

## LATEST UPDATE – Dec. 2, 2020

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In an effort to keep our community partners connected, we are providing you with regular COVID-19 updates.

### Ministry of Health Update

In today's media availability on B.C.'s COVID-19 response, Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer, and Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, reported a total of 834 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours. The total number of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 in BC now stands 34,728 people since the start of the pandemic. There were 174 new cases reported in the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) region. 12 new deaths were confirmed, while 337 people are currently hospitalized, with 79 of these cases receiving treatment in ICU/critical care. The total number of deaths due to COVID-19 now stands at 469. There were 3 new healthcare facility outbreaks announced, and conversely, 3 long-term care outbreaks were declared over. Total active outbreaks in our healthcare system stand at 54 in long-term care and assisted living, and 7 in acute care settings. 2 new community outbreaks were declared in the Fraser Health region- one in Cove Shelter and the second in Millennium Pacific Greenhouses.

### Dr. Bonnie Henry Briefing

Dr. Henry acknowledged the UK medicine's regulator, the MHRA, today authorized the Pfizer vaccine for use in the UK. While it could be some time until we will be in the same position, pending this vaccine's authorization for the Canadian market, an immunization strategy is being developed and Dr. Henry emphasized we will be ready to offer and deliver it to high priority populations when the time comes. This effort is being led by Dr. Henry, Dr. Brown- VCH's VP for Pandemic Response- and leadership from all health authorities in BC. She emphasized there will be no mandatory vaccination programs in BC or in Canada. She has full confidence the vaccines will be safe, once they are made available. The Ministry of Health's focus will be on engaging, educating and involving people in making an active decision around whether they get vaccinated, based on evidence-based information.

Avoiding unnecessary travel remains a key theme for Dr. Henry and Minister Dix. Dr. Henry referenced a hockey team, based in BC's interior, which travelled to Alberta for a sports event against current provincial guidelines. Now dozens of reported COVID-19 cases associated with this specific trip have been identified by Public Health. She urged people, including sports teams, not to consider themselves the exception to the rule. Taking trips like these puts a crack in our wall of defence against the virus.

The Provincial Health Orders, originally announced on November 19, will be posted on the BC government's website today and include specific details about sports. Dr. Henry reminded people that all social events are also prohibited until December 7. While social occasions are not possible right now, Dr. Henry continues to urge people to go outside and to get at least 15 minutes of exercise to remain physically and mentally well. For now, low intensity physical activity in groups is on pause until additional guidance is available- we can expect this next week.

### Release of report- In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care

A report investigating the experiences of Indigenous populations in BC's healthcare system was released on Monday November 30. The report's first finding bears repeating – widespread Indigenous-specific stereotyping, racism and discrimination exist in the B.C. health-care system. To the generations of Indigenous peoples who have lived these experiences, and those who continue to face harm, we apologize for our actions and our inaction in righting wrongs. To health authority Indigenous employees and physicians, we apologize to you as well for the impacts you have experienced. We want to reinforce that racism has no place in our facilities, programs and services, or our society. We have tremendous appreciation for reviewer Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond (Aki-Kwe) and her team for their work, and the almost 9,000 indigenous peoples and health-care workers whose courage to share their stories and experiences help shape this critically important report and blueprint for change. A copy of this report is available [here](#).

### Testing

Anyone in the VCH region with cold, influenza or COVID-19-like symptoms, however mild, can now be assessed for and get a COVID-19 test. Contact your physician or nurse practitioner's office, or a local community collection centre to arrange for a test. Phone numbers and locations of collection centres can be found by visiting: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/testing> or by calling 8-1-1. For more

information and latest updates on COVID-19, follow the BC Centre for Disease Control on Twitter @CDCofBC or visit the website: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>.

#### **Other Resources**

To find the Provincial Health Officer's orders, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

To see a map of **COVID-19 cases by local health area**, visit: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data>

For a listing of the **community exposure events**, go to: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/public-exposures>

For the **latest medical updates**, including case counts, prevention, risks and testing, visit: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>

For **community engagement opportunities** at VCH, see: <http://cean.vch.ca/members/current-opportunities/>