

## Daily Update – May 14, 2020

### Briefing with Dr. Henry

In today's daily briefing, Dr. Bonnie Henry, provincial health officer, reported a total of 15 new cases of COVID-19 in B.C., bringing the total number of people who have tested positive to 2,392 since the pandemic began. Of those, 878 have been in the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) region. The number of people in hospitals throughout B.C. sits at 58, including 12 people in critical care, and 1,885 people are considered fully recovered. There are still 19 active outbreaks in long-term care, assisted living, and acute care throughout B.C.

### Planning for the long weekend ahead

Dr. Henry also called on all British Columbians to stay close to home. She recommended they get outside and enjoy the best of B.C. in our own backyards, going for hikes in local parks, visiting farmers markets, or having a picnic, and if it rains, continue with home movie screenings and Zoom dates. She asked that we all use this May long weekend as an opportunity to put our safe social interaction rules into action and set those habits for the coming weeks.

### Hospital occupancy rates begin to climb

Health Minister Adrian Dix said the occupancy rate in our hospitals is climbing slightly, indicating increased utilization of health care services for reasons other than COVID-19. In recent days in emergency room numbers, and today, occupancy rates across BC hospitals are 67.1%, and in critical care at 52.3%, indicating a slight rise in both. During the COVID-19 pandemic, hospitals across VCH remain prepared to safely receive and care for all individuals who experience health conditions that require urgent and emergency care.

### B.C.'s state of emergency extended

Yesterday, Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, extended the provincial state of emergency to support continued co-ordination of the pandemic response. The action allows a continued, co-ordinated response to keep people safe, support our health-care system and ensure our supply chains are secure. The current state of emergency is being extended through the end of the day on May 26, 2020.

### New federal measures to support Indigenous peoples

Earlier today, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced new measures to support Indigenous peoples. The federal government set aside \$306 million to provide interest-free loans and non-repayable contributions to Indigenous businesses. It is also providing \$75 million of targeted support for First Nations, Inuit and Métis students, well as helping young people find a job in their community this



summer. Another \$10 million has been invested in emergency shelters for Indigenous women and children who are fleeing violence.

## First serological test authorized by Health Canada

Yesterday, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Health Canada has authorized the first serological test for COVID-19 antibodies. This is a critical step for the work of the COVID-19 Immunity Task Force, which now has a safe and approved test that can detect antibodies specific to COVID-19, in an individual's blood. These tests will help us better understand immunity against the virus and how it spreads so we can keep Canadians safe and healthy.

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. 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 <http://www.vch.ca/covid-19>.

For more information and latest updates on COVID-19, follow the BC Centre for Disease Control on Twitter [@CDCofBC](https://twitter.com/CDCofBC) or visit the website: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>.

