

Daily update – March 25, 2020

B.C. provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry announced 42 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 in B.C. on Tuesday, bringing the total to date to 659, with 339 of those cases in the Vancouver Coastal Health region. There are now 64 people in hospital in the province, with 26 being treated in intensive care. The vast majority are recovering at home in isolation, and 183 people now listed as fully recovered.

Once again, many of the cases are in long-term care and assisted living residences. In VCH, that includes an increase in confirmed cases at Haro Park Centre, with 28 residents and 27 staff testing positive. And while there are no new cases at the Lynn Valley Care Centre, we're sad to share news of another death from that outbreak. Dr. Henry said once again, it draws attention to the fragility of our long-term care facilities. Which is why there are new, stricter measures for long-term care homes around the province, including restriction of visitors, and additional measures in the outbreak facilities around personal protective equipment (PPE). It's an incredibly challenging time for the families of residents in long-term care; VCH staff are working hard to find ways to keep people connected with their loved ones.

Personal Protective Equipment was another focus; supplies are being actively monitored, and we've seen a dramatic increase in the "burn rate," which is much higher than we expected. Measures are being put in place, such as alternative supplies and ways of managing to be more efficient in PPE.

Once again, Dr. Henry noted the importance of physical distance, and social connection: it's important that we come together in our communities and support each other, but we do it in a virtual way, and we have a safe space between us to stop the transmission of this virus.

The impact of implementing physical distancing is also economic, and this morning, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced the House of Commons had passed the emergency bill to help people as quickly as possible. The bill includes measures such as delayed repayment of student loans, an enhanced Canadian Child Benefit, and a new Canada emergency response benefit which will offer \$2,000 a month for four months to those not getting a paycheque, or having to miss work due to COVID-19.

The Prime Minister also said the Federal Government is helping companies, labs, and scientific institutions so they can help manufacture the medical products needed for this crisis.





VCH Medical Health Officers, our provincial partners and the Public Health Agency of Canada continue to actively monitor the COVID-19 pandemic. We strongly urge anyone who has symptoms—including a fever, cough, sneezing, sore throat, or difficulty breathing—to self-isolate for 10 days. To protect yourself while out in public, wash your hands frequently and maintain social distance.

Testing is available for people with respiratory symptoms who are hospitalized or likely to be hospitalized, including pregnant women in their third trimester; health-care workers; residents of long-term care facilities; or part of an investigation of a cluster or outbreak.

A self-assessment tool, developed with the BC Ministry of Health, will help determine whether you may need further assessment or testing for COVID-19. Find it at covid19.thrive.health, or download a self-assessment app for their phones.

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/>

