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Highlights from today's town hall

DAWKINS, LAURIE [PHSA]

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Vice President, Communications & Stakeholder Engagement



Thank you for your continued participation in our virtual town halls. With each day, the COVID-19 pandemic brings new challenges and new information, and we appreciate your efforts to stay up-to-date and vigilant in these unprecedented circumstances. Thank you for your dedication – you are all making a significant difference.

This morning's town hall can be [viewed here](#) – you don't need to be on the network to watch. Below, you will find summaries of hot topics from our leaders as well as time stamps for each of the questions answered during the town hall. You can always find the latest bulletins and town hall recordings on our external website at www.phsa.ca/covid19staff.

WATCH THE WEBCAST NOW

Hot topics

Benoit Morin, President and CEO

I hope you, your family and friends are all safe and well. I hope you are calm and focused.

B.C. is still tracking very well.

I spoke about facts last week. Facts continue to help us stay calm and focused. It's important to note where the facts are coming from.

There are a number of sources that are reliable – the BCCDC website, for example, and Dr. Bonnie Henry's daily news conference.

On this long weekend, it's important to maintain social distancing and keep up with the public health measures put in place. We can feel hopeful, but we need to remain vigilant. If we lower our vigilance, the facts may tell us in the next ten days that the story has changed.

This weekend, try to rest, if possible. Take some time to think about everything we've been going through.

Cut through the noise and find some inner peace with this exercise I often use myself. Identify one thing that someone else has done that made you feel wonderful – it can be small or big. Share it with the person and tell them how it made you feel.

Do the same thing with yourself. What have you done during the crisis that makes you proud, involved and meaningful? Thank yourself. You are doing amazing work.

Dr. Réka Gustafson, VP, Public Health and Wellness

I started about nine weeks ago and now everyone in this room is familiar. Thank you for making me feel welcome.

B.C. is doing very well compared to other provinces in Canada and other countries.

We are starting to see a very encouraging and flattening curve.

As a result of this, we are going to start doing some things differently.

This does not include social distancing and other restrictions - we must maintain this so we can start implementing other things, such as changing how we test for COVID-19.

We introduced new testing guidelines in B.C. yesterday. Up until now, testing only focused on vulnerable populations.

We have expanded testing capacity and access to testing so we can try to diagnose, isolate and contact trace cases of COVID-19.

Every physician or nurse practitioner can order a test if they have concerns about their patient.

There are no restrictions on testing, though testing in early stages or those with only mild symptoms is still not effective.

We continue to recommend testing in people with fever and cough.

We hope this expansion of testing will continue to drive transmission down.

With the Quarantine Act now in place, all returning travellers to B.C. will need to self-isolate for 14 days. They will be given specific instructions on how to do so.

With the upcoming long weekend, and the change in weather yesterday, we can start to be cautiously hopeful.

Take a moment to reflect on the incredible work that's been done. Thank you for all that you do.

Jaci Edgeworth, VP, People Services

Single site order

The Provincial Health Office has issued single site order, which supersedes other orders issued by the regional health authorities.

This order is meant to protect vulnerable populations such as the elderly and mental health patients and limit movement between facilities.

There are exclusions – this order does not apply to a number of professions – watch for more information in our daily bulletin.

A framework has been developed in partnership with other health authorities and in the coming days we will assign the single site order to individuals impacted.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The BC Centre for Disease Control and Ministry of Health issued a PPE bulletin this morning, focusing on the safety of health care workers and diligent use of supplies.

The bulletin covers procurement of safe and effective PPE as well as the reprocessing of N95 respirators.

Health authorities will start collecting all used N95s that are not soiled for potential re-use. These will be inspected, assessed and stockpiled and only used when new N95s are not available.

The long weekend

We hope you enjoy the weekend and take some time to relax and recharge, if possible. For those who will be working, collective agreements will apply in terms of hours and pay, and excluded staff can refer to the overtime and extraordinary pay guidelines.

Answering your Slido questions

Remember to visit our Slido question page which will remain open under the event code #PHSATownHall. 'Like' questions that are similar to yours to help us prioritize for future town halls.

Open the webcast recording and skip to the time stamps listed below for specific questions and answers:

Public health & infection control-related questions

What if you have a person of high risk living in your household? i.e. an elderly parent or a child with asthma, etc. What are our options as an employee? 24:49

Is there more than one strain of COVID-19? Is the virus deviating? 27:38

Could COVID be spread from your shoes? We wear the same shoes all day. Shouldn't health care workers be wearing a change of shoes or leaving shoes at work? Same with hospital scrubs? 38:46

Based on the April 2 Town Hall, 92% of the previous week's cases in BC are through community transmission.

What considerations is BC putting towards contact tracing methods? How valuable would information gathered from potential techniques be for short term strategy as well as long term monitoring? 50:02

If wearing a non-medical mask protects those around you, wouldn't it make sense to have everyone wear a mask so that we are all protecting each other? Why not educate everyone on how to properly put on and take off a mask to reduce risk of contaminating yourself? 41:26

Can you speak to the work being done to develop a vaccine? 53:03

A 40-year-old patient [note: it was corrected in the room this particular patient was 47] with COVID-19 died at home over the weekend. Why would a patient in respiratory distress not have been hospitalized? 36:07

What are the standards of the masks used by our health care workers? I learned that all HAs are either using priMED PrimaGard Fluid Resistant Procedure Face Mask (PM-PG4-1201, ATSM Level 1) or Cardinal ASTM Level 1 Surgical Mask (AT71035). WHO recommends ATSM Level 2. What's the risk mitigation? 29:40

IMITS staff going onsite have not been given direction on what they need to do to be safe - do we need masks, disinfectant for working on Workstations On Wheels (WOWs) and pcs? Are we at risk for entering clinical areas to fix devices? 57:41

Should we be tracking the number of health care workers with COVID-19? 56:10

HR-related questions

I have had a lot of union staff cancelling their vacations. This will lead to issues down the road once we are back to providing outpatient services. What is the PHSA/C&W policy regarding vacations during the COVID-19 crisis. Will staff be allowed to carry over vacation into next year? 28:34

When and how does a COVID-19 exposure at work become a WorkSafeBC issue? How would workers be able to confirm exposure happened at work if the claim is denied? 46:14

Will non-contract extended benefits be looked at for counselling services? (covered amount is \$500 and a psychologist is \$150-\$200 per session). EFAP is limited to only six sessions per year. Staff may not be comfortable talking to a peer for support. 47:50

For employees who have to work from home for a few more weeks, what options are there for funding to cover needed items not available? E.g. needing a laptop or monitor, increased internet bills, etc? 44:46

My site's vacation policy allows for two staff to be off at one time in our department. I've asked to change a vacation day for a rescheduled event (due to covid) but been denied as there is already 2 staff off. How can we reschedule if there is no available dates? Will policies change to allow flexibility? 54:38

There seems to be a perception among middle management that they need to develop equitable frameworks for deciding who gets to work from home before that process can start. If we wait until

everyone can be accommodated it will be too late. Isn't speed is better than perfection in this case?

32:50

Business continuity-related questions

What is the priority of CST go-live preparation? We still have scheduled meetings and preparations requested, while trying to maintain full patient care. 34:22

You can view the 'live' questions at any time by visiting: Slido.com/phsatownhall.

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HOME NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FROM TODAY'S TOWN HALL

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Working Well: The strategy for psychological safety is 'early and often'

[NEWLOVE, THERESA \[CWBC\]](#)

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Director of Workplace Wellness, Culture and
Experience

We have all learned of the importance of PPE (personal protective equipment) and the very specific, sequential steps of 'donning' and 'doffing'. Following this sequence of steps protects the physical safety of direct care workers. Donning another type of 'protective equipment' – psychological protective equipment is equally critical to our wellbeing. The strategy for safety is **early and often**. As the scale of the pandemic becomes increasingly evident, our minds and bodies respond as they typically would to a traumatic event. Expect changes in how you think, how your body feels and your emotional responses. These responses, although difficult, are typical. The usual advice is that you can expect these responses will diminish in frequency and intensity over a few weeks. If the typical responses to a critical or traumatic event do not diminish over time – seeking help is critical. The pandemic continues and as a result - the advice is different. Notice right now how you are feeling and take steps to access support. Start with resources that you can easily access online:

[Anxiety Canada](#)

[Starling](#)

[PHSA Workplace Wellness resources](#)

If you would like to speak to a trained professional, there are a number of no-cost resources currently available to you:

Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP) through [Homewood Health](#)

PHSA Psychosocial Staff Support (confidential) -

workplacewellness@cw.bc.ca or 604-875-2982

[BC Psychology Association](#)

Working well during COVID-19

Looking after yourself is an important part of living a happy and healthy life. Join us for upcoming wellness sessions to practice mindfulness, learn about healthy strategies for managing stress and anxiety during COVID-19, and ways to support your overall well-being.

[Mindfulness Meditation Series](#)

[Calming Your Mind in Challenging Times](#)

[COVID-19: Strategies for Managing Stress](#)

[Virtual Yoga](#): Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:00 - 12:20 p.m. via Zoom

Take the 21 day Self-Care Challenge starting Tuesday April 14. Sign up on LearningHub to receive the daily Self-Care Challenge email.

This is the fourth article in the “Working well” series by PHSA’s health promotion team, led by Dr. Theresa Newlove. For more tips on staying healthy and psychologically well during this challenging time, check out previous articles below:


[Stay home, stay healthy: tips for maintaining your psychological well-being during self-isolation](#)

[Tips for staying psychologically well during heavy workload periods](#)

[Coping with fear and anxiety associated with COVID-19](#)

Dr. Newlove is now the director, psychological health and safety on PHSA’s human resources team. In this new role, she is responsible for driving a culture of promoting and protecting the psychological well-being and safety of employees across PHSA. You might know Theresa from her work at BC Children’s Hospital and BC Women’s Hospital + Health Centre, where she was director of workplace wellness, culture and experience and founder of the successful “[Wellelevator](#)” events at the Oak Street campus and 1333 West Broadway. She remains committed to her BC Children’s and BC Women’s portfolio and will continue with the great work she started there. Look for the “Working well” series every week in PHSA News.

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Safe and secure: best practices for working remotely

[IMITS SECURITY \[PHSA\]](#)

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As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, many of us are transitioning to working from home for the first time. Security awareness is often top-of-mind when people work in an office environment. However, when people change their work routines, their cybersecurity habits can also change. So, to help with the successful transition of working outside the office, here are five best practices for working remotely, safely and securely:

1 Start with a secure working environment

With the current COVID-19 pandemic, you are now most likely working from home. However, although you may feel safe and secure in your own home, it is important that you still consider the safety and security of health authority information. Be wary of who's around you and who can see sensitive information on your computer screen, including your username and password. As an alternative, we recommend that you position your screen away from prying eyes (even if they are family).

2 Use our Citrix Remote Access

Once you have set up a secure work area, consider using Citrix remote access to connect to the health authority's network. Below is the list of portals to access:

PHSA users: <https://apps.phsa.ca>

VCH/PHC users: <https://access.vch.ca>

CST Cerner users: <https://RemoteApps.HealthBC.org>

Note: If you do not currently have Citrix remote access, you will require management approval. If you've determined with your manager/director that you need remote access, the request will need to be submitted through the IMITS Service Catalogue.

3 Lock your device

When it comes time to take a break from your computer or mobile device, remember to lock the screen before stepping away. This will help prevent others from breaching the confidential and sensitive information you may have been entrusted with.

4 Be vigilant against phishing emails

If you receive a suspicious email that you were not expecting (even if it's from a trusted source), DO NOT CLICK on any links or attachments within the email. Instead, forward the email to spam@phsa.ca and then immediately delete the email from your Inbox, Sent Items, and Deleted Items folders. It could very well be a phishing email attempting to steal sensitive information such as your username and password.

5 Be cautious when connecting to WiFi

While working from home, avoid connecting your computer or mobile device to public WiFi as they often lack strong security controls. In fact, cybercriminals can often intercept these connections and see everything that you read or enter on the websites you visit. Nonetheless, if you find yourself in a situation where you must connect to a public WiFi, remember to use a Virtual Private Network (VPN). This will encrypt and protect your information.

To learn more about our best practices for secure remote working, check out this [infographic](#). To learn more about staying secure while remotely working, visit the Working Remotely - [Cybersecurity Best Practices](#) page on the IMITS Infocentre. If you have any questions about how to securely work remotely, visit the [IMITS Infocentre](#) or email IMITSSecurity@phsa.ca.

Written by Joseph Tesoro, education awareness specialist, security awareness program and Sabrina Young, education awareness specialist, information security.

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Celebrating our administrative professionals

LOW, CHRISTINA [PHSA]

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Communications Officer, Content Services

Administrative Professionals Day is April 22, but the reality is that administrative staff should be celebrated year round. We hope you take a moment to thank your admin colleagues for their contributions and hard work behind the scenes, all of which keep PHSA programs and services running smoothly and efficiently – especially during this challenging time in response to COVID-19.

We want to recognize the exceptional administrative team members across the organization, so please tell us about your administrative colleagues and how they contribute to your program, service or department. Send us a message of thanks, appreciation or recognition (30 words or less, please!) and a photo to news@phsa.ca by Friday April 17 – your note and picture might be featured in PHSA News and on our social media channels!

Thanks for taking the time to celebrate your co-workers in the face of the ever-evolving COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to your submissions.

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Jobs of the Week

CHARACH, ASHLEY [PHSA]

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Rep Talent Acquisition



COVID-19: Hiring in Health Care

Our employees, physicians and support teams play a critically important role in British Columbia. Now, more than ever, we have an essential and important job to do. We must continue to work together, across PHSA and alongside our health sector partners. We are looking for more help!

Please help us spread the word to join us!

Hiring Nurses

Check the job posting for COVID-19 [occupational health nursing roles](#).

Check the job posting for COVID-19 [infection control nursing roles](#).

Hiring for Supply Chain

Check the job posting for COVID-19 supply chain roles [across the Lower Mainland](#).

We are also hiring for in-hospital replenishment based out of [Victoria General](#) hospital!

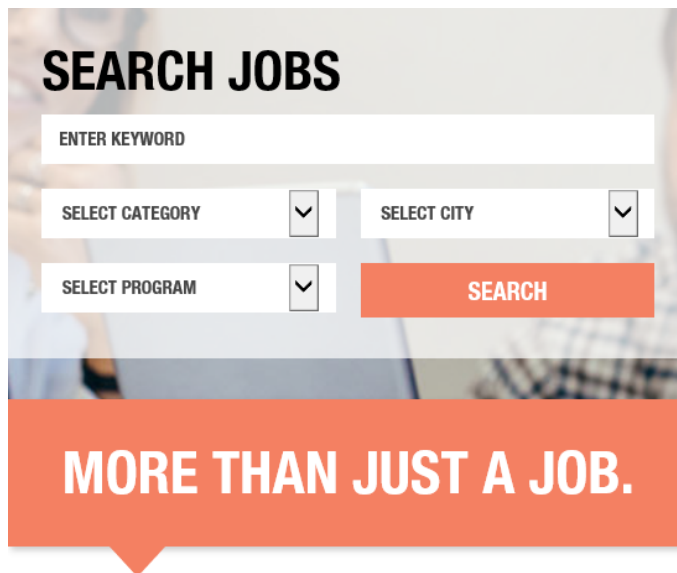
Hiring for BC Emergency Health Services

Check the job posting for [Equipment and Supply Technicians](#).

If an internal posting link has expired, please apply through [jobs.phsa.ca](#).

[BROWSE INTERNAL JOB POSTINGS](#)

[BROWSE EXTERNAL JOB POSTINGS](#)



 **Careers at Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA)**
Today at 4:00pm

COVID-19: HIRING IN HEALTHCARE

Our health care professionals are no doubt our heroes, and this is a challenging time. PHSA needs your help, now more than ever!

We are seeking Occupational Health Nurses to support PHSA staff with questions & concerns related to COVID-19:

<http://ow.ly/biBe30qqQzx>

We are all in this together.

[#togetherforcare](#) [#healthcareheroes](#)

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Rasali, Drona [BCCDC] says:

Veronica Wong is a great Talent Acquisition Advisor to work with.

Posted on July 12, 2019 08:18 am

3 **REPLY**



Mak, Gerald [BCCSS] says:

aefdfsafdsa

Posted on February 27, 2020 01:00 pm

0 **REPLY**



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