

Date: April 02, 2020

To:

From: Sharon Carroll – Program Manager, Bella Coola General Hospital  
Dr. Jeffrey Peimer – Local Medical Director, Bella Coola General Hospital

Re: **COVID-19 – Community Information Bulletin**

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***Coordinated on behalf of Nuxalk Nation Health/Wellness, Central Coast Regional District and Emergency Coordination Officer, Bella Coola General Hospital Emergency Management Committee and VCH***

### **Updates for April 02, 2020**

We are asking that all of us continue to work together as one community to fight the COVID-19 virus. “We can ‘see’ what’s coming and have the gift of time to help plan and prepare” for this virus and its effects (F. Dalton, CEO Providence Healthcare). It is very important to stay safe and protect each other through our social/physical distancing for as long as it takes.

Just because you have isolated yourself for 14 days does not mean you won’t have to do this again. We are in a continual circle of prevention and protection. The British Columbia Ministry of Health is indicating at least another month of strict self-isolation, no group gatherings, continued business closures, frequent hand washing, and physical distancing to help protect us and prevent the virus from spreading.

#### **What does this mean in our daily lives?**

- Wash your hands frequently. This virus is spread by contact and droplets which land on surfaces that we touch which are then transferred to our face by our hands. We must be diligent in hand washing before touching our eyes, nose, mouth, or eyeglasses.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing to prevent spreading the droplets.

#### **This virus spreads really quickly when we have any group activity or gathering**

- Please do your part to keep those groups small and restrict group activities to immediate family members only in your home.
- Do not go house to house to visit or party.
- Do not hug others when outside of your home – greet each other from a distance.
- Speak or visit with others online instead of in person.
- Send one person to pick up groceries once weekly to minimize the need to go out in public.
- Go outside for fresh air or walks but avoid contact with others and ensure you maintain a large distance between each other – do not cluster into a group – you must stay 6 feet apart or more to keep this virus from spreading so easily.

#### **Hospital and long-term care visitor restrictions: one-visitor policy in effect**

Thank you for helping us achieve our **one-visitor essential visit only** policy at the hospital to help keep our elders and most vulnerable safe.

Essential visits include:

- Compassionate care (e.g. end of life, critical illness);
- Visits that are absolutely paramount to patient/client/resident care and well-being, such as helping with feeding or mobility (such as a parent of an admitted child)
- People who are unwell with cold or flu-like symptoms cannot visit



### What to do if you feel sick

**If you have symptoms of fever, cough, shortness of breath, or flu-like illness stay home but call for advice**

- Call the Bella Coola Medical Clinic 250-799-5342, Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for advice;
- Call 8-1-1 all other times

### Seek medical attention if you have

- Trouble breathing, if you cannot keep fluids down, develop chest pain or have other emergent issues.
- Call the ambulance (1-800-461-9911) if your symptoms require immediate care.

### Additional healthcare staff in the valley

Please note we utilize and need healthcare staff and physicians from out of town in order to continue hospital function as normal. All staff and physicians coming into the valley have been informed of our protocols specific to self-isolation for healthcare workers.

For instance: The nurses and doctors come to work, mask at all times in the workplace to protect our most vulnerable, maintain physical distancing when possible, and arrange for grocery ordering/pickup. When out walking or doing a hike, we are requesting they maintain physical distancing and avoidance of others when possible. We will do what we can to protect our community members while continuing to provide healthcare services in the valley.

We, the residents of the Bella Coola Valley, have a huge responsibility in this challenging time! It is absolutely essential that we practice physical distancing, self-isolation and follow all government guidelines - we can't stress this enough and how important it is. Please be kind, help each other and be safe. By pulling together and playing our part we can help keep each other safe and contribute to a quicker recovery. Thank you.

### More information:

- [www.VCH.ca/COVID19](http://www.VCH.ca/COVID19)
- [www.bccdc.ca](http://www.bccdc.ca)
- [www.canada.ca/coronavirus](http://www.canada.ca/coronavirus)
- [www.who.int/coronavirus](http://www.who.int/coronavirus)
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