

COVID-19 Operational Updates

Information medical staff

March 19 at 3 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

The situation around COVID 19 – and how it impacts our workforce – is changing on a daily, sometimes hourly, basis. We are all part of the global effort to fight the spread of COVID-19 and your role in this is vital.

Each of you play a role in the 'health' of our health care system and the work you perform is required to sustain the system – which is important to all citizens of British Columbia. We will continue to evaluate the situation on a daily basis and act in a focused, coordinated, and measured manner.

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

Highlights:

1. New direction on working from home
2. Redeployment opportunities
3. Ensuring bandwidth for critical services
4. Timely pay cheques
5. Communication bulletins and town hall
6. Virtual health toolkit

New direction on working from home

- In an effort to do our part to “flatten the curve” and participate in the global fight against COVID-19, **we have determined that for the next two weeks working remotely should be supported wherever possible.**
- Now, more than ever, we have a critically important job to do and we expect that everyone will continue to do their job and play their part. That said, social distancing, facilitated by working from home where possible, helps protect those around you and will help to reduce risk for those employees who must continue to do their job from within the workplace.
- For many roles across PHSA, it is essential that we work in the hospitals/health care environment delivering direct patient care; however there are a significant number of

other provincial roles and system supports that are essential as we support the COVID-19 work and many of these roles will need to continue in the workplaces.

- Where an employee or physician's job lends itself to remote work, or could be temporarily modified to integrate remote work, we are asking leaders and staff to implement short-term remote work arrangements for the next two weeks. Please note that this might change with minimal notice as we track and learn more about COVID-19.
- The decision of who can/should work remotely will be at the discretion of the director or manager and will be discussed with you.

Technology & equipment

- Having the appropriate technology to do the work remotely is a key aspect of the decision on who can or should work from home. Eligible employees and medical staff must have:
 - access to a PHSA laptop or personal computer;
 - reliable high-speed internet at home; and
 - a cellphone or telephone and an up-to-date contact number.
- Please note, access to PHSA e-mail does not require Citrix. You can log in by going to <https://webmail.healthbc.org/>, entering phsabc\username and your password. This is the same username and password you use to get onto your computer.
- You may wish to update your email signature to include the most appropriate contact number.

Compensation & benefits

- Our workforce and our work remains the same. For some workers, the location may change.
- We know that whether on-site or working from home, everyone will be committed to working their regular hours (unless alternate schedules have been established in agreement with your manager or leader) and will be paid at their regular hourly rate of pay. Overtime must be approved by manager or leader.

Redeployment opportunities

- Many PHSA staff have expressed keen interest in helping – the strong sense of community has been uplifting and inspiring – and we have critical workforce shortages in some areas.
- Key areas in need of immediate support include Supply Chain roles based at our Langley warehouse and in-hospital replenishment across the lower mainland.
- PHSA is also actively seeking Registered Nurses to staff Health Link BC's 811 call centres.
- Managers are actively identifying whatever work is critical at this time, and what work can be put on pause to support the efforts required for the management of COVID-19.
- We are asking managers to support those staff members who are interested in being redeployed and can do so without impacting the operational requirements of their department or unit.
- Staff who are interested in redeployment will need to complete the [COVID-19 Redeployment Opportunities form](#) with their manager's signature and submit it to covidredemption@phsa.ca.

Ensuring bandwidth for critical services

- To ensure essential business and clinical services, which remain dependent upon the Internet, are available at all times, we need to manage the appropriate use of our bandwidth.
- A number of non-essential internet sites are now blocked and cannot be accessed while on the PHSA network:
 - Netflix
 - Facebook-video
 - Amazon-instant –video
 - Apple TV
 - Instagram Video
 - Twitter-video
- Staff requiring access to these services can turn off WIFI on their mobile phones and use LTE.
- Internet providers and the IMITS team are working to improve service quality and bandwidth availability at key sites over the next few weeks.

Timely pay cheques

- If you are still receiving your pay cheque by mail, we encourage you to fill out the [direct deposit form from Payroll](#) [internal link] as soon as possible and send your completed form to payrollphsa@phsa.ca.
- Direct deposit is convenient, reliable, secure and not subject to any potential postal service disruptions due to the community impact of COVID-19.
- If you have any questions, please contact the Payroll team at: 604-297-8683 or 1-866-875-5306 or by email at: payrollphsa@phsa.ca

Access to all-staff bulletins and town hall recording

- To read the latest COVID-19 bulletins from any location, visit the staff resources section of PHSA's website: phsa.ca/covid19staff
- [Watch a short highlight video](#) from today's virtual town hall for PHSA employees.
- To help support our medical staff during this challenging time, we are also offering teleconference town halls specifically for medical staff. Participation is optional.
- We are taking questions throughout the week via Slido using the event code #PHSAmembers
- If you see a question posted that resonates with you, or is similar to your question, please 'like' it to help us prioritize.
- The next teleconference will be Friday, March 20 from 7-7:45 a.m.
- Lines will be available on a first come, first served basis.
 - 1-877-291-3022 (toll free, province-wide)
 - 604-681-0455 (Vancouver)
 - Participant access code: 4478028 #

Virtual health toolkit

- The Office of Virtual Health and the Digital Health Team at PHSA have developed a virtual health toolkit that is specifically for clinician use during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- It features virtual health solutions that you may already have on your mobile phone or desktop – or will be easy to get – so you can continue to provide care to your patients and help keep them at home.

- The toolkit is [available on the PHSA website](#) and includes recommendations on how you can help us to preserve network usage for critical business applications when connecting with your patients virtually.

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 check the [BCCDC's website](#) as a trusted source of information.
- 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](#).