

Daily update – March 26, 2020

City of Vancouver is working with BC Housing and Vancouver Coastal Health as part of a collaborative initiative to help people who are homeless and in the shelters to help reduce the chance of transmission of COVID-19 among this population. Over the past week, we have worked together to select two community centres – Roundhouse and Coal Harbour – to create additional capacity and provide a safer place for those experiencing homelessness.

The new shelters are temporary and will be referral-only, will be staffed 24/7 and have been set up to help reduce the chance of transmission of COVID-19. VCH will provide ongoing Public Health guidance and BC Housing has appointed non-profit operators to manage the emergency response centres. These centres should be operational by the end of the week.

Additionally, the City's Social Resilience Task Force has deployed teams to work on the following areas:

- Food security
- Single-room occupancy hotels (SROs)
- Supportive housing needs
- Community/peer information distribution

For details, see [today's media release](#).

During today's provincial Ministry of Health briefing, Dr. Bonnie Henry said the new prescriber guidelines will support people who may be affected by COVID-19 in the DTES.

Today Dr. Henry also announced 66 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 in B.C., bring the total to date to 725. The number of people who have fully recovered is 186. In Vancouver Coastal Health, the total number of cases to date is 359. The number of confirmed cases in long-term care remains the same as yesterday's update, except at Haro Park, where there are two additional residents and one additional staff member confirmed positive.

Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, said there are 3,903 hospital beds vacant in B.C., which translates to a 63% occupancy rate, and a 54.8% occupancy rate in ICU. Currently, there are 66 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in hospital in the province, and with 26 in intensive care.



Also addressed at today's briefing: the supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to keep our health-care workers safe. Minister Dix said the Ministry is conserving and micromanaging our current existing inventory, and working diligently to seek new sources of supply. The province has also created a new provincial supply chain co-ordination unit to better control the flow of essential goods and services, including medical supplies. There is also a ban on reselling vital supplies, such as masks and cleaning products. People who break that order can be fined up to \$10,000 or jailed for one year.

Dr. Henry also announced an order requiring health sector workers to work at one facility only throughout the pandemic, this includes long term care, acute/extended care, and assisted living.

Also today, the Government of Canada invoked the Quarantine Act, imposing a mandatory 14-day self-isolation for any traveller arriving or returning to Canada.

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.

We strongly urge anyone who has symptoms —including a fever, cough, sneezing, sore throat, or difficulty breathing — to self-isolate for 10 days. 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 smartphones.

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/>

