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## **Report to the South Hadley Selectboard for January 14, 2021**

### **COVID 19 Update**

There have been numerous requests about vaccine distribution in South Hadley. Presently we have applied and been approved by Massachusetts Department of Public Health to become or participate in a regional distribution program. We have ordered a freezer, but as anyone who has recently order any appliances the delivery date is months out. We also have not been assigned or have received any vaccines by the Commonwealth as of this writing.

The rules for a distribution site are significantly different than the “flu clinic” model. The requirement recently does not allow a one- or two-day operation. The standard to be met is a commitment by a ton or entity that it would be fully operational through June 30<sup>th</sup>. Suffice to say even if South Hadley was able to find enough qualified medical personnel to staff such a facility the cost would be extraordinary and not able to be covered by federal or state grant programs fully.

Health Director Hart is diligently working on the details, even as we await more guidance from the state, she is working with neighboring communities, area hospitals and local contact for national pharmacies about what partnerships may be forged so South Hadley residents can get a shot in the arm, safely, once community vaccinations are available. I am sure this will be a continual discussion at the Selectboard Meetings the first and third Tuesday of each month. We will also post information on southhadley.org COVID 19 page as it becomes available and I will include information in upcoming reports, specifically on vaccines.

We also would remind you of the testing opportunities, I have added some links below including the asymptomatic center at UMass. We believe testing is and important tool and should be utilized appropriately. However, we feel the most effective way to fight the virus is clear, wear a mask, practice social distancing, stay away from large crowds, wash hands and stay home as much as possible.

<https://www.umass.edu/coronavirus/communitycovidtest>

The link below provides additional testing options in our region and throughout Massachusetts.

<https://memamaps.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=eba3f0395451430b9f631cb095febf13>

Below is a sampling of some of the data and information we use to try and stay informed about the direction the virus is headed. It is clear or see in every data set here and on the Commonwealth’s website it is in an upward trajectory.

Hospitals, including Holyoke Medical Center continue to see hopeful signs with staff vaccinations proceeding quickly. They also have increased the patient recovery rate precipitously through a greater

understanding of and better strategies for COVID 19. HMC has also offered vaccines to both FD1 and FD 2. Thank you, the SHPD is being offered vaccines through a regional effort at UMass.

## SOUTH HADLEY

Percent positivity: 6.74%

**Percent positivity:** Percent positivity is calculated using molecular tests only. Percent positivity is calculated by dividing the number of positive tests by the total number of tests during the time period.

Report date: 1/7/2021

Time period: 12/20/2020 to 1/2/2021 [Copied from Mass.gov](#)

### South Hadley Div. of Water Pollution Control

Sample collection date: **January 7, 2021**

#### SARS-CoV-2 virus in sewage

**DETECTED**

Virus concentration  
 (genome copies per liter of sewage)

**211,188**

Normalized\* virus concentration  
 (genome copies per liter of sewage)

**593,338**

*\*Normalized virus concentration value is derived by adjusting the raw virus concentration to the PMMV fecal marker in order to account for dilution*

Above is the BioBot data, the most recent complete report is on our COVID 19 page of the website. It continues to show significant presence of COVID RNA in the South Hadley waste stream. If the trend mirrors previous data, it would suggest we are still weeks away from any lessening of the South Hadley surge.

Below is the most recent report on cases in South Hadley. It is hard to imagine that in a community of 17K plus we have broken through the 1,000 confirmed/suspected cases. We also had an additional death this week related to COVID 19 so we now have 41 since March 1. My condolences to those who have been lost to the pandemic

LBOH Count - Events Per Disease and Classification in Jurisdiction

Classification: confirmed,contact,probable,revoked,suspect

Event Dates from 03/01/2020 to 01/12/2021

Jurisdiction(s) selected: SOUTH HADLEY

Jurisdiction(s) used for report: SOUTH HADLEY

The report contains confidential information. The data are current as of 01/12/2021 and are subject to change.

Disease	Status	Num of Cases	1/5/2021	12/30/2020	12/22/2020	12/15/2020
Novel Coronavirus (SARS, MERS, etc)	CONFIRMED	641	582	524	467	415
Novel Coronavirus (SARS, MERS, etc)	CONTACT	514	496	454	419	376
Novel Coronavirus (SARS, MERS, etc)	PROBABLE	36	34	25	23	21
Novel Coronavirus (SARS, MERS, etc)	REVOKED		4			
Novel Coronavirus (SARS, MERS, etc)	SUSPECT	18	18	18	17	17

As you can see from the data in the next chart we have joined the red brigade and have increased our positivity rate to 6.7%. This is particularly concerning given the high number of seniors who live in South Hadley.



Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard – Thursday, January 7, 2021

**Count and Rate of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases and Tests Performed in MA by City/Town, January 1, 2020 – January 5, 2021**

City/Town	Total Case Count	Case Count (Last 14 Days)	Average Daily Incidence Rate per 100,000 (Last 14 days) <sup>1</sup>	Relative Change in Case Counts <sup>2</sup>	Total Tests	Total Tests (Last 14 days)	Total Positive Tests (Last 14 days)	Percent Positivity (Last 14 days)	Change in Percent Positivity <sup>3</sup>
Somerset	1235	209	80.6	Lower	20131	1810	238	13.15%	Higher
Somerville	3394	417	39.4	Higher	266444	13594	477	3.51%	Higher
South Hadley	586	117	46.2	Higher	25545	2003	135	6.74%	Higher
Southampton	200	59	70.0	Higher	6367	640	64	10.00%	Higher
Southborough	283	50	36.9	Lower	17426	1392	50	3.59%	Lower
Southbridge	1015	168	71.6	Lower	17291	1638	197	12.03%	Lower
Southwick	310	57	41.5	Higher	8279	724	60	8.29%	Higher
Spencer	474	111	69.1	Higher	11930	1105	117	10.59%	Higher
Springfield	11944	1703	77.9	Higher	199662	17104	2071	12.11%	Higher
Sterling	434	96	87.3	Higher	11140	1051	103	9.80%	Higher
Stockbridge	38	10	41.9	Higher	2423	267	12	4.49%	Higher
Stoneham	1479	298	95.6	Lower	36007	4469	338	7.56%	Higher
Stoughton	1641	279	72.0	Higher	31479	2930	323	11.02%	Higher
Stow	144	26	25.6	Higher	7855	600	27	4.50%	Higher
Sturbridge	333	91	61.5	Higher	8953	844	97	11.49%	Higher
Sudbury	447	60	24.1	No Change	22670	2465	67	2.72%	Higher
Sunderland	95	11	21.1	Higher	13550	599	11	1.84%	Higher

If misery loves company, I think we can say we are in love. There is more information on mass.gov for your review. We also include the Governor’s weekly advisories on southhadley.org.

The next chart is something I do not believe I displayed before, but the state data on hospitals is very interesting as a trend. The is especially telling when compared to other states. I am sure there as many reasons why there is available beds in Massachusetts when other states are at or near a breaking point. Thank you to all those who are on the frontlines fighting this scourge!



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Hospitalizations

There are **2,219** patients hospitalized for COVID-19.

ICU & Intubated Patients

There are **451** patients in Intensive Care Units (ICU) and **271** patients are intubated.

Average Age of Patients

The average age of patients who were hospitalized for COVID-19 was **73** years old.

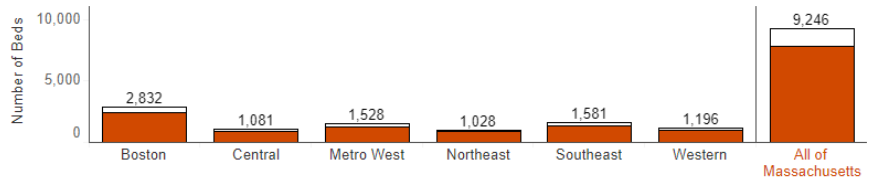
Select to switch hospital visualizations: Hospitalization Detail

View availability by date  
1/11/2021

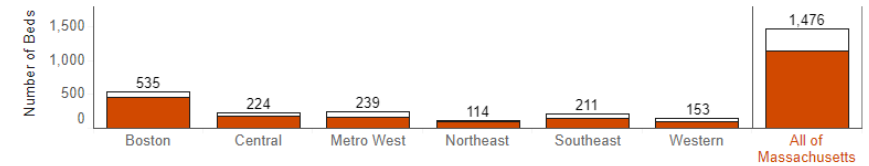
**Occupied beds**  
As of today, **84.9%** of medical/surgical beds are occupied and **78%** of ICU beds are occupied.

There are currently **50** beds occupied through alternate medical sites.

Available and **occupied** medical/surgical (not ICU) beds by region



Available and **occupied** ICU beds by region



For purposes of this reporting, "confirmed" are cases with a PCR test. All data included in this dashboard are preliminary and subject to change. Created by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences, Office of Integrated Surveillance and Informatics Services.

**Capital Projects FY 22**

As we go through the FY 22 budget and start to review capital needs, it is readily apparent that even in these uncertain times there needs to be substantial investment in various projects and needs. The fear is if we get to far behind, especially considering the progress which has been made in the last five years the Town of South Hadley will suffer.

There are a number investments which need to be address and it is unlikely we will be able to meet all the needs. There is a number of these needs I would like to start to be addressed with greater focus.



The Michael E Smith Middle School pool has been on the list for at least five years; however, it had been pushed down in the batting order by other pressing school needs. That said this, I am not sure whether this should be a "school project". There was study done in 2014 which suggested the pool was in serious disrepair. I am not an engineer and I cannot swim (really), but if this 2014 picture of the underbelly of the MESMS pool is any indication, I will not be learning to swim at this location.

At the time of these photos, I believe the repair was a little less than \$300k, I suspect it is more now. If you recall, there was a need to increase security in schools and the turf at the High School a few years later which took precedent.

The questions remain as to what is the value of this pool to the community? How many people feel this is a needed investment, how much of the community is served by it, is there other more important/demanding investments needed which would take precedent? I would humbly suggest it should

not be solely up to the schools to answer those questions, as much of the use has historically been beyond MESMS.

There also will be a request for a critical upgrade of the communication system housed at the South Hadley Police Department, while this is primarily used for the PD and overseen by that department. It does also provide service to the FD's (FD#2 drops calls down to MHC) and the DPW. The price has fluctuated over the last few years, originally thought to be about \$1.8 million, but through some partnering with SHELD and use of a fiber backbone the price has been reduced to around \$1.3. We also are three cruisers behind on the replacement program which has saved us on maintenance through warranties. We now have three of the "new" police vehicles with over 125K miles.

We also have some equipment at the DPW which must be replaced, including a new loader which is estimated at \$315 K (and may take months to get). The older CAT has failed brakes and we will need to lease one in the spring if it cannot be repaired. There also is a pickup and trailer which is aging out up at the public works.

We also cannot lose sight of the sidewalk and street progress we have made, as there is a long list of roads in need of repair and falling behind on that will be catastrophic. I will likely recommend that we allocate the final \$600K from the rolling debt for sidewalks and use another \$700K (at least) of unreserved free cash along with Chapter 90 money for road repair.

I believe through a combination of borrowing and judicious use of unreserved free cash we can make it work and stay in a comfort zone financially. More to come....

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

Thank you, South Hadley, for taking this issue serious and be willing to work to better understand it! We continue offer training and have undertaken some focus groups with all departments across the municipality

It was impossible to the painful images flashed across the television screen in the last week. Beyond the political animus there were so many signs of hate displayed by the insurrectionist it was heartbreaking.

I watched like so many in disbelief as Confederate Flags, "Camp Auschwitz" T Shirts and other disgusting oppressive signs were apart of this angry mob's collective persona. So many times, in early my public service career I wandered through the Capital office buildings and felt the greatness of our nation embodied in a building. I was there the day they were setting up for President Clinton to leave office and President Bush was set to take office. I remember walking through Union Station and actually seeing Joe Biden getting off the train to go to work, only the tourists paid him much attention for everybody else it happened every day. Never even considered he would be President of the United States in the future, just knew you could take the train to Delaware. I actually twice spoke to a Special Congressional Committee on Natural Resources about the need to fund wastewater treatment plants.... not that anyone listened, but I was on C-Span.

I cannot even begin to reconcile the Washington or "Walkington" as my youngest son referred to the nation's capital as the few times, he accompanied he had a different appreciation for Pennsylvania Ave then those who have never spent time in DC. "Appreciation" may be a misrepresentation though.

As we try to better understand each other locally it will be through education, understanding and tolerance. No matter what a person thinks, where they are from, who they love, their religion or their race we have accept we are all different and the only way we can survive a flourish is to expect that people have different views. We do not have to accept every person's view, just their humanity.

The events of last week saddened me and caused me to think if I would even know this place, Washington, its grandeur, its history, all desecrated by political vanity and misbegotten righteousness. It is my sincere hope the country will unite and discuss, debate, deliberate, contemplate all the issues we are facing as a nation ...in a peaceful and respectful manner. Please note, even though I wear a mask this and that are not a political statement. It is just a hope and it is just a mask.

Respectfully submitted.

Michael J. Sullivan  
Town Administrator, South Hadley