



Critical COVID-19 News

Information for employees, medical staff, paramedics and contractors

March 24 at 7:25 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*

We have an essential and important job to do. Each and every one of us. We are continuing to work together, across all areas of PHSA and alongside our health sector partners, to support the response to COVID-19.

We would like to say **a very sincere thank you** for your continued commitment to patient care and excellence during this challenging time. Please continue to support one another and take good care of yourselves and your health. We are all in this together.

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

Highlights:

Breaking news from the provincial government:

1. **Supportive homes opening in Vancouver**
2. **Certain B.C. Parks closing due to non-compliance**

Other important updates:

1. **Single site order from Provincial Health Officer**
2. **Full list of staff and community collection centres for COVID-19**
3. **Next all-staff virtual town hall date**
4. **Household contacts of health care workers**
5. **Physical distancing and the “two metre rule”**

Supportive homes opening in Vancouver

- Close to 60 new supportive homes with around-the-clock supports are opening in Vancouver, as [a result of a partnership](#) between the Government of B.C., the City of Vancouver and the Government of Canada.

Certain B.C. Parks closing due to non-compliance

- BC Parks has heard concerns from the public, RCMP and First Nations, as well as regional and municipal governments about the increase in visitors and [is implementing full closures](#) of certain parks throughout the province.

Single site order from Provincial Health Officer

- During this afternoon’s media availability, Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry announced that a “single site” order would be forthcoming.
- This order, which has not yet been received by health authorities, will likely direct that many health care workers who serve in long-term and residential care facilities are to limit their work to a single location to lessen the risk of transmission of COVID-19 across sites.
- We appreciate this will have significant impact across the health care system, including with some of our Mental Health & Substance Use Services.
- We will share more detail as soon as possible and support planning around this change.

Full list of staff and community collection centres for COVID-19

- Following recent direction from the Province, all health authorities now have a reciprocal agreement to ensure that all health care workers have access to COVID-19 collection centres across the province.
- As referenced in previous bulletins, there is a staff collection centre on the BC Children’s & BC Women’s campus beside Entrance 77.
- Information on all staff and community collection centres – where individuals who are symptomatic may have samples taken for COVID-19 – [can now be viewed on our website](#).
- This page will be updated regularly as new information becomes available.
- Testing will be conducted at designated laboratories, separate from our collection centres. Staff will receive a phone call with their results.
- Please note:
 - Paramedics can visit any collection centre, not just staff-specific ones.
 - Testing will not be done for asymptomatic staff.
 - You may be asked to wait outside prior to your test, so please dress appropriately for the weather.

Next all-staff virtual town hall date

- The next virtual, all-staff town hall will be held on Thursday, March 26 from 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
- An update to the teleconference number and the webcast link will be shared in tomorrow’s Critical COVID-19 News bulletin.
- As with past town halls, the recording [will be made available on our website](#) immediately after the event.
- Continue to send in your questions via [Slido.com](#) using the event code **#PHSATownHall**. We are expanding our subject matter experts as the topics we need to cover expand and will address the most popular and most relevant topics during the virtual town hall.
- ‘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.

Household contacts of health care workers

- In general, time required for self-isolation for people with potential exposure to COVID-19 is 14 days (the incubation period). This includes health care workers who:
 1. live with or have other close prolonged contact with a person with COVID-19;
 2. provided care, without appropriate infection control precautions, to someone with COVID-19;
 3. are returning travellers.
- However, **if a health care worker is essential for the provision of care** (as described in past [PHSA bulletins](#)) as determined by their program, they can return/go to work provided they are **asymptomatic** and wear a surgical mask for 14 days after exposure.
- All of the above advice should be considered in the context of PHSA's recent directive to support as many employees as possible to work from home.

Physical distancing and the “two metre rule”

- We're now using the term 'physical distancing' to describe maintaining a minimum distance of two metres between people.
- Physical distancing also applies to your work environment – in meeting rooms, during breaks and while having lunch.
- We know there are many who cannot work remotely. Wherever you can, consider these options: book larger meetings rooms for rounds or meetings so that everyone can maintain this distance, offer a dial-in option if possible, and be mindful of the space around you when gathering.
- In clinical settings where close contact is required for care, please continue to use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for your clinical care setting.

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 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](#).