

Daily Update – June 24, 2020

Ministry of Health update

At today's briefing, Dr. Bonnie Henry, provincial health officer, and Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, reported 14 new cases of COVID-19 in B.C., bringing the total number of people who have tested positive to 2,849 since the pandemic began. Of those, 963 have been in the Vancouver Coastal Health region. The number of people in hospitals throughout B.C. sits at 14, including seven people in critical care, and 2,516 people are considered fully recovered. There have been no new health-care outbreaks; there are six active outbreaks in long-term, assisted living or acute care. Dr. Henry also reported one new COVID-19 related death in the Vancouver Coastal Health region, for a total of 171 deaths in British Columbia. We offer our condolences to everyone who has lost their loved ones during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Phase 3

Also today, Premier John Horgan announced that B.C. is taking the next step in BC's Restart Plan with a gradual transition to Phase 3, which includes reopening of hotels and resorts, parks, the film industry and select entertainment, like movie theatres. Phase 3 also includes the safe and respectful return of travel and tourism within the province. British Columbians who wish to travel within B.C. this summer are advised to plan ahead and be respectful while visiting communities, especially smaller and rural towns. Dr. Henry has laid out travel guidelines for everyone travelling to and within B.C.:

- pre-trip planning and research on available resources at arriving destination;
- respecting any local travel advisories to isolated and remote communities;
- no travelling for anyone who is sick, and if symptoms develop while travelling - self isolate immediately and contact 811 for guidance and testing;
- practising safe physical distancing of two metres at all times;
- spending time in small groups and open spaces; and
- practising good hygiene, including frequent handwashing and cleaning.

Modelling presentation

Yesterday, Dr. Henry delivered the latest [modelling presentation](#), which included an epidemiological update. The curve of the epidemic, up to and including June 21, illustrated how and where COVID-19 has impacted British Columbians, and showed that while we have flattened the curve, we continue to have a low rate of infection.

Mobility data gathered from smartphone users who have Google location services set to "on," shows that in Phase 2, British Columbians have gradually returned to more activities in the community, but still less than compared to previous years. Modelling suggests contact rates have risen to about 65 per cent of normal, and we had a slight increase in new cases. Dr. Henry said we are maintaining a fine balance,



increasing the number of connections we have with other people, without seeing a dramatic increase in the number of people who are becoming infected. The modelling also tells us that if we go too far, we risk a rapid rebound in B.C., something many other jurisdictions are now experiencing.

Dr. Henry also emphasized the importance of strong contact tracing. As we've increased our contacts, we must ensure public health has resources to find people who may be at risk. During this phase, we need to find about 75 per cent of people within 1-3 days to be able to effectively control the epidemic. As we move into Phase 3, we need to continue to be able to effectively find people within a few days. Our responsibility is to keep our bubbles small and know everyone we are with at all times, to allow public health teams to notify everyone who may be at risk and contain the spread as quickly as possible.

State of Emergency

Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, formally extended the provincial state of emergency, allowing the continued use of extraordinary powers under the Emergency Program Act to support the Province's COVID-19 pandemic response. The state of emergency is extended through the end of the day on July 7, 2020, allowing government to continue to take the necessary steps to keep British Columbians safe.

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/>.

