LATEST UPDATE – Dec. 10, 2020

In an effort to keep our community partners connected, we are providing you with regular COVID-19 updates.

Ministry of Health Update

In today's media availability on B.C.'s COVID-19 response, Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer, and Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, reported a total of 723 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours. The total number of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 in BC now stands at 40,060 since the start of the pandemic. There were 135 new cases reported in the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) region.

Across the province, 28 new deaths were confirmed, while 346 people are currently hospitalized, with 83 of these cases receiving treatment in ICU/critical care. The total number of deaths due to COVID-19 now stands at 587. There were no additional healthcare facility outbreaks announced, while two were declared over. There are 57 active outbreaks in long-term care and assisted living facilities, and 8 in acute care settings.

Dr. Bonnie Henry Briefing

Dr. Henry reiterated the vaccinations program will begin soon and by this time next week, some British Columbians will have already been immunized with the Pfizer vaccine. She emphasized that processes and updates around the vaccine's delivery and roll-out change by the moment, and the framework for the Immunize BC plan is built to be flexible and responsive to these shifts. She asked people to be patient and reassured that the sequencing of who will receive the vaccine and when, is centred around saving lives, and minimizing disruptions across the province. Public Health is still working out the details of a digital record keeping process for the vaccination program. According to Dr. Henry, digital records are important so Public Health is aware of which vaccine was received by whom and to be enable follow up on an individual's immunization schedule, if required. The Pfizer vaccine, for example, requires two shots to reach an efficacy level of 95 per cent.

BCCDC Offers New Weekly Reporting Data

Today will be the first day that the BCCDC updates local health area data on its COVID-19 dashboard. As B.C. has reached higher case numbers relative to the start of the pandemic, it isn't possible to identify individual cases through these new data, thus sufficiently protecting patient confidentiality. This local health area data will now be shared weekly. You will find the BCCDC's COVID-19 dashboard here.

Minister Dix Warns of Fake COVID-19 Test Result Texts

Minister Dix warned some British Columbians have received fake texts indicating they have tested positive for COVID-19. He advised that if you have not been tested for COVID-19 in a designated test collection site several days prior to receiving a text, to disregard these notifications. For people who do test positive for the virus, Public Health calls these cases directly to ensure they are away of the steps they need to follow while infectious. Minister Dix also advised people to sign up for Health Gateway to access to their test results. The platform is a single place where B.C. residents can access their health records, including prescription medication details, and COVID-19 test results.

VCH Website and Translation Engagement

VCH has started two important projects – the redesign of the VCH website and a review of VCH translation practices. Your input in the web design project and the translation needs at VCH for safe care will help us improve our translation tools and ensure our future website is a user-friendly resource that is easy to navigate. We are hosting Zoom focus groups to hear from the diverse communities we serve. To register for our upcoming focus group times and dates, please email ce@vch.ca.

Testing

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 centres can be found by visiting: http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/testing or by calling 8-1-1. 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/.

Other Resources

To find the Provincial Health Officer's orders, visit:
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus

To see a map of **COVID-19 cases by local health area**, visit: http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data

For a listing of the **community exposure events**, go to: http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/public-exposures

For the **latest medical updates,** including case counts, prevention, risks and testing, visit: http://www.bccdc.ca/

For **community engagement opportunities** at VCH, see: http://cean.vch.ca/members/current-opportunities/