



The Royal Society of Canada's Task Force on COVID-19:
Expertise in the Public Interest Through Partnership

In keeping with a long history of diverse, discipline-spanning thought leadership, the Royal Society of Canada (RSC) struck a [task force](#) in April 2020 to assist in Canada's response to and recovery from the pandemic. To accomplish this, the Task Force took two approaches that have engaged over 750 experts in all fields of research, scholarship, and the arts. In keeping with longstanding RSC practices, participants do not have to be members to lead or engage in RSC initiatives.

The first approach was to establish a series of expert committees mandated to produce detailed, [peer-reviewed reports](#) on a broad array of subjects relating to scientific and social issues associated with COVID-19. The first Policy Briefing, "[Restoring Trust: COVID-19 and the Future of Long-Term Care](#)," was published in July 2020. To date twenty-six resources have been produced, all freely available [online](#).

To ensure broader distribution of the reports, we partnered with FACETS – Canada's first and only multidisciplinary open-access science journal. In August 2020, FACETS published the long-term care report as the first in a [series](#) devoted to RSC Policy Briefings.

Our Policy Briefings have generated over 110,000 downloads from the RSC and FACETS websites.

The second approach was the preparation of short, rapid response "informed perspectives", through a unique partnership between the RSC and the Globe and Mail. To date, over 100 rapid-response pieces have been published in the Globe and Mail, and the average number of reads per article is about 4,000.

Beyond peer-reviewed Policy Briefings and informed perspectives, the RSC has produced collections of essays on Indigenous Health and Wellness and on the Impacts of the Pandemic in Racialized Communities. A [website](#) has also been developed showcasing the response of Canadian artists to the pandemic.

Internationally, the RSC continues to contribute to declarations by the G7 and G20, in multilateral fora in Austria, Singapore, and Nicaragua, and other international initiatives to support the effective use of expert advice in public policy.

Our work in support of Canada's response to the pandemic has continued apace. Upcoming Policy Briefings are focused on urgent themes, including:

1. [One Health](#)
2. [The Nursing Workforce](#)
3. [Critical Care](#)
4. [Post-COVID Health Care](#)
5. [Impacts of COVID on Women in Canada](#)
6. [Harm Reduction](#)
7. [Future of Policy-Making](#)
8. Wastewater Surveillance
9. "Long" COVID



Vaccine Town Halls

On December 12, 2020, the Editorial Board of the Globe and Mail wrote “It would really help to have some top scientists and physicians leading a national conversation, to explain to Canadians how the vaccines were approved, how they work, what the dangers are and for whom, and how and why any downsides are vastly outweighed by the benefits.”

In response, and beginning in January 2021, The RSC and the Globe and Mail organized a series of virtual [Town Halls](#) on COVID-19 vaccines open to all Canadians. Over 10,000 Canadians participated.

January 21, 2021

The Globe and Mail and The Royal Society of Canada present | The COVID-19 Vaccine Series

HOW NEW VACCINES PROTECT AGAINST COVID-19



February 18, 2021

The Globe and Mail and The Royal Society of Canada present | The COVID-19 Vaccine Series

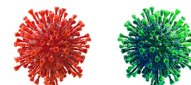
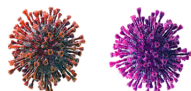
WHAT DO COVID-19 VACCINES MEAN FOR ME?



March 23, 2021

The Globe and Mail and The Royal Society of Canada present
The COVID-19 Vaccine Series:

VARIANTS ARE HERE. NOW WHAT?



April 29, 2021

THE GLOBE AND MAIL AND THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF CANADA PRESENT | THE COVID-19 VACCINE SERIES

COVID-19 VACCINE ROLLOUT: WHERE ARE WE NOW?



June 2, 2021

THE GLOBE AND MAIL AND THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF CANADA PRESENT | THE COVID-19 VACCINE SERIES

I'VE TAKEN THE VACCINE. NOW WHAT?



In addition to webinars with the Globe and Mail, the RSC has organized over 100 hours of webinar programming open to the public, featuring experts from across disciplines and across generations in order to share the latest insights regarding COVID-19 and its impact on Canadians.

Appendix: RSC Task Force on COVID-19 Publications

Policy Briefings

	<u>Publication Date</u>
1. COVID-19 and The Future of Long-Term Care	07/03/20
2. Reconciling Civil Liberties and Public Health	09/25/20
3. Supporting Mental Health of the People of Canada	10/09/20
4. Open Drug Discovery of Anti-Virals	10/16/20
5. Federal Basic Income	10/23/20
6. Public Representations of COVID-19 Science	10/30/20
7. Public Health History	10/30/20
8. Our Strength is in our Stories (Collection of Stories)	12/10/20
9. Economic Recovery	12/17/20
10. Correctional Services During and Beyond COVID-19	01/26/21
11. Epidemiology of COVID-19 in Canada in 2020	02/04/21
12. Seeking Shelter: Homelessness and COVID-19	02/16/21
13. Engaging Creativities: Art in the Pandemic (Website)	02/19/21
14. Archiving Research	02/25/21
15. Mental Health and Policing	03/25/21
16. Immigration Policy and Programs	03/25/21
17. The Future of Higher Education	03/29/21
18. Remembering is a form of Honouring	04/19/21
19. Enhancing COVID-19 Vaccine Acceptance in Canada	04/30/21
20. Impacts of COVID-19 in Racialized Communities (Collection of Essays)	05/18/21
21. Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities	06/01/21
22. Excess Mortality During the COVID-19 Pandemic	06/29/21
23. Impact of COVID-19 on Language and Literacy (Collection of Essays)	08/17/21
24. Mental Health and Policing (Vol. 2)	08/19/21
25. Children and Schools during COVID-19	08/24/21
26. Protecting Expert Advice for the Public	02/02/22

Examples of Informed Perspectives Published in Partnership with The Globe and Mail

Turnbull, Jeff	Helping Canada's Most Vulnerable Communities	05/07/20
Lewis, Mark	Mathematical Modeling	05/28/20
O'Campo, Patricia	Intimate Partner Violence	06/11/20
Richmond, Chantelle	With So Much at Risk, We Couldn't Just Wait for Help	06/17/20
Loeb, Mark	Masks	07/01/20
Delatolla, Rob	Reading the Entrails	11/30/20
McMurtry, Meghan	High Needle Fear	02/09/21
LeBaron, Genevieve	Modern Slavery in Supply Chains	01/21/21
Flood, Colleen	Vaccination Certificates	02/22/21
Gruben, Vanessa et al.	Canada's drug toxicity crisis	10/21/21