



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) Workgroup Meeting

Mitigating Spread of COVID-19 at IHEs

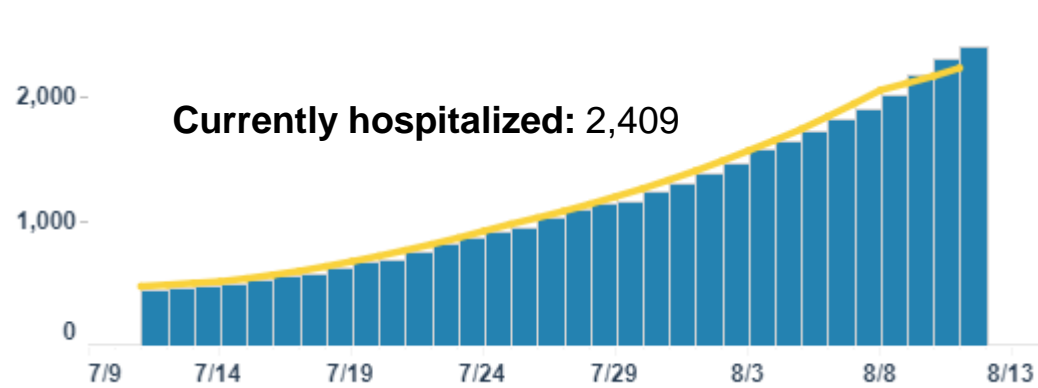
August 13, 2021

Agenda

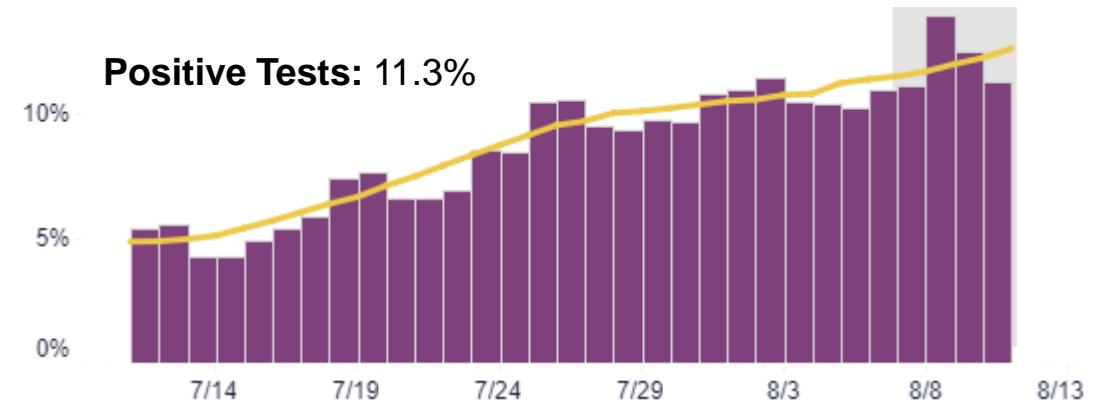
- **Epi Data:** Review COVID-19 trends among North Carolina's college-age population.
 - COVID trends –overall and by college age groups
 - Delta Variant Update
 - Vaccination Status by Age
- **Call to Action:** Discuss implications for institutions of higher education (IHEs) and mitigation strategies to prevent IHE clusters/outbreaks.

Four Key Metrics – All Quickly Rising

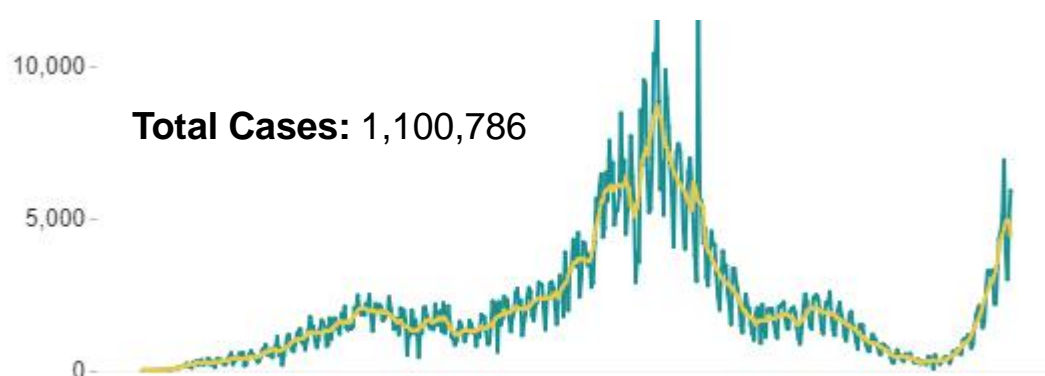
Daily Number of People Currently Hospitalized



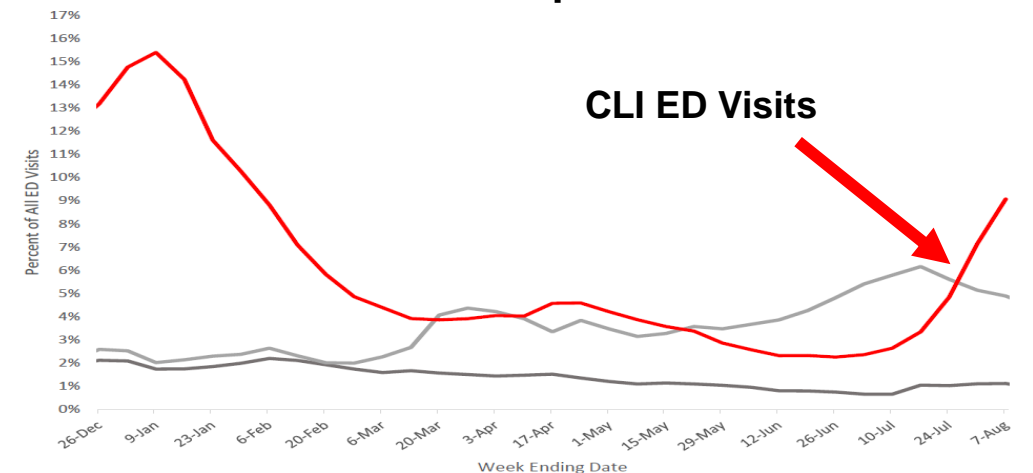
Positive Tests as a Percent of Total Tests



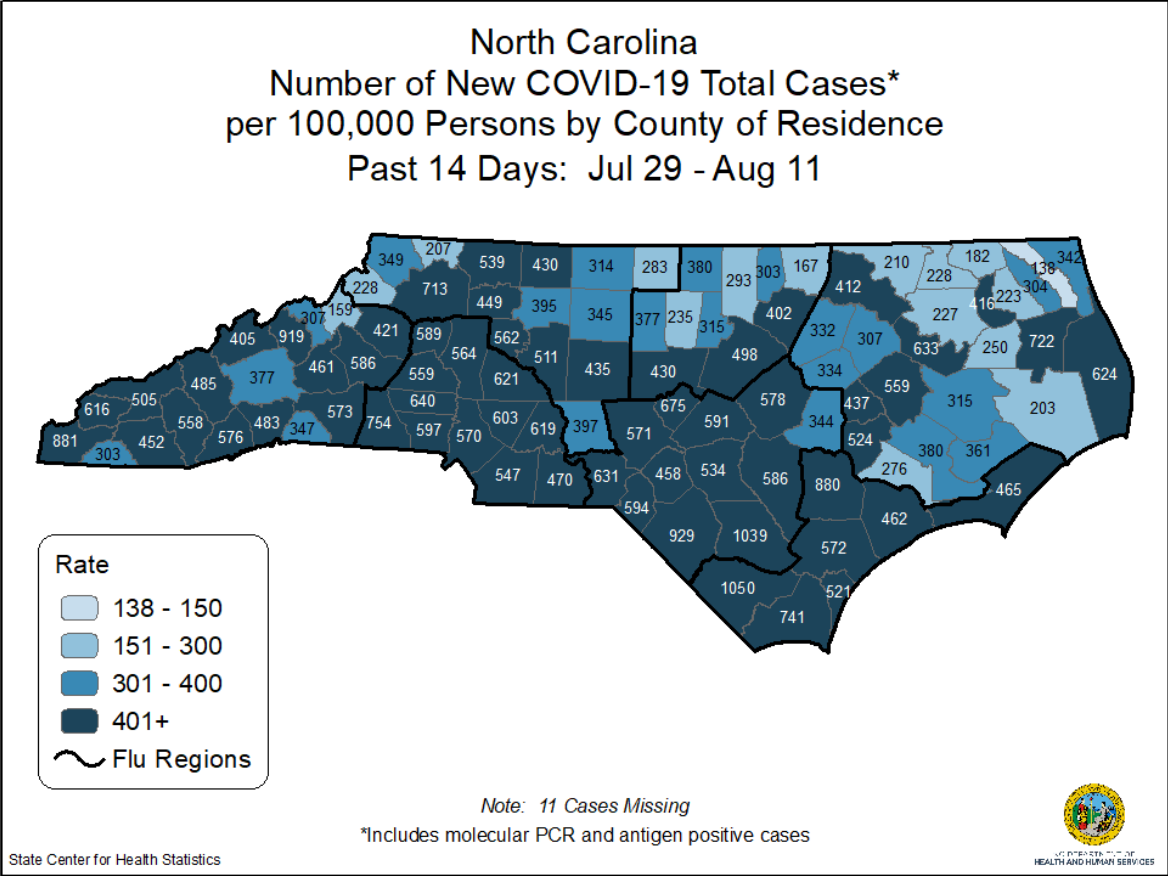
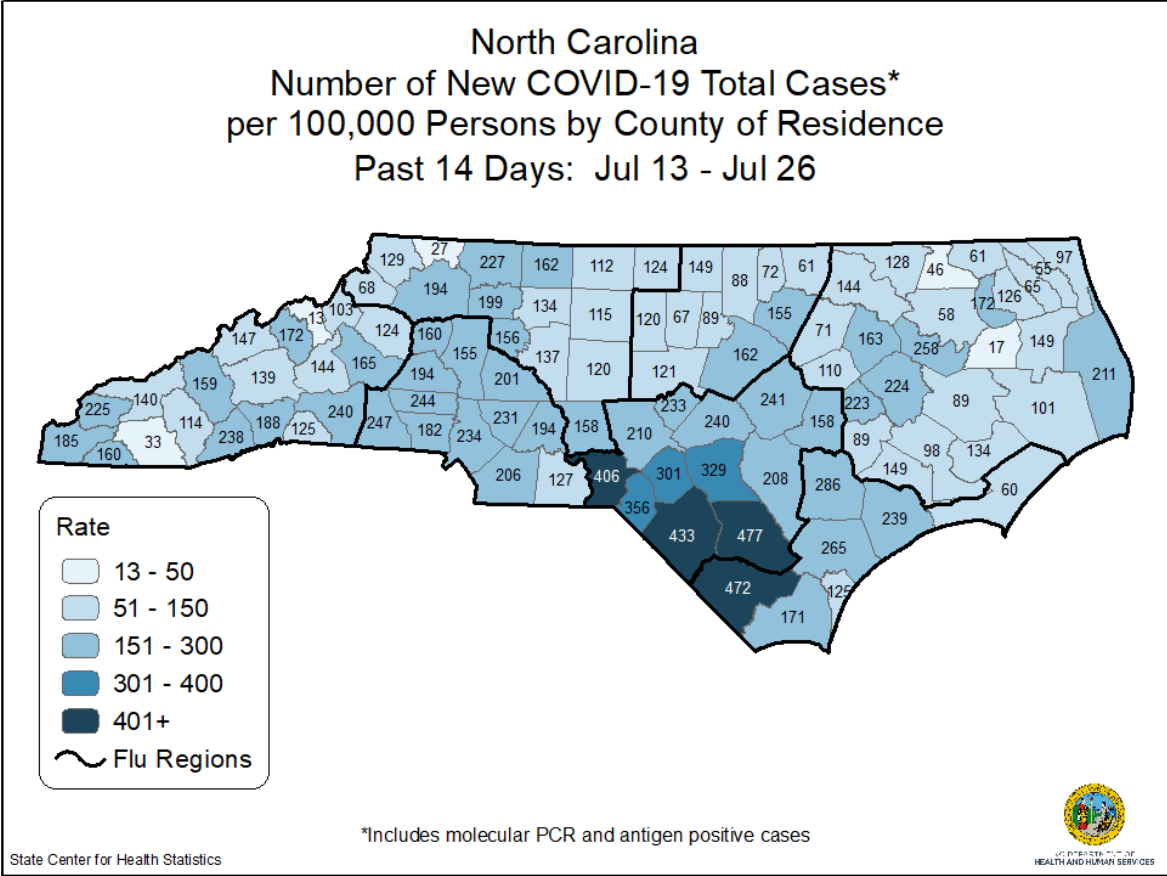
Daily Cases by Date Reported



What Percentage of ED Visits this Season are for COVID-like Illness Compared to Previous Seasons?



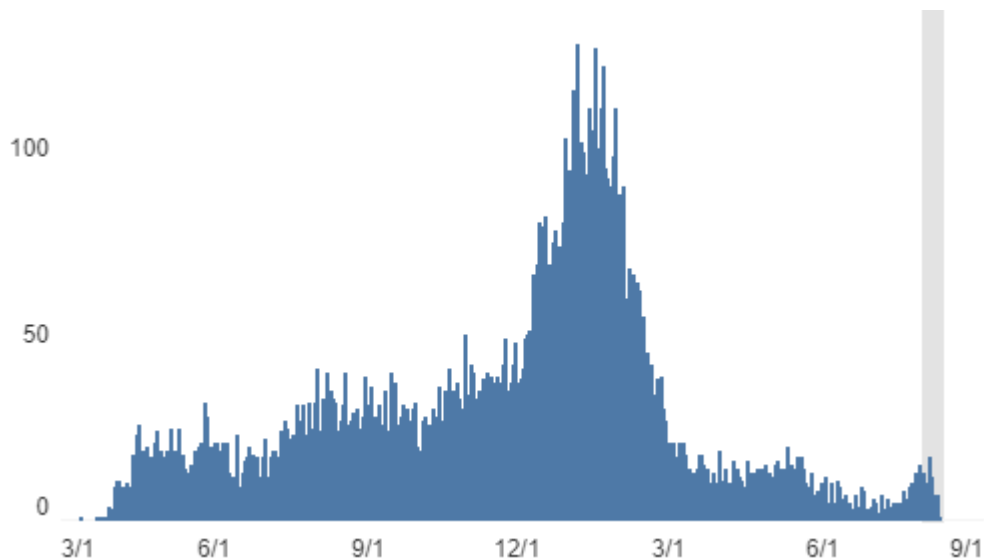
Case Rates Increasing Statewide



COVID-19 Deaths – Lagging indicator

~10 times as many COVID-19 deaths in the past 16 months as reported influenza deaths in North Carolina the past 10 years.

Deaths by Date of Death – North Carolina



Reported NC COVID-19 deaths in past 16 months

13,790

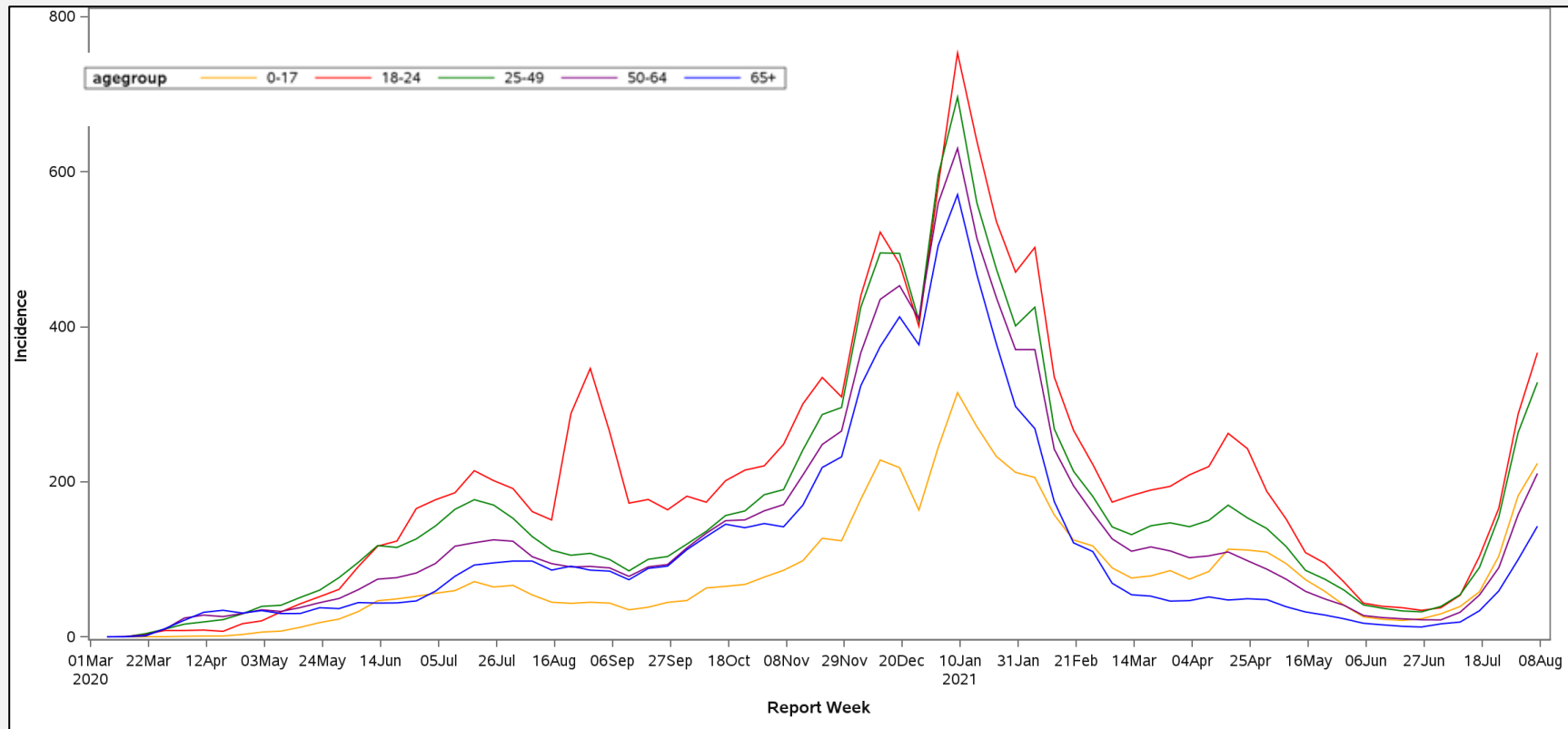
Reported NC Influenza deaths in past 10 years

1,275

Sharpest Increase in Cases Is Among 18 to 24-Year-Olds

Since July 1st, there has been a rapid increase in case rates across all age groups, with highest case rates among 18 to 24-year-olds.

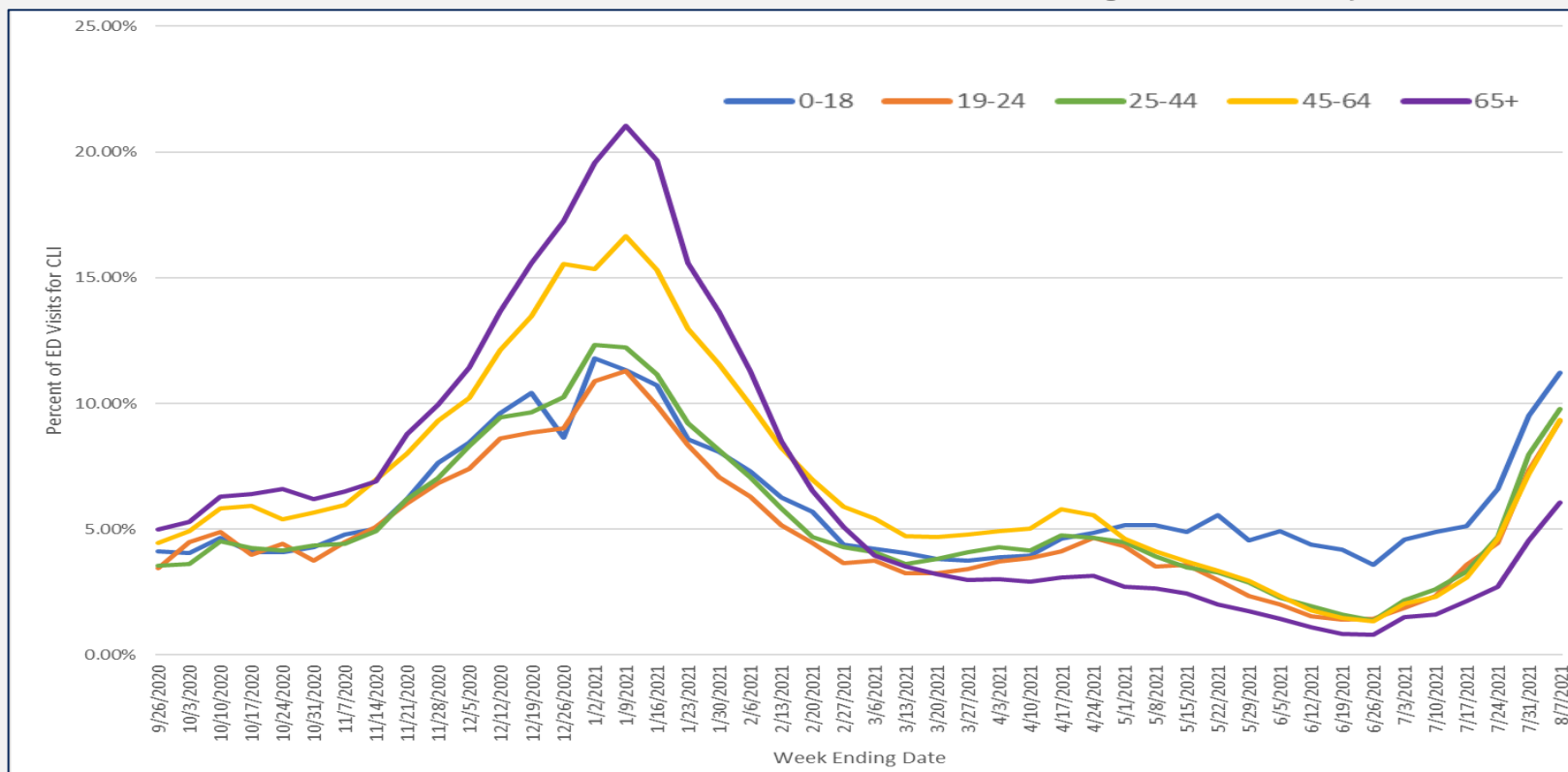
COVID Cases per 100K Population by Age Group



COVID-Like Illness (CLI) ED Visits Increasing Among 19 to 24-Year-Olds

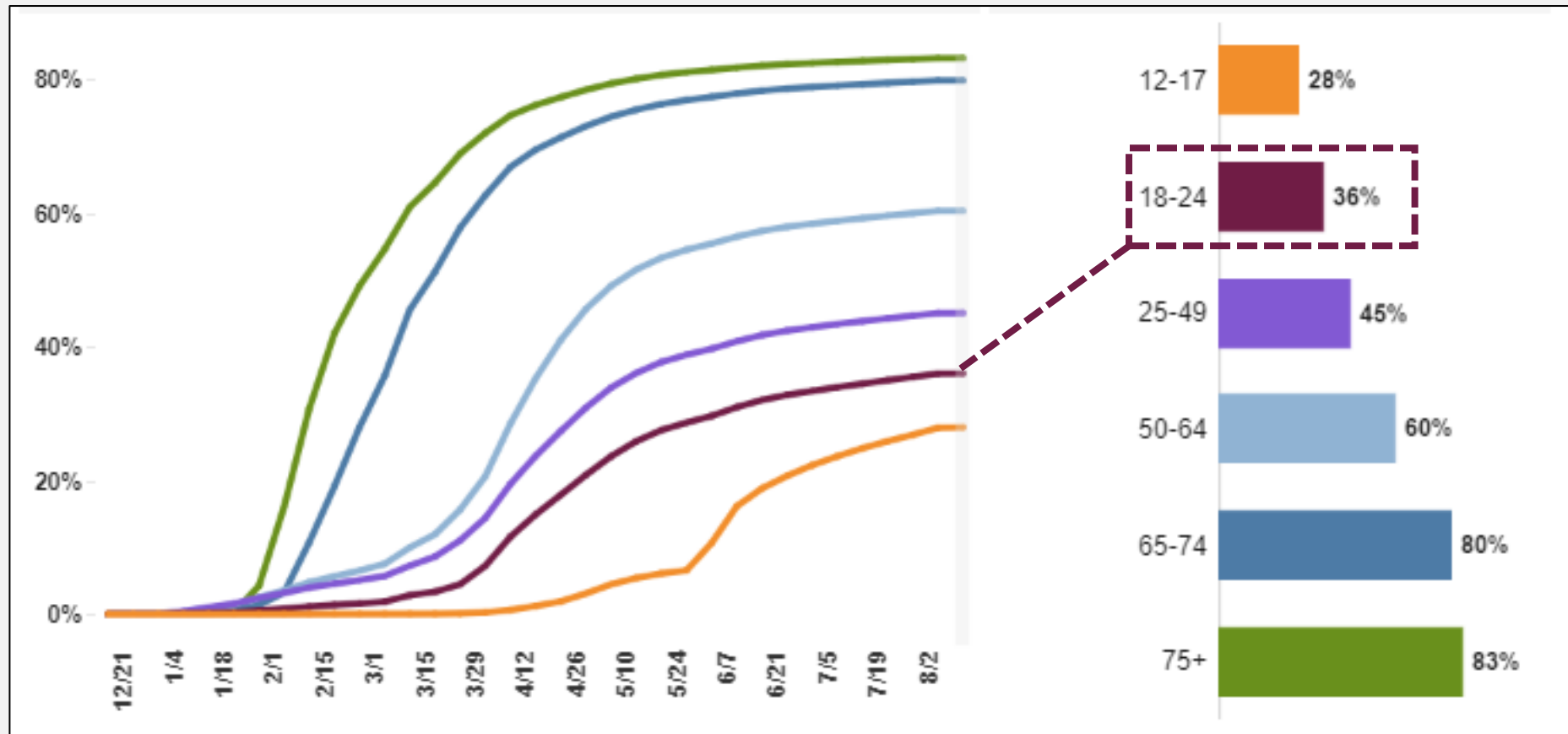
Since July 1st, there has been a steep increase in the percentage of ED visits for CLI across all age groups, including among 19 to 24-year-olds.

Percent of NC ED Visits for CLI Within Each Age Group by Week



Only 36% of 18 to 24-Year-Olds Are Fully Vaccinated

Percent of Total North Carolina Population Fully Vaccinated



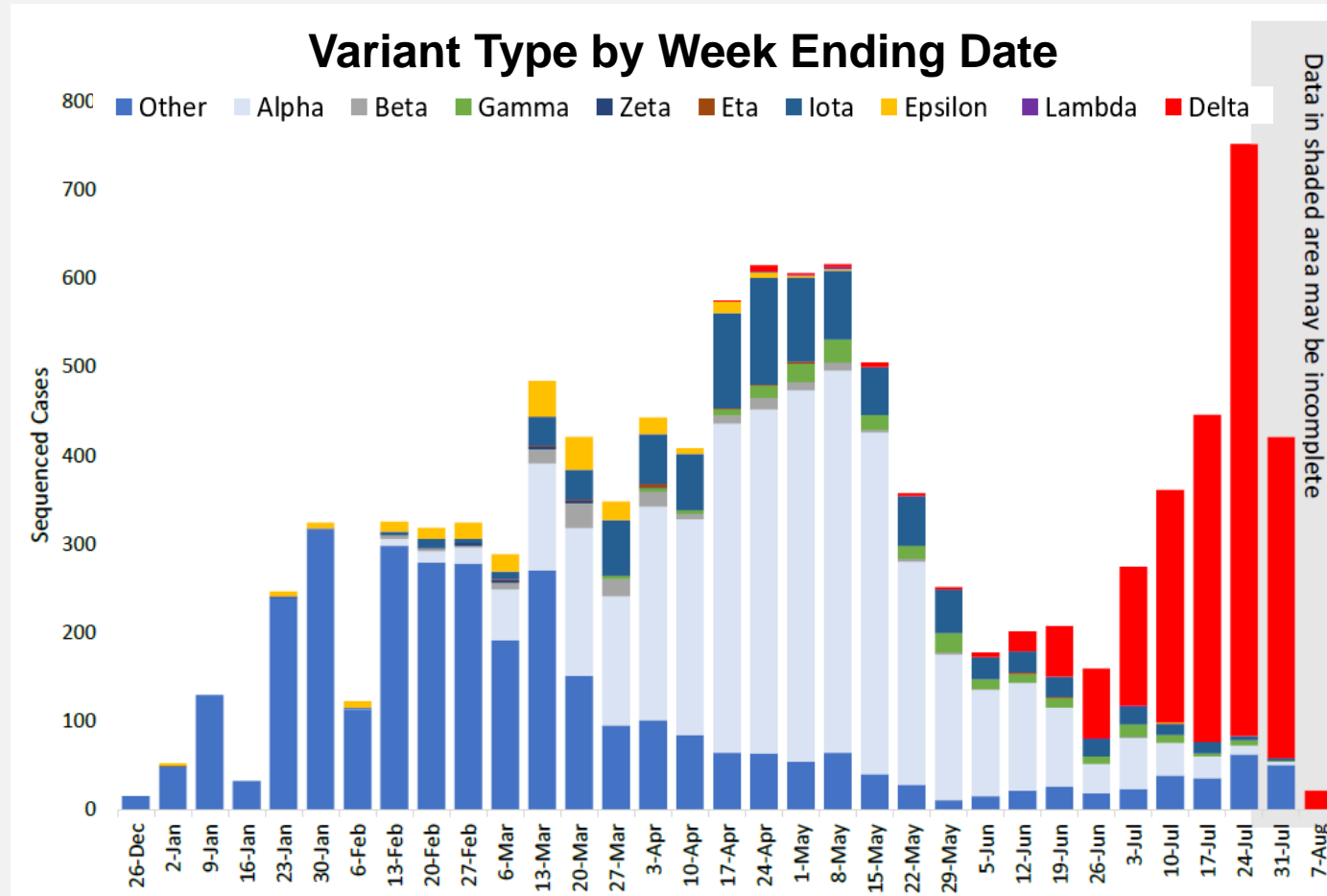
Few IHE Clusters Over Summer, but Return to Campus Will Increase Risk

IHEs reported 105 clusters at 21 institutions between January and July 2021.

Total Reported IHE Clusters (January – July 2021)

Month	Number of IHE Clusters
Jan	9
Feb	42
March	24
April	25
May	4
June	0
July	1

Delta Variant Predominates in North Carolina



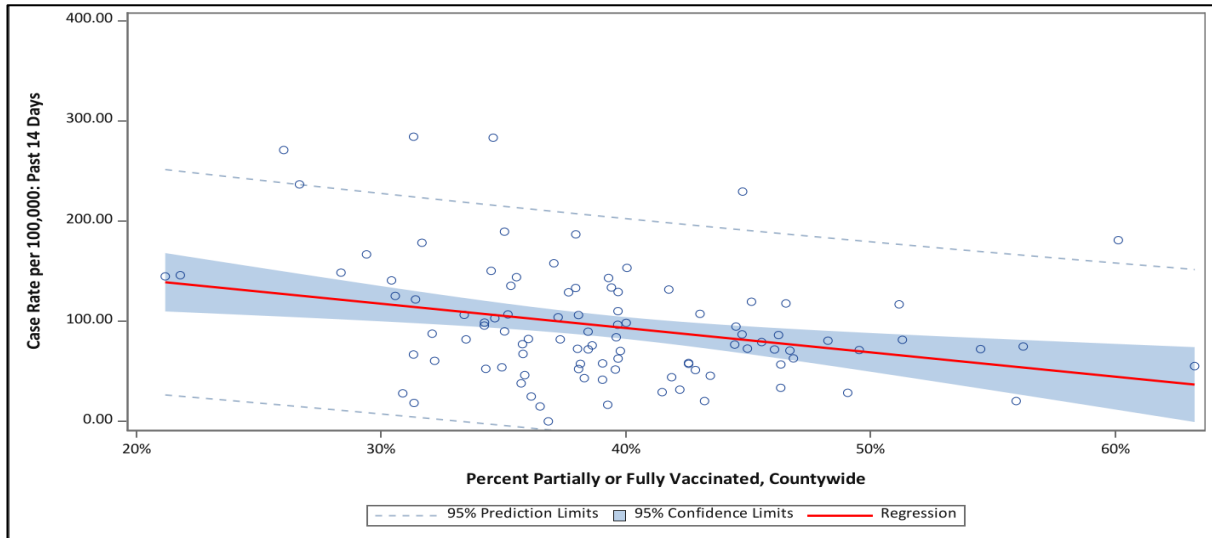
Source: Respiratory Surveillance Report: July 18 – 24, 2021 (Updated August 12, 2021)

Vast Majority of Recent COVID-19 Cases Among Unvaccinated

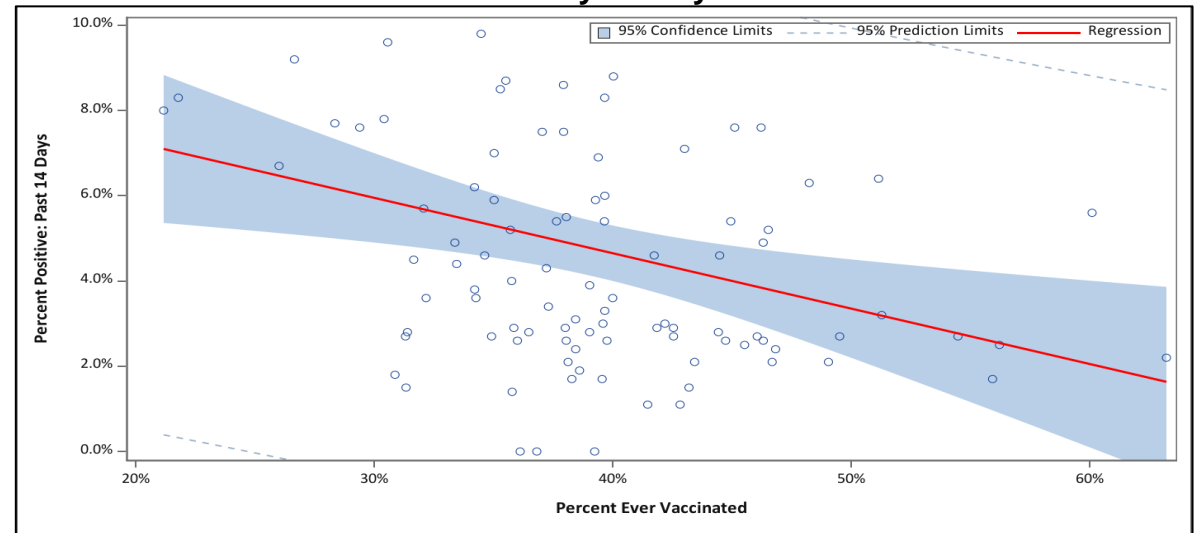
Virus transmission is higher in counties with lower vaccination rates.

From May 6th – August 5th,
88% of cases and 89% of deaths were in people who were not fully vaccinated

Case rate and percent of population vaccinated by county †



PCR test percent positivity and percent of population vaccinated by county †

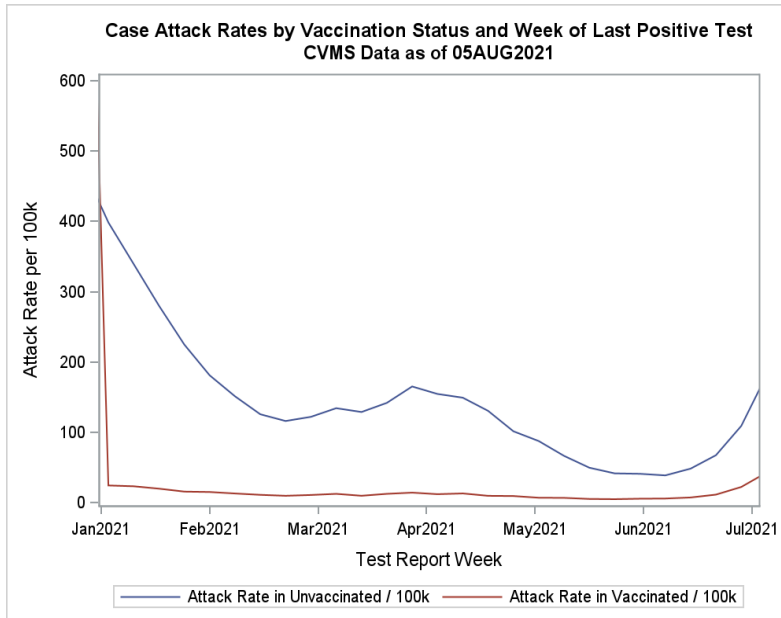


† Preliminary analysis based on vaccine data pulled from the COVID Vaccine Management System on 6/24 and case data pulled from database of reported COVID-19 cases on 6/28. Does not include vaccines given by the Department of Defense, Veteran's Administration, or Indian Health Service; Hospitalization data are missing for many reported COVID cases; Hospitalization numbers include those identified by screening during admission for reasons other than COVID * Based on date of report to public health ** Based on date of death
‡ Case rates and positivity are from June 6–June 19

Attack Rates Far Lower in Vaccinated Individuals

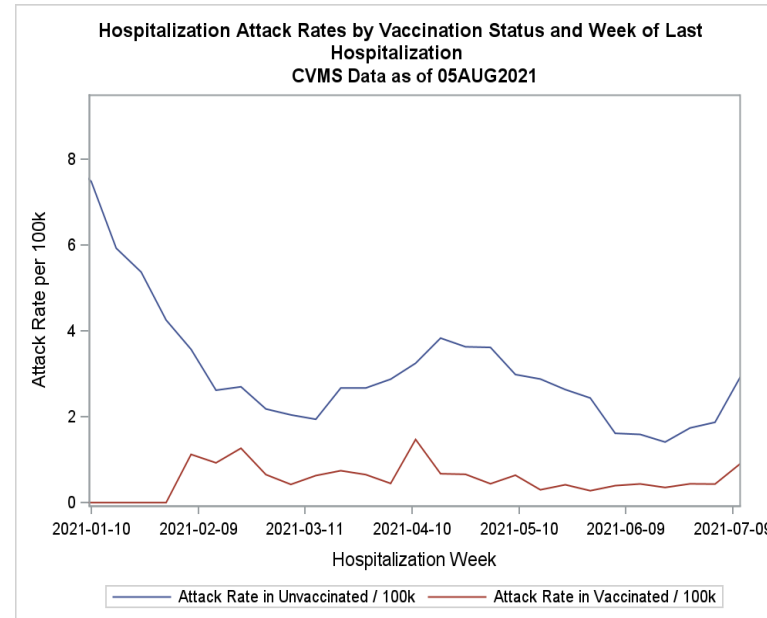
Vaccinated vs. Unvaccinated

Cases



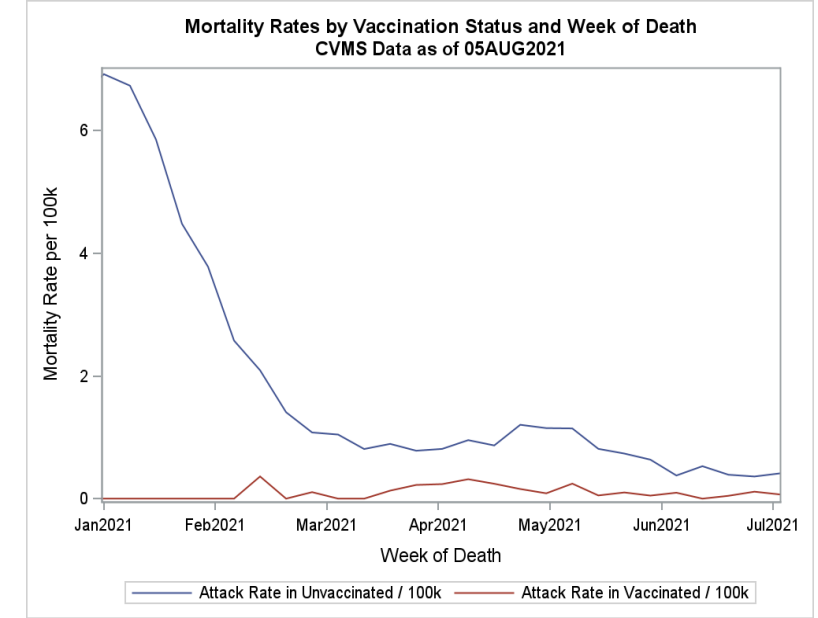
Attack Rate Ratio (week ending 7/31): 4.0

Hospitalizations



Attack Rate Ratio (week ending 7/31): 4.4*

Deaths



Attack Rate Ratio (week ending 7/31): 4.3**

Notes: *Because of low numbers and the time lag from diagnosis until hospitalization, as well as high level of missingness in NC COVID data, this number should be interpreted with caution.

**Because of low numbers and the time lag from diagnosis until death, this number is highly volatile and subject to change and should be interpreted with caution.

Guidance Updates

NCDHHS' Fall Semester Recommendations for IHEs

Key Updates

- ❑ To promote and increase access to vaccines, IHEs
 - **Can**
 - Have on-site vaccinations or decreasing barriers to vaccination sites
 - Incentivize vaccination through prize drawings (swag, school supplies, scholarships)
 - Provide educational resources
 - Require staff, faculty and students to be vaccinated
 - **Should**
 - Require staff, faculty, and students to report vaccine status
- ❑ Continue to offer and strengthen your **surveillance and screening testing programs** by:
 - Requiring individuals who are not fully vaccinated, or do not disclose vaccine status, participate in regular screening/testing program

NCDHHS' Fall Semester Recommendations for IHEs

Key Updates

- ❑ Update **face coverings** policies to:
 - Have all students, faculty, and staff, regardless of vaccination, wear a face covering when they are in a public indoor setting, in areas of high or substantial transmission
 - Continue to have individuals who are not fully vaccinated wear face coverings in all public indoor settings
- ❑ Changes to **Handling Possible, Suspected, Presumptive, or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19:**
 - **Quarantine** is not required after close contact for:
 - People who are fully vaccinated. However, they should get tested 3-5 days after exposure and wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days after last exposure or until they receive a negative test result
 - People who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 3 months and recovered and do not have symptoms

Discussion, Plans, Questions