



Critical COVID-19 News

Information for employees, medical staff, paramedics and contractors

April 7 at 6:35 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

Today is World Health Day. It's a great day to recognize the amazing work that's happening in B.C. – across PHSA, our health authority partners and the entire health sector. While so much of our recent focus has been on COVID-19, we must also pause and reflect on all the critical work we do, every day, to care for our patients, support our provincial systems and keep the health care system running.

Today is also Green Shirt Day – a day when we support organ donor awareness and honour the victims of the tragic Humboldt Broncos bus crash in 2018. Logan Boulet was one of the victims and he was also an organ donor, saving six lives after passing away on April 7, 2018. We often raise awareness about Green Shirt Day and organ donation at events in our communities, but this year is a little different. We're encouraging people to participate in virtual ways that support physical distancing. We encourage you to read about this, and to learn how you can support Green Shirt Day, on [BC Transplant's website](#).

Thank you for your continued work and dedication – in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, but also **every day** – to keep our health care system strong.

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

Highlights:

Breaking news from the provincial government:

- 1. Federal government announces production of more medical supplies and equipment**
- 2. B.C. announces new spaces for vulnerable people to self-isolate**

Other important updates:

- 1. Temporary staff hotel accommodations**
- 2. Today's town hall time stamps**
- 3. Contact tracing for positive cases**

4. PPE decision tool

Federal government announces production of more medical supplies and equipment

- The [Government of Canada announced today](#) that it is building a secure, domestic supply of needed items to protect frontline health workers. Nearly 5,000 Canadian companies have offered their expertise and capacity as we work together on projects that include:
 - Purchasing made-in-Canada ventilators through an accelerated process
 - Developing easy-to-produce ventilators using off-the-shelf, easily accessible parts
 - Using innovative, alternative materials to augment the supply of medical gowns
 - Establishing and securing new supply chains to produce medical gowns from new Canadian sources
 - Purchasing and producing masks, including supporting increased capacity to produce both surgical and N95 masks in Canada
 - Purchasing hand sanitizer from Canadian companies and identifying/guiding new producers through a licensing and procurement process

B.C. announces new spaces for vulnerable people to self-isolate

- To support British Columbians who need a place to self-isolate and to reduce the spread of COVID-19, [the Province announced today](#) that it is partnering with local governments, non-profits and the hotel industry.
- So far, more than 900 spaces have been secured at 23 sites including hotels, motels and community centres throughout B.C.
- These new spaces are a critical part of how we can support those who are vulnerable in our community, including those who are experiencing homelessness or living in communal locations where COVID-19 could spread more quickly.

Temporary staff hotel accommodations

- In order to best protect the health & safety of our staff and their families, PHSA has created a temporary staff accommodation program.
- The program provides:
 - **Employer-paid accommodation** to staff who meet eligibility criteria
 - **Accommodation at a discounted rate** for staff who do not meet eligibility criteria
- The eligibility criteria for employer-paid accommodations:
 - If you have been redeployed by PHSA to a geographic location other than your primary location and cannot safely commute to and from your primary residence;
 - If there is an active outbreak in your place of work and the nature of your work within that location may put you directly at risk of contamination, or you are regularly working in active COVID patient care (i.e. on a COVID-ward) and cannot sequester yourself from other individuals you are living with in your home.
- Staff who do not meet the eligibility criteria may access accommodation at a discounted rate (self-pay options), [which are listed on our website](#).
- The following principles allow for temporary staff accommodation:
 - “Staff” includes PHSA employees, medical staff, residents, and any contractors (i.e. housekeeping) who are key to our COVID-19 response;
 - Where possible, accommodation is provided as close to the worksite as possible;
 - The program will only partner with commercial providers who meet our criteria for health, safety and cleaning guidelines;

- Food is not provided as part of the program;
- Pets and/or family members cannot be accommodated.

Today's town hall time stamps

- We are committed to keeping you up-to-date about the COVID-19 situation and how it impacts our workforce, and answering your questions.
- Following today's all-staff town hall, we time stamped the topics and questions – you can [view this on POD](#), or [in PDF form on our website](#), alongside the [full recording](#).
- You can also [watch the highlights reel](#) on YouTube.
- Our next town hall will be on **Thursday, April 9 at 10:30 a.m.** Stay tuned for more details and continue to send in your questions via [Slido.com](#) using the event code **#PHSATownHall**.

Contact tracing for positive cases

- As referenced during [today's all-staff town hall](#), you can find the PowerPoint slides that outline the contact tracing process followed by Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) and Workplace Health [on our website](#).
- The slides show the steps followed by both IPAC and Workplace Health when there is a team member who tests positive for COVID-19.

PPE decision tool

- As an important reminder, as referenced in [yesterday's bulletin](#) and during [today's all-staff town hall](#), PHSA has developed a new PPE decision tool in collaboration with IPAC, Public Health and the local clinical leadership at the large programs (BCCDC, BC Cancer, BC Children's & Women's, BC Emergency Health Services, BC Mental Health and Substance Use Services).
- The decision tool is [posted on our website](#) (and was also [summarized in the town hall slides](#) today).

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](#) 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](#).