



Critical COVID-19 News

Information for employees, medical staff, paramedics and contractors

March 29 at 6:50 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

Last Sunday, we shared in this bulletin that people in Vancouver were cheering for health care workers from their balconies and lawns at 7 p.m. This simple but powerful act of appreciation has spread across the province, as B.C. communities join in to celebrate the heroic efforts of those serving on the frontlines and all those serving behind the scenes who are supporting our critical provincial systems and networks.

Heartwarming gratitude is pouring in from around the province:

- With a special shout out to the doctors, nurses and health care workers of PHSA, two young girls [deliver a sweet message on Instagram](#) and bang on pots and pans from North Vancouver, and many families have started pinning [#heartsforhealthcareworkers](#) in their windows.
- Messages of gratitude sketched in sidewalk chalk have started to pop up around the province, including [outside the BC Cancer – Victoria centre](#) and [outside ambulance stations](#) like Station 303, Ashcroft.
- Some emergency vehicles have been dispatched in squads every evening at 7 p.m. to show support for health care and essential workers. Incredible videos show [RCMP in Burnaby](#) and [RCMP in Richmond](#), just to name a few, sounding their sirens in support.
- Our friends in the Interior have [shared a similar story on Twitter](#) and our friends in Northern BC [have joined in and are being encouraged to toot their car horns in gratitude](#), as they drive past hospitals.
- [Messages of thanks](#) have been coming in through our website from around the province.

Continue to watch our social media channels as we share the messages, videos and images we've been receiving. If you've seen something inspiring in your community, we encourage you to share it with phsacomm@phsa.ca or tag PHSA in your social media posts ([@phsa.bc on Instagram](#), [@PHSAofBC on Twitter](#), [@ProvincialHealthServices on Facebook](#)).

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

Highlights:

Breaking news from government:

1. **Federal government announces additional supports for vulnerable populations**
2. **B.C. government commits \$3M to food banks**

Other important updates:

1. **Reminder: Day care**

Federal government announces additional supports for vulnerable populations

- Today, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau [announced additional measures](#) to support vulnerable Canadians, including:
 - increased support for Canadians experiencing homelessness, and provide help for women and children fleeing violence.
 - \$7.5 million in funding to Kids Help Phone to provide young people with the mental health support they need during this difficult time.
 - \$9 million through United Way Canada for local organizations to support practical services to Canadian seniors, such as delivery of groceries, medications, or other needed items, or personal outreach to assess individuals' needs and connect them to community supports.

B.C. government commits \$3M to food banks

- The B.C. government [announced today](#) it is providing a \$3-million emergency grant to Food Banks British Columbia.
- Food Banks British Columbia will distribute the money among food banks provincewide to support their immediate needs to buy and distribute food, pay employees and cover other costs essential to the delivery of their food programs.

Reminder: Day care

- On Friday, the B.C. government [provided an update on child care](#). Government is encouraging all child care facilities that remain open to prioritize any available spaces for children of essential service workers – specifically prioritizing placements for children whose parents work in direct-to-public health services, such as those individuals delivering patient care in hospitals and emergency response.
- For the week of March 30, if there are urgent situations where frontline health care workers require care for their children, the B.C. government is asking those parents to take the following steps based on the age of their children.
 - **School-aged children (K-6):** Contact your school principals (public and independent) as soon as possible to determine how best to meet the need for urgent child care beginning the week of March 30th.
 - **Children aged 0-5 (Pre K):** Contact child care providers that operate on school grounds (where applicable) to see if they have capacity, or call the local [Child Care Resource and Referral Centre](#) and they will work to match frontline health care workers with a child care provider that has

available space.

- **Vancouver School Board only:** For families in Vancouver, the Vancouver School Board has announced that all child care spots for children from Pre K to grade 6 for essential service workers in Vancouver are being coordinated by [Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre \(WCCRC\)](#).
- The government's immediate focus is for critical need only, for those with no other child care options for the week of March 30.
- Information on more long-term support for essential service workers (this includes essential frontline and support services health care workers) will be announced in the coming days:
 - The government is currently building an online resource for all essential service workers that will support and match them with local child care providers beginning next week.
 - School districts and independent school authorities are also working on longer-term plans to provide child care and supports for school-aged children of essential service workers, with a priority focus on Health and Health Services, Social Services, Law Enforcement, First Responders, and Emergency Response. More information on these plans will be available by April 3.

Thank you for your continued dedication

The service that each and every one of you offers for our patients and families – and the essential support you provide to our 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.
- Continue to send in your questions via [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.
- Continue to check the [BCCDC's website](#) as a trusted source of information.
- We have opened up a [new staff COVID-19 section on phsa.ca](#) where employees can access [PHSA News](#) and the same information that is posted on POD, but when off the network.
- BCEHS alerts and updates are on 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](#).