

## Daily update – March 30, 2020

The preparation continues in B.C. for a possible increase in the number of COVID-19 patients. At today's briefing, Minister of Health Adrian Dix announced that there are now 4,233 vacant acute care beds throughout the province, with a current occupancy rate of about 61 per cent. Vancouver Coastal Health and Fraser Health authorities are preparing off-site treatment centres with extra beds for patients who are recovering from less serious illnesses or injuries; in VCH, that site will be the Vancouver Convention Centre, which will house 271 beds if they are needed.

Also today, Provincial Medical Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry announced 86 new cases of COVID-19 in the past 48 hours: 16 from March 29, 70 from March 30, for a total of 970 cases in B.C. to date, with 472 in VCH. Of the total COVID-19 cases, 106 individuals are currently hospitalized, with 60 in intensive care. We have seen 469 confirmed cases recovered, which includes 70 people who were in the ICU. There are now 13 long-term care and assisted living homes in B.C. that have had confirmed cases. Sadly, another two people have died as a result of COVID-19, including the first person to die in the community.

Minister Dix also announced a suspension of parking fees for health-care workers, and in coordination with that, VCH announced today that health-care workers, staff, visitors and the public will no longer have to pay for parking at our owned and operated sites. Pay parking will be suspended until further notice, effective April 1, 2020. This change makes it easier for individuals to avoid touching screens and buttons at payment kiosks that may have been touched by someone previously and also supports physical distancing measures that have been mandated by Dr. Henry.

In addition, VCH has worked with our civic partners in Vancouver, Richmond and the City of North Vancouver to provide unrestricted street parking in neighbourhoods near VCH hospitals. Parking tickets will be waived if staff or physicians get ticketed during a work shift while parking close to Vancouver General Hospital, Richmond Hospital and Lions Gate Hospital. Staff will be provided with instructions on how to get the tickets waived.

Earlier today, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced the details of a wage subsidy to encourage employers to keep people on the payroll. For businesses that have seen a reduction in revenue of at least 30 per cent, the federal government will cover up to 75 per cent of employee salaries on the first \$58,700 earned.



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](https://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/>

