

Critical COVID-19 News

Information for medical staff

April 2 at 6:40 p.m.

Sent on behalf of Dr. Maureen O'Donnell & Susan Wannamaker

Chief medical officer and chief operating officer of PHSA's COVID-19 EOC

As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, working together has never been more important. We are witnessing strong collaboration and teamwork across the entire organization. Of course, we recognize there have been – and will continue to be – hard days. Please continue to support one another, seek to understand the concerns or questions of your colleagues and take care of your own health and wellbeing.

Your efforts are making a difference in our communities and to the patients and partners that we serve. We continue to extend our sincere gratitude to each and every one of you. Thank you for your continued commitment.

Our daily bulletins contain the latest workforce information. **Please read them carefully.**

Highlights:

Breaking news from the provincial government:

1. Series of B.C. government announcements on new supports

Other important updates:

- 1. Access to COVID-19 test results via my ehealth**
- 2. VCH medical health officer single-site order**
- 3. Use of Cloud services during COVID-19 pandemic**
- 4. Staff town hall time stamps**
- 5. B.C. government guidelines for enforcement**

Series of B.C. government announcements on new supports

- New emergency supports for province's most vulnerable: For everyone on income assistance or disability assistance who is not eligible for the emergency federal support programs, including the Canada Emergency Response Benefit, the Province will provide an automatic \$300-monthly COVID-19 crisis supplement for the next three months. This supplement will also be provided to low-income seniors who receive the B.C. Senior's Supplement and recipients of income assistance or disability assistance who reside in special care facilities.
- Essential service protections from liability: The B.C. government is taking steps to protect those providing essential services by ensuring they cannot be held liable for

damages caused by exposure to COVID-19 while continuing to operate, so long as they are complying with orders from the provincial health officer and other authorities.

- B.C. government Economic Recovery Task Force: The task force will bring together leaders from business, labour, First Nations and not-for-profits to help ensure the Province's economic response to COVID-19 is effective and responsive to the needs of British Columbians.

Access to COVID-19 test results via my ehealth

- Effective immediately, outpatient COVID-19 test results from most areas of the province are available via my ehealth.
- Patients need to provide a Personal Health Number (PHN) at the clinic or collection centre where their test is being done for results to be accessed via my ehealth.
- My ehealth is not used in the Vancouver Island and Interior Health regions, where test results are available via the Cerner (VIHA) and Medinet (IH) patient portals.
- My ehealth offers a fast and secure method for patients to receive their lab test results electronically. As soon as results are released from the performing lab, they are available on the online portal.
 - Most results are available within 24 - 48 hours after coming for testing. This includes results from test samples collected at our network of [phsa.ca/staff-resources/covid-19-resources-for-staff/staff-covid-19-testing]staff and community collection centres (except for Vancouver Island and Interior Health collection centres).
 - The online portal is available in four languages and works on personal computers and mobile smartphones.
 - Patients that are not registered for my ehealth can call **1-888-522-7758** to obtain their **Lab Visit Number (LVN)** and get access to their COVID-19 test results.
 - **New feature:** Starting later this week, my ehealth users will have the choice to receive an email alert when **new test results** are ready. My ehealth patients currently receive notifications for test result updates or amendments.
- Today, approximately 1.12 million British Columbians are registered to receive their test results via my ehealth. This is a significant step in our response and in the testing capacity of our laboratory system as a whole. Kudos to our lab professionals, partners and all the teams that supported this initiative!

VCH medical health officer single-site order

- Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH)'s medical health officer (MHO) has issued a single-site order for all long-term care facilities within the VCH region.
- This means that, if an individual who has employment, contract work or a volunteer relationship with multiple long-term care facilities, **or** with a long-term care facility and another health care facility, and where at least **one** of these long-term care facilities falls within the jurisdiction of VCH, the individual will be restricted to working at only one site after April 4, 2020.
- As stated in the order, **employees and professions exempt from this process include: physicians, nurse practitioners, paramedics, pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and laboratory technicians, along with any other category of service providers declared to be exempt by the MHO issuing the single site order, in this case, VCH's MHO.**
- We note this does not impact most medical staff; however, we want you to be aware of the communication to employees on this matter.

- The order issued by VCH's MHO does not restrict long-term care facility staff from providing services in locations that are not health care facilities. For example, one could still provide home support services in a private home.
- It is important to note that no PHSA facilities are directly impacted by this order; however, we recognize that there may be PHSA employees who also hold a role within a VCH long-term care facility.
- We are asking all PHSA employees who select to work in a long-term care facility that is impacted by a single-site order (and therefore can no longer work for PHSA), to notify your supervisor or manager immediately. This will not result in termination of their employment with PHSA. PHSA will maintain their benefits (if applicable), and their position will be held open.

Use of Cloud services during COVID-19 pandemic

- On March 26, 2020, the B.C. Ministry of Citizens' Services issued an order that temporarily relaxes requirements under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act that ordinarily restrict access to/or storage of personal information outside of Canada.
- The order does not relieve PHSA from its obligation to ensure that personal information is secure against the risk of loss, theft or unauthorized access and use.
- Resources on how to maintain appropriate diligence in the protection of privacy and in securing information in accordance with PHSA policies are available in our website in our Security and Privacy Tip sheet and as part of the Virtual Health toolkit.
- If you have identified any Cloud services that you wish to use and which may fall within the scope of the order, please contact the PHSA Information Access Privacy team at privacyandfoi@phsa.ca.

Staff town hall time stamps

- As noted in the Operational Bulletin earlier today, a staff town hall was held this morning.
- Staff Slido questions raised during today's (virtual) town hall and the time stamps for each answer can now be viewed in a story on POD [[internal link](#)] or externally in PDF form on our website.
- Should you be interested, you can also:
 - View the full town hall recording [[link available externally](#)]
 - View the highlights reel on YouTube [[link available externally](#)]
- Our next medical staff town hall will take place on **Monday, April 2 at 7 a.m.** by teleconference.
- Continue to send in your questions via Slido.com using the event code #PHSAMedicalStaff.

B.C. government guidelines for enforcement

- The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) has issued new guidelines to support compliance with orders on business closures and gatherings, under the Public Health Act.
- These new guidelines provide clear instructions regarding warning, public education and fines – what can be issued and by whom – to be carried out by municipal bylaw officers and other compliance officers to ensure these measures are enforced consistently throughout B.C. communities.
- More information regarding these guidelines for compliance can be found [on the B.C. government's website](#).

Thank you for your continued dedication

The service that each and every one of you offers for patients and families – and the essential support you provide to provincial systems – is critical, and is making a meaningful difference in B.C.

Your ongoing sources of information

- We are sending daily updates. Watch for emails from phsacomm@phsa.ca.
- Send in your questions via [Slido.com](https://www.slido.com) using the event code **#PHSATownHall**. 'Like' questions that are similar to yours to let us know the priority topics to cover at our virtual town halls and in future communications.
- Check the [BCCDC's website](#) as a trusted source of information.
- Visit the [staff COVID-19 section on phsa.ca](#) to access [PHSA News](#) and COVID-19 information when off the network.
- For BCEHS alerts and updates, check the [BCAS intranet](#) and in the [BCEHS Handbook](#). *[Note: you must be on the BCEHS network to access these links].*
- For site-specific questions, please check in with your manager or clinical leadership.
- For trusted information from around the world, please check the [World Health Organization website](#).