

Daily Update – July 9, 2020

Ministry of Health update

In today's Ministry of Health briefing, Dr. Bonnie Henry, provincial health officer, and Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, reported 20 new cases of COVID-19 in B.C. since last Friday, bringing the total number of cases to 3,028 since the pandemic began. Of those, 982 have been in the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) region. This number is lower than previously reported, because starting today cases will be reported by the by health authority where people live. Cases of residents from other countries — including those who became ill while here and temporary foreign workers — have been removed to make sure we understand the impact on the population here. There are 175 active cases of COVID-19 in the province and 2,667 people who tested positive have recovered. The number of people in hospitals throughout B.C. is 17, including four people in critical care. Two long-term care facilities, and one acute care facility continue to have active outbreaks in B.C.

Investigation into allegations of racism

Earlier today, former judge and provincial child advocate Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond formally launched an independent investigation into Indigenous-specific racism in British Columbia's health care system. Appointed by Health Minister Adrian Dix on June 19, Turpel-Lafond has now assembled her team for the investigation, established her terms of reference and launched a survey to collect and assess the experiences of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people when they access health care. The investigation team includes members with direct clinical experience, knowledge of the health care system and expertise in conducting complex investigations. The review will be conducted in stages, starting with the investigation of troubling allegations that a "game" has been played in hospital ERs which includes guessing the blood alcohol levels of Indigenous patients, and including a wider look at systemic racism in B.C. health care.

The investigation features a survey of Indigenous people in B.C., asking for their experiences in the health care system. That survey is now available on the Addressing Racism investigation website engage.gov.bc.ca/addressingracism. The website also provides a toll-free number, 1-888-600-3078, at which people are encouraged to share their specific stories of experiencing or witnessing racism in the B.C. health care system. Turpel-Lafond said she would like to hear from all health authority staff who have witnessed or have a story to share including Indigenous staff. All names and information will be kept confidential.

The investigation is expected to take several months.

Update from the Premier

Also today, Premier John Horgan updated British Columbians on how the restart of the economy is going and spoke about a range of issues. He pointed to relatively low new cases of COVID-19, increasing use of

public transit and ferries, increasing business at restaurants and shops, companies considering B.C. because of its success flattening the curve, the return of the film industry, and other factors as reasons for optimism. He said Dr. Bonnie Henry helped identify ways to work together so economy didn't need to come to complete stop, and we are now reaping those rewards in terms of interest from companies.

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 centre can be found by visiting: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/testing> or by calling 8-1-1. In Vancouver, the City Centre and REACH urgent and primary care centres can provide testing as well as the St. Vincent's drive-up location at 4875 Heather Street. The Richmond Assessment Centre is located at 6820 Gilbert Road, in the parking lot of the Richmond Tennis Club. On the North Shore, testing is available at the North Vancouver Urgent and Primary Care Centre. If you think you need testing, please call ahead before visiting your doctor, urgent and primary care center or health clinic.

VCH Medical Health Officers, our provincial partners and the Public Health Agency of Canada continue to actively monitor the COVID-19 pandemic. To protect yourself while out in public, wash your hands frequently and maintain social distance. For more information on COVID-19, please visit www.vch.ca/COVID19.

For more information and latest updates on COVID-19, follow the BC Centre for Disease Control on Twitter [@CDCofBC](https://twitter.com/CDCofBC) or visit the website: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>.

