Daily Update – May 4, 2020

In a joint statement today, Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, and Dr. Bonnie Henry, B.C.’s provincial health officer, reported 33 new cases of COVID-19, bringing the total number of people who have tested positive in B.C. to 2,145 since the pandemic began. Of those, 823 have been in the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) region. The number of people in hospitals throughout B.C. sits at 79, including 24 people in critical care, and 1,357 people are considered fully recovered.

In total, 21 long-term care and assisted living facilities, and three acute-care units have active outbreaks, with outbreaks now declared over at 12 care facilities. The VCH Public health team is among those in the province providing support to community outbreaks, actively contact tracing those who may be directly affected and their close contacts. There are now 35 employees confirmed positive at United Poultry in Vancouver.

The statement also noted that today is National Physicians Day, as well as the start of National Medical Laboratory Week. It’s an opportunity for all of us to recognize the dedication and contributions of our physicians, our medical laboratory professionals and all our other health-care workers — the people whose responsibility it is to care for all of us. “Let’s honour and protect them by doing all we can to continue to flatten the curve. When we are outside this weekend, think of them and always keep a safe physical distance from those around you. Be 100% committed to keeping our firewall strong.”

On Monday, May 4, the provincial health briefing at 1:30, will include an update on some of the modelling from Dr. Henry.

Earlier today, Carole James, Minister of Finance, said B.C. is now accepting applications for its Emergency Benefit for Workers, which provides a one-time, tax free payment of $1,000 to
those whose work has been affected by COVID-19. Applying online is the fastest, easiest way to receive the benefit. To apply, British Columbians with their social insurance number and direct deposit information can go to: www.gov.bc.ca/workerbenefit.

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. Testing can be done through a primary care provider, walk-in clinic, urgent and primary care centre or community collection centre. Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses including the common cold. They include: fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, nasal congestion, painful swallowing, loss of sense of smell, headache, muscle aches, fatigue or loss of appetite. COVID-19 testing is not recommended for people without symptoms.

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 www.vch.ca/COVID19.

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/.