Daily Update – June 8, 2020

Briefing with Dr. Henry

In today's daily briefing, Dr. Bonnie Henry, provincial health officer, reported 29 new "test-positive" cases of COVID-19 in B.C. since Friday, as well as one epidemiologically linked case, bringing the total number of cases to 2,659 since the pandemic began. Of those, 907 have been in the Vancouver Coastal Health region. There are 16 people with COVID-19 in hospitals throughout B.C., including four people in critical care, and 2,309 people are considered fully recovered. There are still four active outbreaks in long-term care or assisted-living facilities in B.C.

Almost 30% of students are back in class

More than 157,000 kindergarten to Grade 12 students, representing nearly 30% of B.C.'s total school population, were back in classrooms during the first week of the province's gradual return to schools for in-class instruction under new health and safety guidelines, said Rob Fleming, Minister of Education. As of June 1, all kindergarten to Grade 5 students have the option to attend school half-time, while students in grades 6 to 12 can attend school the equivalent of one day a week. Students attending schools are limited to current density targets of 50% for kindergarten to Grade 5, and 20% for grades 6 to 12. Children of essential service workers and students who need additional support are still welcome to attend schools full-time this month.

Unifying families

Earlier today, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced an exemption to the Canada-U.S. border shutdown to allow immediate family members of Canadian citizens or permanent residents to visit from the U.S. The exemption, which comes into effect at 12 a.m. on June 9, includes spouses, children, parents or guardians. Visitors to Canada will have to quarantine for 14 days and plan to stay in the country for at least 15 days. The border was closed to all non-essential visitors in mid-March.

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. 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 http://www.vch.ca/covid-19.

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/.