

Daily update – March 31, 2020

At today's briefing, Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry announced 43 more people have tested positive for COVID-19, bringing the total to date in B.C. to 1,013 confirmed cases. Of those, 476 have been in the Vancouver Coastal Health region. Currently 128 people are hospitalized in B.C. as a result of the virus, with 61 patients in intensive care. Just over half of all patients — 507 in total — have fully recovered. Dr. Henry also announced that five more people have died as a result of COVID-19.

Dr. Henry also announced a new First Responder Dispatch Protocol, in which firefighters and police officers who might normally attend to medical emergencies along with paramedics will no longer be dispatched, unless their services are required. The protocol will help better protect non-paramedic first responders, and reduce unnecessary use of valuable personal protective equipment (PPE), during the COVID pandemic.

Earlier today, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced supply contracts with three Canadian companies to manufacture needed medical equipment to help address the demand for critical supplies in the coming weeks. He also announced \$2 billion to purchase protective equipment for provinces and territories.

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/>

