, you should communicate your results to your healthcare provider and let your close contacts know they were exposed to COVID-19.

You can report your positive test results either through the mobile app associated with your at-home test, or through the **Maryland COVID Positive At-Home Test Report Portal**. Log in on the portal's home page to submit a report. If you do not have login information, you may register to create an account.



Reporting positive results through the At-Home Test Report Portal will initiate the contact tracing process, which is required to receive work or school excuse and release letters.

Residents can use the direct link:
covidlink.maryland.gov/selfreport

Residents must Login or Register on OneStop to proceed

Login

You must login to complete this form

Email*

Password*

[Forgot Your Password?](#)

Log in

[Don't have an account? Register](#)

[Didn't receive confirmation instructions?](#)

Register

First Name*Last Name*

Email*

Password*Confirm Password*

Your password needs to:

☐ Not include your name, email address.

☐ Include at least one number or symbol.

☐ Include both lower and upper case characters (a-z).

☐ Be at least 8 characters long.

Register

[Already have an account? Log in](#)

Confirmation / Follow-up Email



Hello
John Smith

Hello *John*,

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) has received the COVID Positive At-Home Test Self Report for *Jane Doe*. This at-home positive test, collected on **Apr 2, 2022**, was self-reported by *John Smith*. This test result has not been verified by MDH.

Please review Maryland State Isolation Guidelines below or by logging into your OneStop dashboard.

Thank you for reporting your positive at-home test result to the Maryland Department of Health.

Isolation means:

- you must stay home, except to get medical care
- you may not go to work/school, and you should tell your employer/school that you tested positive
- you should stay in a separate room from other household members and use a separate bathroom, if possible
- you should wear a mask if you have to be in a room with others

If you have any emergency warning signs for COVID-19, seek medical attention immediately. These include:

- trouble breathing
- persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- new confusion
- inability to wake or stay awake
- pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds, depending on skin tone
- severe abdominal pain


These are not all possible symptoms. Seek medical attention for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning. Call 911 if you have a medical emergency and tell the operator that you have COVID-19.

Please follow the isolation guidance provided above.

[View Submission](#)

Updated Resources on covidLINK


<https://covidlink.maryland.gov/content/testing/if-you-test-positive/#document>



WELCOME TO
covidLINK

[Home](#)[Vaccine](#)[Testing & Treatment](#)[Contact Tracing](#)

[FAQs](#)[Language Assistance Services](#)



Newly Diagnosed?

Finding out that you have tested positive for COVID-19 can be alarming. There are resources that can help you. You can also help prevent spreading coronavirus to your loved ones or others in your community.

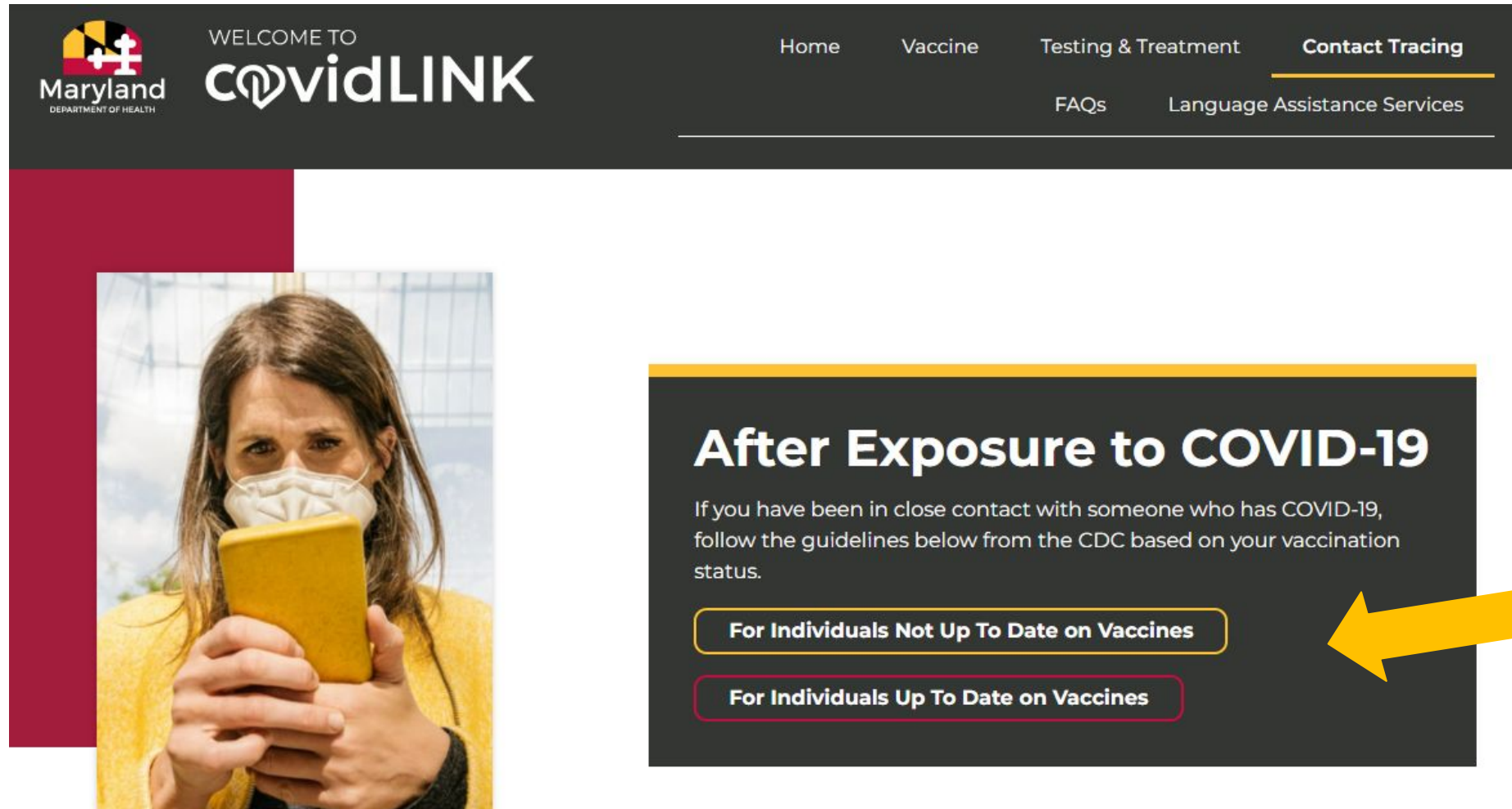
[Isolation Guidance](#)

[Report At-Home Test Results](#)

[COVID-19 Treatment Options Info](#)

Updated Resources on covidLINK

<https://covidlink.maryland.gov/content/answer-the-call/after-exposure-to-covid-19/>



The screenshot displays the covidLINK website interface. At the top, a dark navigation bar contains the Maryland Department of Health logo, the text 'WELCOME TO covidLINK', and a menu with links: Home, Vaccine, Testing & Treatment, Contact Tracing (highlighted with a yellow underline), FAQs, and Language Assistance Services. Below the navigation bar, on the left, is a photograph of a woman wearing a white face mask and a yellow jacket, holding a yellow smartphone. To the right of the photo is a dark gray content box with a yellow header bar. The header bar contains the title 'After Exposure to COVID-19'. Below the title, a paragraph of text reads: 'If you have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, follow the guidelines below from the CDC based on your vaccination status.' At the bottom of the content box are two buttons: 'For Individuals Not Up To Date on Vaccines' (highlighted with a yellow border) and 'For Individuals Up To Date on Vaccines' (outlined with a red border). A large yellow arrow points from the right side of the image towards the 'For Individuals Not Up To Date on Vaccines' button.

After Exposure to COVID-19

If you have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, follow the guidelines below from the CDC based on your vaccination status.

For Individuals Not Up To Date on Vaccines

For Individuals Up To Date on Vaccines

Questions??

Risks and considerations when planning a field trip or other school outing

Kia Crocker, MPH

Epidemiologist and Community Team Lead

Division of Outbreak Investigation

Background

- COVID-19 is a highly infectious illness that can lead to large outbreaks in settings where people congregate
- COVID-19 outbreaks in school and youth-centered settings (athletic tournaments, camps, school) have been identified
- Now that COVID-19 activity is down and various restrictions have been lifted, congregate activities are increasing
- This increased activity may lead to increased exposures

Risks associated with field trips or school outings

- Mixing of students from other schools
 - Increased exposure
 - Transmission from group to group
- Outbreaks
 - Increase number of COVID-19 cases
 - Secondary transmission to family members or others outside of the school
- Severe illness
 - While severe outcomes among children are rare overall, they can occur (especially among unvaccinated children)

Hypothetical Situation

Four schools from four different counties visit a museum on the same day. No symptom check or COVID-19 testing is conducted prior to the trip. Masking is optional for all students, staff and chaperones throughout the day, including on the bus and at the venue. Upon entry, all visitors are allowed to explore freely for 2 hours. At noon, the four schools all eat lunch together in the indoor cafeteria. After lunch, all four schools watch a movie together in the IMAX theater. Seating is not assigned so students, staff and chaperones are allowed to intermingle. After the movie, all return to their school bus but the driver is the only person who sits in the same seat.

What are some ways that schools could reduce risk to their students?

- Masking
 - While being transported
 - While indoors
- Cohorting
 - Create small groups to travel together throughout day
- Hygiene
 - Incorporate breaks to wash or sanitize hands, shared materials, or equipment
- Vaccination status
 - Encourage vaccination
- Rapid testing
 - Anyone positive should be excluded from participating
 - Contact K-12 COVID-19 Testing Team for testing questions or concerns
 - Email: MDH.K-12Testing@Maryland.gov

Summary

- COVID-19 can cause large outbreaks in congregate settings, especially when vaccination rates among participants are low
- As the pandemic progresses and COVID-19 activity levels in the community decrease, easing community mitigation measures and restrictions can lead to more chances for exposure
- Refer to MDH guidance and CDC website for recommendations to limit the risk to your school community
 - MDH Interim K-12 guidance:
[https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/Documents/mdh_msde_joint%20memo_school_childcare%20guidance%20update_3.2022%20\(1\).docx.pdf](https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/Documents/mdh_msde_joint%20memo_school_childcare%20guidance%20update_3.2022%20(1).docx.pdf)
 - CDC K-12 guidance:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>

