

# Daily COVID 19 Report (March 25, 2020)

## Key Metrics:

### Case Count (as of Mar.25/11:00)

Confirmed Cases	New Cases Since March 24	Recovered Cases	Currently in Hospital	Currently in ICU*	Medically Ventilated (MV)	Deaths
659 (↑42)	42	183 (↑10)	64(↑5)	33 (↓1)	27(↑1)	14 (↑1)

\*this number was supplied by the critical care leads in each Health Authority

### Case count By Health Authority:

#### VCHA:

Confirmed Cases	New Cases Since March 24	Recovered Cases	Currently in Hospital	Currently in ICU	MV	Deaths
339 (↑9)	9	161 (↑3)	22(↑0)	9(↓3)	7(↑1)	12(↑1)

### Facility Updates:

- **Lynn Valley LTCF, VCHA:**
  - 42 confirmed resident cases (↑0), none in hospital or ICU, 11 deaths (↑1)
  - 21 confirmed staff (↑0), none in hospital or ICU, 0 deaths (12 staff from VCH (↑0) and 9 (↑0) staff from FHA)
- **Hollyburn LTCF, VCHA:**
  - 1 COVID confirmed resident case (↑0), 0 confirmed staff, s.22 none in hospital, 0 deaths
- **Haro Park LTCF, VCHA:**
  - 28 COVID confirmed resident case (↑13) none in hospital or ICU, 1 death (↑0)
  - 27 confirmed staff (↑2), none in hospital or ICU, 0 deaths s.22
- **German Canadian House LTCF, VCHA**
  - 1 COVID confirmed staff who is currently in ICU (↑0) s.22
- **Little Mountain LTCF, VHCA**
  - 1 COVID confirmed staff (↑0), none currently in hospital or ICU, 0 deaths s.22
- **NEW Broadway Pentecostal Lodge, LTCF, VCHA**
  - 1 COVID confirmed staff (↑1), none currently in hospital or ICU, 0 deaths s.22
- **Status of Lions Gate**
  - Outbreak precautions level 3 is active, emergency patients only.

**FHA:**

Confirmed Cases	New Cases Since March 24	Recovered Cases	Currently in Hospital	Currently in ICU	MV	Deaths
218 (↑24)	24	3 (↑0)	36 (↑5)	19 (↑13)	15 (↑0)	2 (↑0)

**Facility Updates**

- **Delta View LTCF, FHA**
  - 1 COVID confirmed staff (↑0), none currently in hospital or ICU, 0 deaths s.22
- **Dufferin Care Centre (Coquitlam), FHA**
  - 1 COVID confirmed staff (↑0), none currently in hospital or ICU, 0 deaths s.22
- **Evergreen Heights AL, FHA**
  - 1 COVID confirmed resident case (↑0), 0 confirmed staff, none in hospital, 0 deaths

**VIHA:**

Confirmed Cases	New Cases Since March 24	Recovered Cases	Currently in Hospital	Currently in ICU	MV	Deaths
47 (↑3)	3	6 (↑6)	1 (↑0)	2 (↑0)	2 (↑0)	0 (↑0)

**IHA:**

Confirmed Cases	New Cases Since March 24	Recovered Cases	Currently in Hospital	Currently in ICU	MV	Deaths
46 (↑5)	5	8 (↑0)	4 (↑0)	2 (↑0)	2 (↑0)	0 (↑0)

**NHA:**

Confirmed Cases	New Cases Since March 24	Recovered Cases	Currently in Hospital	Currently in ICU	MV	Deaths
9 (↑1)	1	5 (↑5)	1 (↑0)	1 (↓1)	1 (↑0)	0 (↑0)

**Testing Inclusive of Community Assessment sites (as of Mar.25/10:00)**

Patient Tests	Tested Negative	Tested Positive	Patient Samples Pending	Projected Testing for today
31,739 (↑5,058)	31,080* (↑9016)	659 (↑42)	2,713 (↑884)	4,342 (↑1,926)

\*Approximate Number

## Occupancy Rate by Health Authority (Current as of Mar.25/11:00)

Note Change in Available Beds number is approximate and there is still some “data noise” and should be understated publicly. Work is happening to resolve and standardize the data collection.

Health Authority	Pre-COVID-19 Response Occupancy Rate (Dec 12 2019)	Current Occupancy Rate Snapshot	Change in Occupancy Rate	Change in Available Beds	Total Beds	Total Critical Care Beds	Critical Care Bed Occupancy Rate	Total Vacant Critical Care Beds*
IHA	102.9%	68.9%	-34.0%	487	1431	84	63.1%	31
FHA	106.9%	56.5%	-50.4%	1822	3775	295	51.9%	142
VCHA	100.5%	63.6%	-36.9%	861	2335	182	47.3%	96
VIHA	106.6%	72.8%	-33.8%	624	1872	104	55.8%	46
NHA	105.0%	76.7%	-28.3%	162	574	46	56.5%	20
PHSA	73.8%	72.5%	-1.3%	126	716	102	57.8%	43
<b>Current BC Total</b>	<b>103.5%</b>	<b>64.7%</b>	<b>-38.8%</b>	<b>4080 (↑214)</b>	<b>10703</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>53.5%</b>	<b>378(↑61)</b>
<b>Previous Totals</b>								
March 24, 2020	103.5%	66.4%	-37.1%	3866	10602	830	55.3%	317
March 23, 2020	103.5%	67.8%	-35.7%	3719	10604	830	54.8%	
March 22, 2020	103.5%	68.6%	-34.9%	3632	10604	826	55.7%	
March 20, 2020	103.5%	78.5%	-25.0%	2398	9743	649	61.8%	

\*total vacant critical care bed information was not available prior to March 24, 2020

## BC Emergency Health Services events by Dispatch Centre for Influenza Like Illness (ILI) (as of Mar.24/23:59)

Date	Metrics	ILI_Events			
	Disp_Centre	Kamloops	Vancouver	Victoria	Total
March 24, 2020		73	187	44	<b>304 (↓26)</b>
March 23, 2020		73	196	61	<b>330 (↓9)</b>
March 22, 2020		62	213	64	<b>339 (↑26)</b>
March 21, 2020		54	211	48	<b>313 (↓43)</b>
March 20, 2020		81	225	50	<b>356 (↑107)</b>
March 19, 2020		61	148	40	<b>249</b>

**8-1-1 (as of Mar.24/23:59)**

Date	Calls Received	Calls Answered	Abandon Rate %	Average Wait (mins)	Max Wait of Answered (mins)	Average Handle Time (mins)
March 24	6,605 (↓66)	3,854 (↑166)	41.7%	17.0	83.4	4.7
March 23	6,671 (↑1,230)	3,688 (↓434)	44.8%	21.5	141.1	5.1
March 22	5,441(↓200)	4,122 (↑92)	24.3%	10.1	99.9%	5.1
March 21	5,641	4,031	29.4%	11.6	97.1	5.2
March 20	6,056	3,248	47.2%	25.2	125.8	4.7
March 19	5,546	2,615	51.6%	32.1	106.5	4.6
March 18	5,141	2,652	48.9%	35.5	120.6	4.6
Pre-COVID-19 call volume was 1,200/day						

Efforts to enhance capacity and meet demand include:

- 11 Additional nurses have been added as of March 22, 2020
- 56(↑7) Patient navigation staff have been added as of March 24, 2020
- Self Assessment App was released Monday March 23, 2020
- Implementation of additional menu option (Telus Prompter) to allow callers to select Service BC 1-888-COVID-19 for non-health calls, this went live March 22, 2020
- BCCDC BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Tool launched March 17, 2020
- BCCDC Support App & Self-Assessment Tool launched March 23, 2020.

### 1-888-COVID19 (as of Mar.24/23:59)

Date	Calls Received	Calls Answered	Average Speed of Answer	Abandon Rate	Max Wait	Average Handle Time	Texts
March 24	1907	1656 (↓275)	1 Min 54 Sec	12.9%	25 Min 15 Sec	5 Min 4 Sec	918
March 23	2,239	1,931(↑653)	1 Min 56 Sec	13.8%	23 Min 6 Sec	4 Min 39 Sec	752
March 22	1430	1278 (↑51)	1 Min 11 Sec	4.27%	11 Min 31 Sec	4 Min 27 Sec	444
March 21	1333	1227 (↓623)	1 Min 24 Sec	7.80%	19 Min 3 Sec	4 Min 45 Sec	545
March 20	1923	1850 (↑10)	40 Sec	3.59%	18 Sec 15 Min	5 Min 2 Sec	931
March 19	2117	1840 (↓55)	1 Min 50 Sec	12.9%	13 min 41 sec	4min 15 sec	553
March 18	2503	1895 (↑88)	7 Min 5 Sec	22.8%	59 min 48 sec	2 min 24 sec	723
March 17	3416	1807(↑660)	33 Min 56 Sec	44.15%	1 hour 17 secs	4min 14 sec	678
March 16	1769	1147	12 Sec	27.76%	6 min 20 secs	5 min 16 sec	166

### Self Assessment Tool on BCCDC.com (as of Mar.24/23:59)

Date	Total Users (last 24 hours)	Peak Activity	Average Activity	BC-based Users
March 24	61,343 (↓36,365)	443 users/min	2,556/hour	95%
March 23	97,708	426 users/minute	4,071/hour	92%
March 19	532,996	759 users/minute	22,208/hour	92%
March 18	386,085	743 users/minute	16,087 per hour	92%
March 17	525,421	924 users/minute	29,893 per hour	92%

- Since soft launch of the assessment too, it has been accessed 2,684,033 times (↑193,842)

### BC COVID19 APP (as of Mar.24/23:59)

Date	Total Users
March 24	68,524 (↑55,519)
March 23	13,005

## Temporary Emergency Registrants (as of Mar.25/10:00)

Professionals in various fields re-registering to work to support surge capacity

Physicians											
Date	Family Physicians	Pediatrics	Infectious Diseases	Public Health/ Preventative Medicine	Community Medicine	Medical Microbiology	Psychiatry	Anesthesiology	Internal Med /Gastroenterology	Ophthalmology	Total Registrants to Date
March 25	13	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	25 (↑4)
March 24	11	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	21 (↑2)
March 23	9	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	19

Nursing						
Date	Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)	Registered Nurse	Registered Psychiatric Nurse	Nurse Practitioner	Health Care Assistant*	Total Registrants to Date
March 25	13	104	2	2	89	210 (↑41)
March 24	12	92	1	2	62	169(↑90)
March 23	6	70	1	2	0	79

Note: HCA #s include regular registrants (don't have temp registration currently)

Allied Health				
Date	Occupational Therapist	Dieticians	Pharmacist	Total Registrants to Date
March 25	0	0	0	0
March 24	0	0	0	0
March 23	0	0	0	0

## Status Update on Key Issues:

### Supplies and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (as of Mar.25/11:00):

- Like other jurisdictions (internationally), BC is closely monitoring its supply of PPE to ensure there is adequate and appropriate access for health care workers.
- BC is working with suppliers and the Federal government to ensure that we're prepared and that we have the right PPE where we need it and when we need it.
- BC is receiving shipments of key supplies, including N95 masks, on a day to day basis. For example:
  - we expect to receive over 12,000 N95 masks tomorrow from one of our suppliers;
  - we have received some supply from the Federal government's bulk procurement efforts and expect more to arrive on Monday (March 30);
  - we have leads on credible and reliable sources for masks that we're expecting will lead to a significant influx of masks;
  - we are reaching out to other sectors to ensure that PPE that is not being used in light of various business closures is redirected to the health system in case we need it; and
  - there are several innovative approaches being explored both locally and internationally around ways to safely sanitize and reuse masks and other PPE if that approach is required.

## PHO Guides and Orders to Date (as of Mar 21.20 10:00)

**March 24, 2020:** PHO issued an order that health care providers who work in long term care (LTC) facilities only be scheduled to work at a single site. This is to help with avoiding transmission of COVID-19 across multiple LTC sites.

**March 21, 2020:** PHO to issue an order to clarify the restrictions for bars and clubs.

**March 20, 2020:** PHO issued an order under the Public Health Act to restricts restaurants to take-out/delivery only.

**March 18, 2020:** Mike Farnworth, the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General declared a Provincial State of Emergency under the **Emergency Program Act.**

**March 17, 2020:** The PHO ordered to close all bars and clubs in B.C. effective immediately.

**March 17, 2020:** B.C. Premier John Horgan has announced the province's schools from Kindergarten to Grade 12 are closed, with no indication of when classes will resume.

**March 17, 2020:** British Columbia announced a Public Health Emergency under the **Public Health Act** due to the novel coronavirus pandemic.

**March 16, 2020:** the PHO issued an order under the Public Health Act prohibiting the gatherings of more than 50 people.

**March 16, 2020:** PHO directed all hospitals in BC to adopt Outbreak Response Phase 2: Hospitals are to undertake only urgent and emergency procedures and postpone all non-urgent scheduled surgeries.

**March 16, 2020:** PHO directed Lions Gate Hospital in North Vancouver to adopt Outbreak Response Phase 3: The hospital will only accept emergency patients.

**March 13, 2020:** PHO recommended residents of British Columbia practice social distancing.

**March 12, 2020:**

- PHO recommended that mass gatherings be limited to 250 people or more.
- PHO issued an order with various restrictions on activities for both "essential workers" and "non-essential workers" to follow.

**March 11, 2020:** Health Emergency Coordination Center (HECC) activated to a Level 3.

## BC Program Note

### Agenda Item

FPT Deputy Ministers' Teleconference: March 25, 2020  
Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

- As of March 24, 2020 (3PM PST), there have been 617 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and thirteen deaths in B.C.
  - 194 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 41 cases in Interior Health;
  - 44 cases in Island Health;
  - 9 cases in Northern Health; and
  - 330 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- 59 of B.C.'s confirmed COVID-19 cases are in hospital; 23 cases are in ICU.
- 173 of the confirmed cases have recovered, based on the resolution of symptoms and two negative lab test results.
- As of March 21, 2020, a total of 21,296 tests have been completed in B.C. Testing capacity has increased to approximately 3,500 tests per day.
- On March 17, 2020, the Provincial Health Officer declared a public health emergency in B.C. to facilitate an even faster provincial response and enact further measures to protect British Columbians.
- On March 18, 2020, the Minister of Public Safety declared a provincial State of Emergency to facilitate a coordinated province-wide response to COVID-19 and enact broader measures to secure critical supplies and ensure access to essential goods and services.

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C.

- The B.C. health care system has reached a critical supply issue for PPE.
- B.C. urgently requires federal assistance to secure additional personal protective equipment and related supplies. On March 22, at the Deputy Minister level, BC advised Health Canada of an urgent need for N95 respirators, masks, and sanitizer (bottles). On March 23, 2020, B.C. received a shipment of 7,000 N95 respirators (2,000<sup>s.17</sup> model and 5,000<sup>s.17</sup> model) from the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS).
- BC is preparing an updated list of required supplies and PPE and will be submitting to Health Canada by Wednesday, March 25. The updated list will be informed by epidemiological modelling and anticipated utilization rates.
- BC also has an immediate need for 180 ventilators.
  - At the Deputy Minister level, BC has bilaterally requested federal assistance obtaining these as quickly as possible.
  - Also, the Council of the Federation (COF) Secretariat is preparing an aggregation of Provincial/Territorial ventilator need, which will include input from BC. The aggregation will be shared with all PTs.

## BC Program Note

### Health System Preparedness

- All hospitals are directed to Outbreak Response Phase 2. Hospitals must postpone all non-urgent scheduled surgeries and undertake only urgent and emergency procedures. Hospitals are also required to review operating-room capacity daily to prioritize urgent and emergency surgeries.
- As of March 24, 2020, 3,866 more acute care beds had been freed up by cancelling non urgent elective surgeries and were available to prepare for serious illness caused by the coronavirus.
- Pharmacists are directed to provide patients with a prescription refill or an emergency supply of their medications, if needed.
- Provision of compensation for physicians to provide virtual-care services.
- Emergency registration of non-practicing or retired health-care professionals, including professionals from other jurisdictions and the armed forces.
- Nursing support is being augmented in response to the surge in calls to 8-1-1.

### Testing

- Prioritization of health care workers, people in hospitals, and those in long term care settings for COVID-19 testing. In particular, B.C.'s provincial COVID testing strategy has been modified to focus on clusters and outbreaks, patients in hospital and health-care workers.
- Implementation of a new self-assessment tool and an app to support people in determining whether they require further assessment or testing for COVID-19. Tool available at <https://bc.thrive.health/>
- Testing of all samples for influenza-like illness for COVID-19, influenza A and B, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV).
- Expanded COVID-19 testing capacity at St. Paul's Hospital, Victoria General Hospital, BC Children's and Women's Hospital, Royal Jubilee Hospital Microbiology Laboratory, and Kelowna Hospital, and through other Community Assessment Centers being established by Health Authorities.
- An Interim Order has been signed by Health Canada to ensure quicker approvals for the importation and sale of medical devices for COVID-19. As a result, two new diagnostic test kits are now available in Canada for COVID-19.
- Health Canada has introduced interim measures to ensure access to hand sanitizers, disinfectants, PPE (such as masks and gowns), and swabs. These measures include approval of products that may not meet current regulatory requirements and expedited approval of establishments and site licenses related to these products.

### Prevention and Containment Measures

- The following public health measures have been introduced in response to COVID-19 in B.C.:
  - Cancellation of all public gatherings larger than 50 people.
  - Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.

## BC Program Note

- Restriction of family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only. Essential visits include compassionate visits for end-of-life care and visits to support care needs, such as routine visits to assist with feeding and mobility.
- Closure of all personal service establishments such as barbershops, salons, nail estheticians, health spas, massage parlors, tattoo shops and others.
- All dine-in food services are directed to close or transition to take-out and delivery models only.
- Businesses that provide essential goods, services and transportation are being directed to maintain physical distancing of one to two meters for staff and customers.
- Closure of all casinos until further notice to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- Closure of businesses with liquor primary licenses, such as bars, pubs and night clubs.
- Suspension of regular operations of the Supreme Court of B.C. The court will hear only essential and urgent matters.
- Immediate suspension of in-class instruction at all schools (post-secondary and Kindergarten to Grade 12) until further notice.

### Support Measures

- Expanded financial support for child-care providers to ensure parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to safe child care.
- On March 23, 2020, Premier Horgan announced a \$5 billion relief plan to provide income supports, tax relief and direct funding for people, businesses and essential services.
- Expanded supports to protect vulnerable people and those experiencing homelessness, including identification of sites to support isolation for people experiencing homelessness and ban on evictions for non-payment of rent in B.C. Housing-funded buildings.
- Amendments to the Employment Standards Act to protect workers and prevent layoffs.

### Border Measures

- As of Friday, March 20, the Canada-U.S. border is closed to all non-essential travel (e.g. tourism and recreation) on a temporary basis. Exemptions are expected to be in place by early next week regarding:
  - Essential workers (e.g. airline and medical workers).
  - Seasonal agricultural workers, fish/seafood workers, caregivers and other temporary foreign workers
  - International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020

## BC Program Note

- Permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16<sup>th</sup> but had not yet travelled to Canada.
- Exemptions already apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking. Minister Blair has indicated that borders on Indigenous reserves will also be unimpeded.
- Prime Minister Trudeau has indicated that asylum seekers entering at non-official border points will be turned back to the U.S.
- With the exception of workers who are essential to the movement of goods and people, all travelers to Canada are being directed to self-isolate for 14 days. If symptoms arise, individuals are being directed to limit their contact with others and connect with their primary care provider, local public health unit or call 8-1-1.
- Increased screening measures are being implemented at airports, including more visible messaging, health screening at kiosks, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection of high-traffic areas and facilities at airports.
- As of March 18, 2020, international flights are being directed to four Canadian Airports, including Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of their citizenship, will not be permitted to board international flights to Canada. Those who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada will be barred from entering Canada, except for aircrews, diplomats, immediate family members of Canadian citizens, and U.S. citizens.
- The Federal Government has advised against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the United States.

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions

- In the State of Washington, 27,121 individuals have been tested as of March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020. Washington has reported 1,793 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 94 deaths. Over three-quarters of confirmed cases are in King County (934) and Snohomish County (447).
  - Public health experts agree that the true number of people who have been infected with COVID-19 in Washington greatly exceeds the number of COVID-19 infections that have been laboratory-confirmed.<sup>1</sup>
  - The state has waived all costs associated with testing (i.e. lab fees).
  - On March 17, the Governor of Washington signed a bill that reduces credentialing delays for health care workers, to facilitate their entry into the workforce to respond to the outbreak.<sup>2</sup>
- Washington State (1,793 cases), New York (15,168), and California (1,250) account for the majority of cases in the U.S.
- Nova Scotia declared a public state of emergency on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. All other provinces and territories had already declared a public health emergency or state of emergency.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>

<sup>2</sup> [https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## BC Program Note

- As of March 20, 2020, Newfoundland Labrador is now requiring a 14-day quarantine for all persons who have arrived from out of country as well as those arriving from another province.
- Alberta updates include:
  - Launched an online assessment tool to determine whether residents need to be tested for COVID-19.
  - On March 15, government announced additional \$500M for testing, surveillance, and treatment of patients.
  - On March 17, \$60M announced for municipalities, charitable and non-profit organizations providing social services support for COVID-19.
  - On March 18, physician visits may be conducted through the app 'Babylon' by TELUS Health.
  - On March 19, \$50M announced for Emergency Isolation Support program in support of workers needing to self-isolate. Additionally, new pharmacy service billing code to allow COVID-19 assessments; lowered co-payment for certain groups; and pharmacists given discretion to provide a maximum 30-day supply of prescription drugs.
  - On March 20, government made amendments to the *Emergency Management Act*. Under the amended Act, a provincial state of emergency can now supplement and reinforce a local authority's state of emergency, allowing both levels of government to work more closely.
  - All health-care workers returning from travelling should be assessed by their own Occupational Health Services or AHS Public Health.
- Ontario updates include:
  - Closed all daycares, sports/entertainment facilities, private schools, and all bars and restaurants, (except for takeout / delivery) until March 31.
  - Working to enhance laboratory testing capacity to 5,000 daily.
  - Announced first stage of COVID-19 relief package with \$300M in funding.
  - Relief package funding will support 25 assessment centers, 750 acute care spaces and 75 critical care beds.
  - Relief package funding will support 1,000 backfill positions and 50 surge positions in rural/remote and indigenous communities.
  - Additional 500 ventilators ready for use.
  - On March 19, government passed emergency legislation to support workers unable to work due to COVID-19 and suspended noise by-laws to encourage the delivery of essential goods.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on Mar. 24, 2020

## BC Program Note

### Agenda Item

FPT Premiers' Teleconference: March 26, 2020  
Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

- As of March 24, 2020 (3PM PST), there have been 617 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and thirteen deaths in B.C.
  - 194 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 41 cases in Interior Health;
  - 44 cases in Island Health;
  - 9 cases in Northern Health; and
  - 330 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- 59 of B.C.'s confirmed COVID-19 cases are in hospital; 34 cases are in ICU.
- 173 of the confirmed cases have recovered, based on the resolution of symptoms and two negative lab test results.
- As of March 24, 2020, approximately 30,000 tests have been completed in B.C. Testing capacity has increased to approximately 3,500 tests per day.
- On March 17, 2020, the Provincial Health Officer declared a public health emergency in B.C. to facilitate an even faster provincial response and enact further measures to protect British Columbians.
- On March 18, 2020, the Minister of Public Safety declared a provincial State of Emergency to facilitate a coordinated province-wide response to COVID-19 and enact broader measures to secure critical supplies and ensure access to essential goods and services.

Commented [BSH1]: To be updated later by IGR

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C.

- The B.C. health care system has reached a critical supply issue for PPE.
- B.C. urgently requires federal assistance to secure additional personal protective equipment and related supplies. On March 22, at the Deputy Minister level, BC advised Health Canada of an urgent need for N95 respirators, masks, and sanitizer (bottles).
- On March 23, 2020, B.C. received a shipment of 7,000 N95 respirators (2,000 s. 17 model and 5,000 s. 17 model) from the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS).

s.13; s.17

- BC is preparing an updated list of required supplies and PPE and will be submitting to Health Canada by Wednesday, March 25. The updated list will be informed by epidemiological modelling and anticipated utilization rates.
- BC also has an immediate need for 180 ventilators.
  - At the Deputy Minister level, BC has bilaterally requested federal assistance obtaining these as quickly as possible.
  - Also, the Council of the Federation (COF) Secretariat is preparing an aggregation of Provincial/Territorial ventilator need, which will include input from BC. The aggregation will be shared with all PTs.

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## BC Program Note

### Health System Preparedness

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- As of March 24, 2020, 3,866 more acute care beds had been freed up by cancelling non-urgent elective surgeries and were available to prepare for serious illness caused by the coronavirus.
- Pharmacists are directed to provide patients with a prescription refill or an emergency supply of their medications, if needed.
- Provision of compensation for physicians to provide virtual-care services.
- Emergency registration of non-practicing or retired health-care professionals, including professionals from other jurisdictions and the armed forces.
- Nursing support is being augmented in response to the surge in calls to 8-1-1.
- The Provincial Health Officer has issued updated expectations for all health professionals regulated under the Health Professions Act. This includes chiropractors, dentists, physicians, nurses, and other professionals providing care in community settings. The update states that non-essential and elective services involving direct patient contact should be minimized. Where possible, care should be provided via telephone and video platforms.

### Testing

- B.C.'s provincial COVID testing strategy focuses on clusters and outbreaks, patients in hospital, residents of Long Term Care facilities and health-care workers.
- Testing of all samples for influenza-like illness for COVID-19, influenza A and B, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV).
- Implementation of a new self-assessment tool and an app to support people in determining whether they require further assessment or testing for COVID-19. Tool available at <https://bc.thrive.health/>
- Expanded COVID-19 testing capacity at St. Paul's Hospital, Victoria General Hospital, BC Children's and Women's Hospital, Royal Jubilee Hospital Microbiology Laboratory, and Kelowna Hospital, and through other Community Assessment Centers being established by Health Authorities.
- An Interim Order has been signed by Health Canada to ensure quicker approvals for the importation and sale of medical devices for COVID-19. As a result, two new diagnostic test kits are now available in Canada for COVID-19.
- Health Canada has introduced interim measures to ensure access to hand sanitizers, disinfectants, PPE (such as masks and gowns), and swabs. These measures include approval of products that may not meet current regulatory requirements and expedited approval of establishments and site licenses related to these products.

## BC Program Note

### Prevention and Containment Measures

- The following public health measures have been introduced in response to COVID-19 in B.C.:
  - Cancellation of all public gatherings larger than 50 people.
  - Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.
  - Restriction of family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only. Essential visits include compassionate visits for end-of-life care and visits to support care needs, such as routine visits to assist with feeding and mobility.
  - Closure of all personal service establishments such as barbershops, salons, nail estheticians, health spas, massage parlors, tattoo shops and others.
  - All dine-in food services are directed to close or transition to take-out and delivery models only.
  - Businesses that provide essential goods, services and transportation are being directed to maintain physical distancing of one to two meters for staff and customers.
  - Closure of all casinos until further notice to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
  - Closure of businesses with liquor primary licenses, such as bars, pubs and night clubs.
  - Suspension of regular operations of the Supreme Court of B.C. The court will hear only essential and urgent matters.
  - Immediate suspension of in-class instruction at all schools (post-secondary and Kindergarten to Grade 12) until further notice.

### Support Measures

- Expanded financial support for child-care providers to ensure parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to safe child care.
- On March 23, 2020, Premier Horgan announced a \$5 billion relief plan to provide income supports, tax relief and direct funding for people, businesses and essential services.
- On March 25, 2020, Premier Horgan announced a temporary ban on tenant evictions, as well as rent freeze and financial support for tenants in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Expanded supports to protect vulnerable people and those experiencing homelessness, including identification of sites to support isolation for people experiencing homelessness and ban on evictions for non-payment of rent in B.C. Housing-funded buildings.
- Amendments to the *Employment Standards Act* to protect workers and prevent layoffs.

## BC Program Note

### Border Measures

- As of Friday, March 20, the Canada-U.S. border is closed to all non-essential travel (e.g. tourism and recreation) on a temporary basis. Exemptions are expected to be in place by early next week regarding:
  - Essential workers (e.g. airline and medical workers).
  - Seasonal agricultural workers, fish/seafood workers, caregivers and other temporary foreign workers
  - International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020
  - Permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16<sup>th</sup> but had not yet travelled to Canada.
- Exemptions already apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking. Minister Blair has indicated that borders on Indigenous reserves will also be unimpeded.
- Prime Minister Trudeau has indicated that asylum seekers entering at non-official border points will be turned back to the U.S.
- With the exception of workers who are essential to the movement of goods and people, all travelers to Canada are being directed to self-isolate for 14 days. If symptoms arise, individuals are being directed to limit their contact with others and connect with their primary care provider, local public health unit or call 8-1-1.
- Increased screening measures are being implemented at airports, including more visible messaging, health screening at kiosks, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection of high-traffic areas and facilities at airports.
- As of March 18, 2020, international flights are being directed to four Canadian Airports, including Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of their citizenship, will not be permitted to board international flights to Canada. Those who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada will be barred from entering Canada, except for aircrews, diplomats, immediate family members of Canadian citizens, and U.S. citizens.
- The Federal Government has advised against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the United States.

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions

- As of March 23, there is a total of 2,494 confirmed cases and 115 deaths from COVID-19 in the American states which border BC (WA, OR, ID and AK).
- In the State of Washington, 33,933 individuals have been tested as of March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020. Washington has reported 2,221 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 110 deaths. Over three-quarters of confirmed cases are in King County (1,170) and Snohomish County (519).

## BC Program Note

- Public health experts agree that the true number of people who have been infected with COVID-19 in Washington greatly exceeds the number of COVID-19 infections that have been laboratory-confirmed.<sup>1</sup>
- The state has waived all costs associated with testing (i.e. lab fees).
- On March 17, the Governor of Washington signed a bill that reduces credentialing delays for health care workers, to facilitate their entry into the workforce to respond to the outbreak.<sup>2</sup>
- On March 23, the Governor of WA issued a legally enforceable "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order for a minimum of two weeks.
- On March 23, the Governor of Oregon issued a legally enforceable 'stay at home' order.
- Washington State (2,221 cases), New York (21,689), and California (1,931) account for nearly 60 percent of cases in the U.S.
- Within Canada, all P/T jurisdictions have declared either a state of emergency or a public health emergency. Generally, the powers available to governments under a public health emergency are more limited than under a state of emergency.
- In addition to international travelers returning to provinces or territories, several jurisdictions are asking inter-provincial/territorial travelers to also isolate for 14 days. Some municipal governments are declaring states of emergency in order to stop the spread of COVID-19 in their communities.
- Alberta updates include:
  - On March 15, government announced additional \$500M for testing, surveillance, and treatment of patients.
  - On March 17, \$60M announced for municipalities, charitable and non-profit organizations providing social services support for COVID-19.
  - On March 18, physician visits may be conducted through the app 'Babylon' by TELUS Health.
  - On March 19, \$50M announced for Emergency Isolation Support program in support of workers needing to self-isolate. Additionally, new pharmacy service billing code to allow COVID-19 assessments; lowered co-payment for certain groups; and pharmacists given discretion to provide a maximum 30-day supply of prescription drugs.
  - On March 20, government made amendments to the *Emergency Management Act*. Under the amended Act, a provincial state of emergency can now supplement and reinforce a local authority's state of emergency, allowing both levels of government to work more closely.
- Ontario updates include:
  - Closed all daycares, sports/entertainment facilities, private schools, and all bars and restaurants, (except for takeout / delivery) until March 31.
  - Working to enhance laboratory testing capacity to 5,000 daily.
  - Announced first stage of COVID-19 relief package with \$300M in funding.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>

<sup>2</sup> [https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## BC Program Note

- Relief package funding will support 25 assessment centers, 750 acute care spaces and 75 critical care beds.
- Relief package funding will support 1,000 backfill positions and 50 surge positions in rural/remote and indigenous communities.
- Additional 500 ventilators ready for use.
- On March 19, government passed emergency legislation to support workers unable to work due to COVID-19 and suspended noise by-laws to encourage the delivery of essential goods.
- On March 23, ON ordered closure of all non-essential workplaces for two weeks beginning March 25.
- QC updates:
  - Provincial government decree banned gatherings of two or more and police have the authority to carry out warrants issued by public health authorities.
  - On March 23, ordered closure of all non-essential businesses from March 25 until April 13.
  - Montreal opens walk-in clinic to test for anyone with symptoms of COVID-19. It is available to people both in cars and on foot, without an appointment.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on Mar. 25, 2020

## BC Program Note

<b>Agenda Item</b>	FPT Health Ministers' Teleconference: March 27, 2020 Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)
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- As of March 26, 2020 (3PM PST), there have been 725 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 14 deaths in B.C.
  - 241 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 62 cases in Interior Health;
  - 52 cases in Island Health;
  - 11 cases in Northern Health; and
  - 359 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- As of March 25, 66 of B.C.'s confirmed COVID-19 cases are in hospital; 26 cases are in ICU.
- 186 of the confirmed cases have recovered.
- On March 17, 2020, the Provincial Health Officer declared a public health emergency in B.C. to facilitate an even faster provincial response and enact further measures to protect British Columbians.
- On March 18, 2020, the Minister of Public Safety declared a provincial State of Emergency to facilitate a coordinated province-wide response to COVID-19 and enact broader measures to secure critical supplies and ensure access to essential goods and services.

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C.

- BC has submitted a significant request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach.
- On March 23, 2020, B.C. received a shipment of 7,000 N95 respirators (2,000 s.17 model and 5,000 s.17 model) from the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS).
- BC is expecting arrival of an additional 6,000 N95 respirators (by air) on March 26 and a larger load of supplies (by truck) on Monday, March 30.
- While the emergency supplies from Canada are appreciated and helpful, BC's PPE inventory is not at a level to sustain the pressure of a growing case count and unreliable supply chains.
- Beyond the request to Canada, BC is pursuing leads for supply from any/all credible sources internationally and exploring creative/innovative production solutions locally.
- BC also has an immediate need for 180 ventilators. BC identified the need for 180 ventilators in its request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach.

### Health System Preparedness

- All hospitals are directed to Outbreak Response Phase 2. Hospitals have postponed all non-urgent scheduled surgeries and undertake only urgent and emergency procedures. Hospitals are also required to review operating-room capacity daily to prioritize urgent and emergency surgeries.
- As of March 26, 2020, 3,903 acute care beds had been freed up by cancelling non-urgent elective surgeries.

## BC Program Note

- Pharmacists are directed to provide patients with a prescription refill or an emergency supply of their medications, if needed.
- The Ministry of Health has made provisions for compensation of physicians providing virtual-care services.
- Emergency registration of non-practicing or retired health-care professionals is underway, including professionals from other jurisdictions and the armed forces. As of March 26, 26 physicians and 248 nurses have re-registered and made themselves available to assist in healthcare delivery.
- 8-1-1 calls have increased from ~1,200 calls per day (pre-COVID) to over 6,500 per day. Nurses and patient navigation staff have been added to support this increase.

### Testing

- As of March 26, 2020, 34,561 tests have been completed in B.C.
- B.C.'s provincial COVID testing strategy focuses on clusters and outbreaks, patients in hospital, residents of Long Term Care facilities and health-care workers.
- BC has implemented an online self-assessment tool and an app to support people in determining whether they require further assessment or testing for COVID-19. Tools available at <https://bc.thrive.health/>
- BC has expanded COVID-19 testing capacity at St. Paul's Hospital, Victoria General Hospital, BC Children's and Women's Hospital, Royal Jubilee Hospital Microbiology Laboratory, and Kelowna Hospital, and through other Community Assessment Centers being established by Health Authorities.

### Prevention and Containment Measures

- On March 26th, Minister Farnworth (PSSG) announced use of extraordinary powers under a state of provincial emergency. Ministerial orders include:
  - *Supply chain:* Establishing a new Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit to co-ordinate goods and services distribution; taking a more active role in co-ordinating essential goods and services movement by land, air, marine and rail; and suspending any bylaws that restrict goods delivery at any time of day.
  - *Protecting consumers:* Banning the secondary resale of food, medical supplies, personal protective equipment, cleaning and other essential supplies; and restricting quantities of items purchased at point of sale.
  - *Enforcement:* Enabling municipal bylaw officers to support enforcement of the Provincial Health Officer's orders for business closures and gatherings, in line with offences under the *Public Health Act*.
  - *Travel:* Ensuring all passenger and car-ferry services provide minimum service levels and priority access for residents, and essential goods and workers.
  - *Protecting B.C.'s most vulnerable:* Making it easier to support critical services for vulnerable people, like food banks and shelters.
  - *Co-ordination:* Suspending local states of emergency specific to the COVID-19 pandemic, except for the City of Vancouver; giving municipal councils the ability to hold more flexible meetings to expedite decisions; and co-ordinating potential use of

## BC Program Note

local publicly owned facilities, like community centres, for self-isolation, testing, medical care, warehousing and distribution.

- B.C. previously introduced the following public health measures:
  - Disallowing all public gatherings larger than 50 people.
  - Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.
  - Restricting family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only.
  - Suspending in-class instruction at all schools (post-secondary and Kindergarten to Grade 12).
  - Directing closure of casinos, businesses with liquor primary licenses, and personal service establishments (e.g. salons).
  - Directing dine-in food services to close or transition to take-out and delivery models only.
  - Directing businesses providing essential goods, services and transportation to maintain physical distancing of one to two meters for staff and customers.
  - Suspending regular operations of the Supreme Court of B.C. The court will hear only essential and urgent matters.

### Support Measures

- March 25: Premier Horgan announced a temporary ban on tenant evictions, as well as rent freeze and financial support for tenants in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- March 23: Premier Horgan announced a \$5 billion relief plan to provide income supports, tax relief and direct funding for people, businesses and essential services.
- Expanded financial support for child-care providers to ensure parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to safe child care.
- Expanded supports to protect vulnerable people and those experiencing homelessness, including identification of sites to support isolation for people experiencing homelessness and ban on evictions for non-payment of rent in B.C. Housing-funded buildings.
- Amendments to the *Employment Standards Act* to protect workers and prevent layoffs.

### Border Measures

- March 24: The Governor General issued an OIC titled Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order (Mandatory Isolation). The order delineates mandatory isolation and/or quarantine requirements for persons entering Canada.
- March 20: the Canada-U.S. border was closed to all non-essential travel (e.g. tourism and recreation) on a temporary basis. Exemptions are in place regarding:
  - Essential workers (e.g. airline and medical workers).
  - Seasonal agricultural workers, fish/seafood workers, caregivers and other temporary foreign workers
  - International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18th, 2020
  - Permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16th but had not yet travelled to Canada.

## BC Program Note

- Exemptions already apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking. Minister Blair has indicated that borders on Indigenous reserves will also be unimpeded.
- Prime Minister Trudeau has indicated that asylum seekers entering at non-official border points will be turned back to the U.S.
- Increased screening measures are being implemented at airports, including more visible messaging, health screening at kiosks, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection of high-traffic areas and facilities at airports.
- As of March 18, 2020, international flights are being directed to four Canadian Airports, including Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of their citizenship, will not be permitted to board international flights to Canada. Those who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada will be barred from entering Canada, except for aircrews, diplomats, immediate family members of Canadian citizens, and U.S. citizens.
- The Federal Government has advised against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the United States.

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions (as of Mar. 25)

- In the State of Washington, 34,181 individuals have been tested as of March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Washington has reported 2,469 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 123 deaths. Over three-quarters of confirmed cases are in King County (1,277) and Snohomish County (614).
  - On March 23, the Governor Inslee of WA issued a legally enforceable "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order for a minimum of two weeks.
  - Public health experts agree that the true number of people who have been infected with COVID-19 in Washington greatly exceeds the number of COVID-19 infections that have been laboratory-confirmed.<sup>1</sup>
  - The state has waived all costs associated with testing (i.e. lab fees).
  - On March 17, Governor Inslee signed a bill that reduces credentialing delays for health care workers, to facilitate their entry into the workforce to respond to the outbreak.<sup>2</sup>
- Over 55 percent of cases in the U.S. are in New York (26,358 cases) and New Jersey (3,675). California (2,511) and Washington State (2,469) report the next highest numbers of cases.
- Within Canada, all P/T jurisdictions have declared either a state of emergency and/or a public health emergency. Generally, the powers available to governments under a public health emergency are more limited than under a state of emergency.
- In addition to international travelers returning to provinces or territories, several PT jurisdictions are asking inter-provincial/territorial travelers to also isolate for 14 days. Some municipal governments are declaring states of emergency in order to stop the spread of COVID-19 in their communities.
- Ontario updates include:

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>

<sup>2</sup> [https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## BC Program Note

- March 25: the Ontario government announced: \$7 billion in additional resources for the health care system and direct support for people and jobs. It also will make available \$10 billion in support for people and businesses through tax and other deferrals to improve their cash flow, protecting jobs and household budgets.
- March 23: ON ordered closure of all non-essential workplaces for two weeks beginning March 25.
- March 19, government passed emergency legislation to support workers unable to work due to COVID-19.
- March 17<sup>th</sup>: Announced first stage of COVID-19 relief package with \$300M in funding.
- QC updates:
  - Provincial government banned gatherings of two or more.
  - On March 23, ordered closure of all non-essential businesses from March 25 until April 13.
- Federal update (Canada)
  - The Government enacted new legislation, including amendments to the *Food and Drugs Act* and the *Patent Act*. These legislative amendments will give the Minister of Health new powers to help prevent or alleviate shortages of drugs and medical devices.
  - Government and opposition parties in Parliament passed a \$107-billion economic aid package bill to help Canadians struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on Mar. 26, 2020

## BC Program Note

### Agenda Item

FPT Deputy Health Ministers' Teleconference: March 30, 2020  
Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

- As of March 28, 2020 (1PM PST), there have been 884 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 17 deaths in British Columbia (B.C.).
  - 291 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 77 cases in Interior Health;
  - 61 cases in Island Health;
  - 12 cases in Northern Health; and
  - 444 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- As of March 28, 81 of B.C.'s confirmed COVID-19 cases are in hospital; 52 cases are in intensive care; and 396 (45%) of the confirmed cases have recovered.
- Physical distancing, travels restriction and other stringent measures has reduced BC COVID-19 cases growth trajectory from the expected 24% to 12%, based on B.C. Centre for Disease Control's (BCCDC) modelling.
- On March 17, the Provincial Health Officer declared a public health emergency to facilitate a faster provincial response and enact further protective measures.
- On March 18, the Minister of Public Safety declared a provincial State of Emergency to facilitate a coordinated province-wide response to COVID-19 and enact broader measures to secure critical supplies and ensure access to essential goods and services.

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C.

s.13; s.17

- B.C. needs more PPEs and is taking proactive measures to conserve PPE supplies.
- B.C. developed an "Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic Personal Protective Equipment Allocation Framework" as part of the provincial PPE conservation and supply strategy, with effective implementation on March 25, 2020.
- B.C. has submitted a significant request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach.
- Beyond the request to Canada, BC is pursuing leads for alternative supplies from any/all credible sources internationally and exploring creative/innovative production solutions locally.
- On March 23, 2020, B.C. received a shipment of 7,000 N95 respirators (2,000<sup>s.17</sup> model and 5,000<sup>s.17</sup> model) from the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS).
- While the emergency supplies from Canada are appreciated and helpful, BC's PPE inventory is not at a level to sustain the pressure of a growing case count and unreliable supply chains.
- B.C. is expecting arrival of an additional 6,000 N95 respirators (by air) on March 26, a larger load of supplies (by truck) and 100K of N95 respirators on Monday, March 30. Mask shipment of K95 model will continue until B.C. has 3 million in stock.

## BC Program Note

- B.C. also has an immediate need for 180 ventilators. B.C. identified the need for 180 ventilators in its request to Health Canada under their “Collaborative Bulk Buy” approach.
- Additional 120 ventilators have been ordered on March 5, 2020. As of March 24, 15 additional adult critical vents have arrived, with an additional 29 be arriving shortly. An additional 57 critical care ventilators have been identified for loan or are being refurbished.

### Health System Preparedness

- B.C. is focused on preparing its current capacity for: (i) critical care and ventilators capacity for critically ill patients, and (ii) current hospital bed capacity for less acute patients.
- All hospitals are directed to Outbreak Response Phase 2. Hospitals have postponed all non-urgent scheduled elective surgeries and undertake only urgent and emergency procedures. Hospitals are also required to review operating-room capacity daily to prioritize urgent and emergency surgeries.
- As of March 28, 2020, 4,295 vacant beds and more than 1,200 ventilators are available across the health system.
- Pharmacists are directed to provide patients with a prescription refill or an emergency supply of their medications, if needed.
- The Ministry of Health has made provisions for compensation of physicians providing virtual-care services.
- Emergency registration of non-practicing or retired health-care professionals is underway, including professionals from other jurisdictions and the armed forces. As of March 28, 28 physicians and 309 nurses have re-registered and made themselves available to assist in healthcare delivery.
- 8-1-1 calls have increased from ~1,200 calls per day (pre-COVID) to over 6,500 per day. Nurses and patient navigation staff have been added to support this increase.

### Testing

- As of March 27, 2020, 36,643 tests have been completed in B.C.
- B.C.’s COVID-19 testing strategy remains focused on clusters and outbreaks, the elderly and high-risk patients and health-care workers, rather than the broader public.
- BC has implemented an online self-assessment tool and an app to support people in determining whether they require further assessment or testing for COVID-19. Tools available at <https://bc.thrive.health/>
- BC has expanded COVID-19 testing capacity at St. Paul’s Hospital, Victoria General Hospital, BC Children’s and Women’s Hospital, Royal Jubilee Hospital Microbiology Laboratory, and Kelowna Hospital, and through other Community Assessment Centers being established by Health Authorities.

### Prevention and Containment Measures

- March 27: The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) discouraged any in-person gathering of any size and ordered that only food vendors are allowed in markets.

## BC Program Note

- March 26: The PHO ordered all health sector employers to have employees work at only one site/facility to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- On March 26th, Minister Farnworth (PSSG) announced use of extraordinary powers under a state of provincial emergency. Ministerial orders include:
  - *Supply chain*: Establishing a new Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit to co-ordinate goods and services distribution; taking a more active role in coordinating essential goods and services movement by land, air, marine and rail; and suspending any bylaws that restrict goods delivery at any time of day.
  - *Protecting consumers*: Banning the secondary resale of food, medical supplies, personal protective equipment, cleaning and other essential supplies; and restricting quantities of items purchased at point of sale.
  - *Enforcement*: Enabling municipal bylaw officers to support enforcement of the Provincial Health Officer's orders for business closures and gatherings, in line with offences under the *Public Health Act*.
  - *Travel*: Ensuring all passenger and car-ferry services provide minimum service levels and priority access for residents, and essential goods and workers.
  - *Protecting B.C.'s most vulnerable*: Making it easier to support critical services for vulnerable people, like food banks and shelters.
  - *Co-ordination*: Suspending local states of emergency specific to the COVID-19 pandemic, except for the City of Vancouver; giving municipal councils the ability to hold more flexible meetings to expedite decisions; and coordinating potential use of local publicly owned facilities, like community centres, for self-isolation, testing, medical care, warehousing and distribution.
- B.C. previously introduced the following public health measures:
  - Disallowing all public gatherings larger than 50 people.
  - Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.
  - Restricting family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only.
  - Suspending in-class instruction at all schools (post-secondary and Kindergarten to Grade 12).
  - Directing closure of casinos, businesses with liquor primary licenses, and personal service establishments (e.g. salons).
  - Directing dine-in food services to close or transition to take-out and delivery models only.
  - Directing businesses providing essential goods, services and transportation to maintain physical distancing of one to two meters for staff and customers.
  - Suspending regular operations of the Supreme Court of B.C. The court will hear only essential and urgent matters.

### Support Measures

- March 25: Premier Horgan announced a temporary ban on tenant evictions, as well as rent freeze and financial support for tenants in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- March 23: Premier Horgan announced a \$5 billion relief plan to provide income supports, tax relief and direct funding for people, businesses and essential services.

## BC Program Note

- Expanded financial support for child-care providers to ensure parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to safe child care.
- Expanded supports to protect vulnerable people and those experiencing homelessness, including identification of sites to support isolation for people experiencing homelessness and ban on evictions for non-payment of rent in B.C. Housing-funded buildings.
- Amendments to the *Employment Standards Act* to protect workers and prevent layoffs.

### Border Measures

- March 28: Transport Canada introduced new measures requiring all air and rail operators to screen air passengers and intercity rail passenger prior to boarding for signs of illness. The new measures will come into effect on March 30, 2020.
- March 25: The Minister of Health announced an Emergency Order under the *Quarantine Act* (Mandatory Isolation) requiring mandatory self-isolation for 14 days for persons entering Canada.
- March 20: The Governor General issued an Order in Council (OIC) titled "Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order." Non-Canadian citizens and residents are prohibited from entering Canada from the United States. The Canada-U.S. border was closed to all non-essential travel (e.g. tourism and recreation) on a temporary basis. Exemptions are in place regarding:
  - Essential workers (e.g. airline and medical workers).
  - Seasonal agricultural workers, fish/seafood workers, caregivers and other temporary foreign workers.
  - International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18th, 2020.
  - Permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16th but had not yet travelled to Canada.
- Exemptions already apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking. Minister Blair has indicated that borders on Indigenous reserves will also be unimpeded.
- Prime Minister Trudeau has indicated that asylum seekers entering at non-official border points will be turned back to the U.S.
- Increased screening measures are being implemented at airports, including more visible messaging, health screening at kiosks, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection of high-traffic areas and facilities at airports.
- As of March 18, 2020, international flights are being directed to four Canadian Airports, including Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of their citizenship, will not be permitted to board international flights to Canada. Those who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada will be barred from entering Canada, except for aircrews, diplomats, immediate family members of Canadian citizens, and U.S. citizens.
- The Federal Government has advised against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the United States.

## BC Program Note

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions (as of Mar. 25)

- In the State of Washington, 34,181 individuals have been tested as of March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Washington has reported 2,469 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 123 deaths. Over three-quarters of confirmed cases are in King County (1,277) and Snohomish County (614).
  - On March 23, the Governor Inslee of WA issued a legally enforceable “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order for a minimum of two weeks.
  - Public health experts agree that the true number of people who have been infected with COVID-19 in Washington greatly exceeds the number of COVID-19 infections that have been laboratory-confirmed.<sup>1</sup>
  - The state has waived all costs associated with testing (i.e. lab fees).
  - On March 17, Governor Inslee signed a bill that reduces credentialing delays for health care workers, to facilitate their entry into the workforce to respond to the outbreak.<sup>2</sup>
- Over 55 percent of cases in the U.S. are in New York (26,358 cases) and New Jersey (3,675). California (2,511) and Washington State (2,469) report the next highest numbers of cases.
- Within Canada, all P/T jurisdictions have declared either a state of emergency and/or a public health emergency. Generally, the powers available to governments under a public health emergency are more limited than under a state of emergency.
- In addition to international travelers returning to provinces or territories, several PT jurisdictions are asking inter-provincial/territorial travelers to also isolate for 14 days. Some municipal governments are declaring states of emergency in order to stop the spread of COVID-19 in their communities.
- Ontario updates include:
  - March 25: the Ontario government announced: \$7 billion in additional resources for the health care system and direct support for people and jobs. It also will make available \$10 billion in support for people and businesses through tax and other deferrals to improve their cash flow, protecting jobs and household budgets.
  - March 23: ON ordered closure of all non-essential workplaces for two weeks beginning March 25.
  - March 19, government passed emergency legislation to support workers unable to work due to COVID-19.
  - March 17<sup>th</sup>: Announced first stage of COVID-19 relief package with \$300M in funding.
- QC updates:
  - Provincial government banned gatherings of two or more.
  - On March 23, ordered closure of all non-essential businesses from March 25 until April 13.
- Federal update (Canada)
  - The Government enacted new legislation, including amendments to the *Food and Drugs Act* and the *Patent Act*. These legislative amendments will give the Minister of

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>

<sup>2</sup> [https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## BC Program Note

Health new powers to help prevent or alleviate shortages of drugs and medical devices.

- Government and opposition parties in Parliament passed a \$107-billion economic aid package bill to help Canadians struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on Mar. 26, 2020

## Leonard, Christopher J HLTH:EX

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**From:** Vandermolén, Chad HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** April 8, 2020 10:26 AM  
**To:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX; Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX; Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX; BC IGR HLTH:EX; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FOR ACTION: Updates to BC Program Note  
**Attachments:** 2020 04 09 DRAFT BCPN\_COVID-19\_FPT Health Ministers\_Coronavirus.docx

Good morning,

The next FPT Health Ministers' teleconference is tomorrow afternoon. If you have any updates/edits to the attached BCPN (we've made some updates following your last update), please provide the approved changes by end of day today. Please note: (1) no need to update the case count, testing, and vacant hospital bed data, as I will get the April 8 numbers early this afternoon; (2) IGR will likely be condensing a number of sections (e.g. Border Measures and BC Support Measures) considerably to reduce the length of the note.

Many thanks,  
Chad

## BC Program Note

<b>Agenda Item</b>	FPT Health Ministers' Teleconference: April 9, 2020 Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)
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- As of April 7, 2020 (11:30AM PST), there have been 1,291 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 43 deaths in British Columbia (B.C.).
  - 458 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 128 cases in Interior Health;
  - 79 cases in Island Health;
  - 23 cases in Northern Health;
  - 603 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- 138 individuals are hospitalized, 66 are in critical and intensive care, and 806 (62.5%) have recovered.
- On April 4, a federal correction facility in Mission was placed under a lockdown, after 22 cases of COVID-19 were confirmed.
- B.C.'s provincial state of emergency has been extended until April 14. It was first declared on March 18<sup>th</sup>.

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C.

- April 7<sup>th</sup>: 1) Public Services and Procurement Minister Anita Anand announced that Canada received eight million surgical masks from China; 2) s. 16
- B.C. is continuing to work with the Government of Canada (GoC) to secure international supply, with private industry to re-direct production to PPE manufacturing, securing private donations of PPE, and, exploring innovative options to safely extend the use of the N95s already in the health system.
- Apr 3: The GoC signed an agreement with s. 15; s. 17 to manage the distribution of medical supplies across Canada.
- Apr 2: FPT Health Ministers approved the "Draft Allocation of Scarce Resources COVID-19 Interim Response Strategy" to support rapid distribution of PPE products. Allocation amongst PTs is based on an "80/20" formula—80% of federally acquired PPE is to be allocated to PTs on a per capita basis, with 20% to be retained in the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS) to be subsequently allocated to address critical shortages identified by PTs.
- Apr 1: B.C. launched the COVID-19 Supply Hub to expedite sourcing of medical and essential supplies. B.C. developed an "Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic Personal Protective Equipment Allocation Framework" as part of the provincial PPE conservation and supply strategy, with effective implementation on March 25, 2020.
- B.C. has submitted a significant request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach. In addition, BC is pursuing leads for alternative supplies from any/all credible sources internationally and exploring creative/innovative production solutions locally.

Deleted: I

Commented [BSH1]: Date? Any follow up yet?

## BC Program Note

- B.C. received a shipment of N95 respirators from the NESS last week and is expecting further N95 supplies to arrive this week.
- One million surgical masks arrived in B.C. on March 30. Mask shipment, particularly N95s, will continue until B.C. has a sustainable stockpile for the COVID-19 pandemic response.

### Health System Preparedness

- B.C. is focused on preparing its current capacity for: (i) critical care and ventilator capacity for critically ill patients, and (ii) current hospital bed capacity for less acute patients.
- All hospitals are directed to Outbreak Response Phase 2. Hospitals have postponed all non-urgent scheduled elective surgeries and asked to review operating room capacity to prioritize only urgent and emergency procedures.
- As of April 7, there are more than 4,559 vacant beds and more than 1,200 ventilators available across the health system.
- On April 6, 55 ventilators from the NESS arrived in B.C.
- On March 30, B.C. designated 19 hospitals as COVID-19 primary sites and announced the preparation of off-site treatment centres, including the Vancouver Convention Centre.
- As of March 31, 35 physicians and 444 nurses have re-registered following the B.C. government call out for emergency registration of non-practicing health-care professionals.

### Testing

- As of April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020, 51,423 tests have been completed in B.C.
- B.C.'s COVID-19 testing strategy remains focused on clusters and outbreaks, the elderly and high-risk patients and health-care workers, rather than the broader public.
- B.C. implemented an online self-assessment tool and an app (<https://bc.thrive.health/>) for British Columbian's to determine if they need further assessment or testing for COVID-19.
- B.C. has expanded COVID-19 testing capacity at five hospitals and at a number of health authority-led Community Assessment Centers.

### Prevention and Containment Measures

- Apr 7: announced partnership with local governments, non-profits, and the hotel industry to provide over 900 spaces for vulnerable individuals who need a safe place to self-isolate.
- Apr 6: The PHO stated that non-medical face covering is an option to keep droplets in, when one might not be able to maintain physical distance. However, face covering has not been formally recommended.
- B.C. has introduced the following public health measures:
  - Issuing new social distancing guidelines for grocery stores.
  - Suspending paid parking for patients and staff at all health authority-operated sites.
  - Directing all health sector employers to have employees work at only one site/facility.
  - Only allowing food vendors to sell in markets.
  - Discouraging in-person gatherings of any size and disallowing gatherings larger than 50 people.
  - Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.

**Commented [BSH2]:** Date received, and additional details (quantity, etc)?

Point below is out of reverse-chronological order, making this section confusing to read. Can some stale-dated info be deleted or re-framed?

## BC Program Note

- Restricting family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only.
- Suspending in-class instruction at all schools and post-secondary institutions.
- Directing closure of casinos, businesses with liquor primary licenses, and personal service establishments (e.g. salons).
- Directing dine-in food services to close or transition to take-out and delivery models only.
- Directing businesses providing essential goods, services and transportation to maintain physical distancing of one to two meters for staff and customers.
- Suspending regular operations of the Supreme Court of B.C. The court will hear only essential and urgent matters.
- On March 26th, the Minister of Public Safety & Solicitor General announced use of extraordinary powers under a state of provincial emergency. Ministerial orders include:
  - *Supply chain*: Establishing a new Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit to co-ordinate goods and services distribution.
  - *Protecting consumers*: Banning the secondary resale of medical supplies, PPE, cleaning and other essential supplies; and restricting quantities of items purchased.
  - *Enforcement*: Enabling municipal bylaw officers to enforce the PHO's orders.
  - *Travel*: Ensuring all transportation services provide minimum service levels and priority access for residents, and essential goods and workers.
  - *Protecting B.C.'s most vulnerable*: Making it easier to support critical services for vulnerable people, like food banks and shelters.
  - *Co-ordination*: Suspending local states of emergency specific to the COVID-19 pandemic; giving municipal councils the flexibility to expedite decisions; and coordinating potential use of local publicly owned facilities for COVID-19 uses.

### B.C.'s Support Measures

- April 3: \$10m to enhance infection prevention and control, and improve quality and safety in long-term care and assisted living homes.
- April 2: Additional financial supports announced for individuals receiving income assistance or disability assistance.
- April 1: Hydro bill relief measures; \$5M cash flow access for amateur sport sector organizations.
- Mar 29: \$3M emergency grant for Food Banks B.C.
- Mar 25: Temporary ban on tenant evictions, rent freeze and financial support for tenants.
- Mar 23: \$5B relief plan for income supports, tax relief and direct funding for people, businesses and essential services.
- BC has also:
  - Expanded financial support for child-care providers to ensure parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to safe child care.
  - Expanded supports to protect vulnerable people and those experiencing homelessness, including identifying sites to support isolation for people experiencing homelessness and a ban on evictions for non-payment of rent in B.C. Housing-funded buildings.
  - Amended the *Employment Standards Act* to protect workers and prevent layoffs.

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## BC Program Note

### Border Measures

- April 5<sup>th</sup>: Transport Canada introduced the following measures:
  - Canadian cruise ships prohibited from mooring, navigating, or transiting in Canadian Arctic Waters.
  - Foreign passenger vessels seeking to enter Arctic Waters required to give the Minister of Transport 60 days of notice and are subject to any terms the Minister determines necessary.
  - All commercial marine vessels with capacity of more than 12 passengers are: 1) prohibited from engaging in non-essential activities; 2) required to reduce maximum passenger volumes by 50% or implement alternative practices to reduce risk of infection spread; and 3) required to conduct health screening of all passengers.
- Mar 28: Transport Canada required all air and intercity rail operators to perform passenger health screening prior to boarding.
- Mar 25: Federal Minister of Health announced an Emergency Order under the *Quarantine Act* (Mandatory Isolation) requiring mandatory self-isolation for 14 days for persons entering Canada.
- Mar 20: The Governor General issued an Order in Council (OIC) (*Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada*) prohibiting non-Canadian citizens and residents from entering Canada from the U.S. The Canada-U.S. border was closed to all non-essential travel on a temporary basis. Exemptions exist for:
  - Essential workers (e.g. airline and medical workers).
  - Seasonal agricultural workers, fish/seafood workers, caregivers and other temporary foreign workers.
  - International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18th, 2020.
  - Permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16th but had not yet travelled to Canada.
- Exemptions already apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking. Minister Blair has indicated that borders on Indigenous reserves will also be unimpeded.
- As of March 18, 2020, international flights are being directed to four Canadian Airports, including Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of their citizenship, will not be permitted to board international flights to Canada. Those who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada will be barred from entering Canada, except for aircrews, diplomats, immediate family members of Canadian citizens, and U.S. citizens.
- The Federal Government has advised against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the United States.

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions

#### **United States:**

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## BC Program Note

- Washington State (as of April 6<sup>th</sup>):
  - 8,384 confirmed cases; 372 deaths; 87,902 tested.
  - Legally enforceable "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order in place since Mar 23
- Other U.S. States (as of April 7<sup>th</sup>):
  - 374,329 confirmed cases and 12,064 deaths across the U.S.
  - Nearly half of U.S. cases are in New York (141,100) and New Jersey (41,091)
  - New York State reports that the average number of people newly hospitalized people has dropped over the past three days.
- Michigan (17,221) reported the next highest numbers of cases

### Canada:

- Ontario:
  - As of April 6<sup>th</sup>, ON had 4,726 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 153 deaths. 614 people are hospitalized, including 233 in intensive care and 187 on ventilators.
  - Apr 6: Premier Ford stated that American officials had stopped an order of 3M's masks from coming to Ontario, leaving the province with only one week of PPE supply. 500,000 N95 masks were released that day, which Premier Ford stated was sufficient for one additional week.
  - Apr 1: 1) Local health units urged to use powers to enforce self-isolation; 2) anyone charged under emergency powers required to identify themselves or face fines. Failure to comply with an emergency order carries additional punishments, including the possibility of imprisonment.
  - March 28: Issued an emergency order banning gatherings of more than five people 2) proclaimed legislation enabling central planning of public sector supplies.
  - March 25: announced \$7 billion in additional resources for the health care system and direct support for people and jobs.
  - Mar 17-23: 1) Announced first stage of COVID-19 relief package (\$300M); 2) passed emergency legislation to support those unable to work due to COVID-19; 3) ordered closure of all non-essential workplaces.
- Quebec:
  - As of April 7<sup>th</sup>, QC had 9,340 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 583 hospitalizations and 150 deaths.
  - Apr 6: 1) Premier Legault confirmed QC had enough PPE for the next two weeks but that gowns would run out after six days; 2) announced exemptions of capped driving hours for trucking companies delivering essential products.
  - Mar 30: 1) Ordered closure of most businesses on Sundays throughout April, including grocery stores. Exceptions exist for gas stations, pharmacies, convenience stores and restaurants doing takeout. 2) \$133M of additional funding to private and public Long-term care homes.
  - Mar 28: 1) Prohibited non-essential travel to and from eight regions in the province, enforced with highway checkpoints. Additional access restrictions were added for four more regions, including Ottawa-Gatineau, on April 1<sup>st</sup>. 2) Posted police along U.S.

## BC Program Note

border to track returning travelers. 3) Closed all tourism-related lodgings, with exceptions for those designed to house returning U.S. travelers.

- Mar 23/24: 1) Ordered closure of all non-essential businesses until April 13; 2) banned gatherings of two or more.
- Alberta (as of April 6<sup>th</sup>):
  - Total of 40 people in hospital for COVID-19, including 16 in intensive care. AB has reported 24 COVID-19 related deaths.
  - Government of Alberta announced: 1) plans to release its COVID-19 modelling data and projections on the evening of April 7th; 2) government-led mass procurement of non-medical masks for public use.
  - Premier Kenney told participants at an energy summit that he expects AB's unemployment rate to hit 25% in the coming months.
- Government of Canada:
  - April 7: Prime Minister Trudeau stated the government is working with companies to produce 30,000 ventilators.
  - Apr 1: 1) Scheduled a recall of parliament to pass \$71B in additional financial assistance. Provided details on 75% wage subsidy and emergency response benefit. 2) Dr. Harpreet S. Kochhar made Associate Deputy Minister of Health to support efforts to combat COVID-19.
  - Mar 31: announced an investment of \$2 billion to support diagnostic testing and to purchase ventilators and PPE, including for bulk purchases with PTs; signed new procurement agreements with three Canadian companies to purchase and increase capacity to manufacture equipment and supplies including portable ventilators, surgical masks, and rapid testing kits.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on April 9th, 2020

## Leonard, Christopher J HLTH:EX

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**From:** Vandermolten, Chad HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** March 30, 2020 3:41 PM  
**To:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX; Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX; Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX; BC IGR HLTH:EX; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** For Time-Sensitive Action: Request for updated BC Program note re Coronavirus  
**Attachments:** 2020 03 30 DRAFT BCPN\_COVID-19\_FPT Deputy Health Ministers\_Coronavirus-547 pm Mar 29\_comments removed ver.docx  
  
**Importance:** High

Good afternoon,

There is a potential Health Ministers' call on Coronavirus for 4-5:00 p.m. our time tomorrow/Tues., Mar. 31. (After today's FPT DM call, 4-5 p.m., the next confirmed FPT DM call is Wed, April 1, from 4-5:00 p.m.) The HMM is likely to proceed as proposed, and Minister Dix is expected to participate, though he may be somewhat delayed due to the media availability prior to the proposed HMM call. **IGR is requesting PPH provide an Exec.-lead approved updated BCPN as soon as possible on Tues., Mar. 31** (most recent version is attached to be leveraged); we will update further and send to HECC for vetting and Peter's approval prior to the HMM.

Thanks,  
Chad

## BC Program Note

### Agenda Item

FPT Deputy Health Ministers' Teleconference: March 30, 2020  
Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

- As of March 28, 2020 (1PM PST), there have been 884 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 17 deaths in British Columbia (B.C.).
  - 291 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 77 cases in Interior Health;
  - 61 cases in Island Health;
  - 12 cases in Northern Health; and
  - 444 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- As of March 28, 81 of B.C.'s confirmed COVID-19 cases are in hospital, 52 cases are in intensive care, and 396 (45%) have recovered.
- There is some evidence that physical distancing, travel restrictions and other stringent measures have reduced BC COVID-19 cases growth trajectory from the expected 24% to 12%, based on B.C. Centre for Disease Control's (BCCDC) modelling.
- On March 18, the Minister of Public Safety declared a provincial State of Emergency to facilitate a coordinated province-wide response to COVID-19 and enact broader measures to secure critical supplies and ensure access to essential goods and services.
- On March 17, the Provincial Health Officer declared a public health emergency to facilitate a faster provincial response and enact further protective measures.

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C. s.13; s.17

- B.C. needs more PPE and is taking proactive measures to conserve PPE supplies.
- B.C. developed an "Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic Personal Protective Equipment Allocation Framework" as part of the provincial PPE conservation and supply strategy, with effective implementation on March 25, 2020.
- B.C. has submitted a significant request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach.
- Beyond the request to Canada, BC is pursuing leads for alternative supplies from any/all credible sources internationally and exploring creative/innovative production solutions locally.
- On March 23, 2020, B.C. received a shipment of 7,000 N95 respirators (2,000 s.17 model and 5,000 s.17 model) from the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS).
- While the emergency supplies from Canada are appreciated and helpful, BC's PPE inventory is not at a level to sustain the pressure of a growing case count and unreliable supply chains.
- BC is expecting arrival of an additional 6,000 N95 respirators (by air) on March 26, a larger load of supplies (by truck) and 100K of N95 respirators on Monday, March 30. Mask shipment of K95 model will continue until B.C. has 3 million in stock.

**Commented [SKH1]:** HECC / Peter - I took this suggested phrasing from the technical briefing slides. s. 13  
s.13

**Commented [CV2]:** Re all the supplies noted in this bullet, are all of these deliveries coming via the federal gov't/NESS avenue?

**Commented [SKH3]:** Has this been received?

## BC Program Note

- BC also has an immediate need for 180 ventilators. BC identified the need for 180 ventilators in its request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach.
- 120 ventilators were ordered on March 5, 2020. As of March 24, 15 additional adult critical vents have arrived, with an additional 29 expected to arrive shortly. An additional 57 critical care ventilators have been identified for loan or are being refurbished.

**Commented [BSH4]:** Does this change the above bullet, re: needing 180 ventilators?

### Health System Preparedness

- B.C. is focused on preparing its current capacity for: (i) critical care and ventilator capacity for critically ill patients, and (ii) current hospital bed capacity for less acute patients.
- All hospitals are directed to Outbreak Response Phase 2. Hospitals have postponed all non-urgent scheduled elective surgeries and undertake only urgent and emergency procedures. Hospitals are also required to review operating-room capacity daily to prioritize urgent and emergency surgeries.
- As of March 28, 2020, 4,295 vacant beds and more than 1,200 ventilators are available across the health system.
- Pharmacists are directed to provide patients with a prescription refill or an emergency supply of their medications, if needed.
- The Ministry of Health has made provisions for compensation of physicians providing virtual-care services.
- Emergency registration of non-practicing or retired health-care professionals is underway, including professionals from other jurisdictions and the armed forces. As of March 28, 28 physicians and 309 nurses have re-registered and made themselves available to assist in healthcare delivery.
- 8-1-1 calls have increased from ~1,200 calls per day (pre-COVID) to over 6,500 per day. Nurses and patient navigation staff have been added to support this increase.

**Commented [CV5]:** HECC/Peter, please confirm accuracy of this data and the framing of this bullet.

### Testing

- As of March 27, 2020, 36,643 tests have been completed in B.C.
- B.C.'s COVID-19 testing strategy remains focused on clusters and outbreaks, the elderly and high-risk patients and health-care workers, rather than the broader public.
- BC has implemented an online self-assessment tool and an app to support people in determining whether they require further assessment or testing for COVID-19. Tools available at <https://bc.thrive.health/>
- BC has expanded COVID-19 testing capacity at St. Paul's Hospital, Victoria General Hospital, BC Children's and Women's Hospital, Royal Jubilee Hospital Microbiology Laboratory, Kelowna Hospital, and through other Community Assessment Centers being established by Health Authorities.

### Prevention and Containment Measures

- March 27: The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) discouraged any in-person gathering of any size and ordered that only food vendors are allowed in markets.

## BC Program Note

- March 26: The PHO ordered all health sector employers to have employees work at only one site/facility to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- On March 26th, Minister Farnworth (PSSG) announced use of extraordinary powers under a state of provincial emergency. Ministerial orders include:
  - *Supply chain*: Establishing a new Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit to co-ordinate goods and services distribution; taking a more active role in coordinating essential goods and services movement by land, air, marine and rail; and suspending any bylaws that restrict goods delivery at any time of day.
  - *Protecting consumers*: Banning the secondary resale of food, medical supplies, personal protective equipment, cleaning and other essential supplies; and restricting quantities of items purchased at point of sale.
  - *Enforcement*: Enabling municipal bylaw officers to support enforcement of the Provincial Health Officer's orders for business closures and gatherings, in line with offences under the *Public Health Act*.
  - *Travel*: Ensuring all passenger and car-ferry services provide minimum service levels and priority access for residents, and essential goods and workers.
  - *Protecting B.C.'s most vulnerable*: Making it easier to support critical services for vulnerable people, like food banks and shelters.
  - *Co-ordination*: Suspending local states of emergency specific to the COVID-19 pandemic, except for the City of Vancouver; giving municipal councils the ability to hold more flexible meetings to expedite decisions; and coordinating potential use of local publicly owned facilities, like community centres, for self-isolation, testing, medical care, warehousing and distribution.
- B.C. previously introduced the following public health measures:
  - Disallowing all public gatherings larger than 50 people.
  - Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.
  - Restricting family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only.
  - Suspending in-class instruction at all schools (post-secondary and Kindergarten to Grade 12).
  - Directing closure of casinos, businesses with liquor primary licenses, and personal service establishments (e.g. salons).
  - Directing dine-in food services to close or transition to take-out and delivery models only.
  - Directing businesses providing essential goods, services and transportation to maintain physical distancing of one to two meters for staff and customers.
  - Suspending regular operations of the Supreme Court of B.C. The court will hear only essential and urgent matters.

### Support Measures

- March 25: Premier Horgan announced a temporary ban on tenant evictions, as well as rent freeze and financial support for tenants in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- March 23: Premier Horgan announced a \$5 billion relief plan to provide income supports, tax relief and direct funding for people, businesses and essential services.

## BC Program Note

- BC has also:
  - Expanded financial support for child-care providers to ensure parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to safe child care.
  - Expanded supports to protect vulnerable people and those experiencing homelessness, including identification of sites to support isolation for people experiencing homelessness and a ban on evictions for non-payment of rent in B.C. Housing-funded buildings.
  - Made amendments to the *Employment Standards Act* to protect workers and prevent layoffs.

### Border Measures

- March 28: Transport Canada introduced new measures requiring all air and intercity rail operators to screen passengers prior to boarding for signs of illness. Any traveler with COVID-19 symptoms will not be permitted to board. The new measures will come into effect on March 30, 2020.
- March 25: The Minister of Health announced an Emergency Order under the *Quarantine Act* (Mandatory Isolation) requiring mandatory self-isolation for 14 days for persons entering Canada.
- March 20: The Governor General issued an Order in Council (OIC) titled "Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order." Non-Canadian citizens and residents are prohibited from entering Canada from the United States. The Canada-U.S. border was closed to all non-essential travel (e.g. tourism and recreation) on a temporary basis. Exemptions are in place regarding:
  - Essential workers (e.g. airline and medical workers).
  - Seasonal agricultural workers, fish/seafood workers, caregivers and other temporary foreign workers.
  - International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18th, 2020.
  - Permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16th but had not yet travelled to Canada.
- Exemptions already apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking. Minister Blair has indicated that borders on Indigenous reserves will also be unimpeded.
- Prime Minister Trudeau has indicated that asylum seekers entering at non-official border points will be turned back to the U.S.
- Increased screening measures are being implemented at airports, including more visible messaging, health screening at kiosks, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection of high-traffic areas and facilities at airports.
- As of March 18, 2020, international flights are being directed to four Canadian Airports, including Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of their citizenship, will not be permitted to board international flights to Canada. Those who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada will be barred from entering

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## BC Program Note

Canada, except for aircrews, diplomats, immediate family members of Canadian citizens, and U.S. citizens.

- The Federal Government has advised against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the United States.

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions (as of Mar. 29)

- In the State of Washington, 59,206 individuals have been tested as of March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Washington has reported 4,310 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 189 deaths. Nearly 70% of confirmed cases are in King County (2,077) and Snohomish County (912).
  - On March 23, the Governor Inslee of WA issued a legally enforceable "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order for a minimum of two weeks.
  - Public health experts agree that the true number of people who have been infected with COVID-19 in Washington greatly exceeds the number of COVID-19 infections that have been laboratory-confirmed.<sup>1</sup>
  - The state has waived all costs associated with testing (i.e. lab fees).
  - On March 17, Governor Inslee signed a bill that reduces credentialing delays for health care workers, to facilitate their entry into the workforce to respond to the outbreak.<sup>2</sup>
- As of March 26<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. states with the most cases were New York (38,977 cases), New Jersey (6,876), California (3,777) and Washington (3,207).
- Within Canada, all P/T jurisdictions have declared either a state of emergency and/or a public health emergency. Generally, the powers available to governments under a public health emergency are more limited than under a state of emergency.
- In addition to international travelers returning to provinces or territories, several PT jurisdictions are asking inter-provincial/territorial travelers to also isolate for 14 days. Some municipal governments are declaring states of emergency in order to stop the spread of COVID-19 in their communities.
- Ontario updates include:
  - March 28: 1) issued an emergency order banning gatherings of more than five people; 2) proclaimed legislation enabling central planning of public sector supplies; and 3) issued emergency order for stiff penalties for price gouging.
  - March 25: announced \$7 billion in additional resources for the health care system and direct support for people and jobs. It also will make available \$10 billion in support for people and businesses through tax and other deferrals to improve their cash flow, protecting jobs and household budgets.
  - March 23: ordered closure of all non-essential workplaces for two weeks beginning March 25.
  - March 19: passed emergency legislation to support workers unable to work due to COVID-19.
  - March 17<sup>th</sup>: announced first stage of COVID-19 relief package with \$300M in funding.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>

<sup>2</sup> [https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## BC Program Note

- QC updates:
  - Mar 28: 1) Prohibited non-essential travel to and from eight regions in the province, enforced with highway checkpoints; 2) Posted police along U.S. border to track returning travelers; 3) Closed all tourism-related lodgings, with exceptions for those designed to house returning U.S. travelers; and 4) provided health care workers on parental leave an additional six months to use benefits if they return to work.
  - March 24: Provincial government banned gatherings of two or more.
  - March 23: ordered closure of all non-essential businesses from March 25 until April 13.
- Federal update (Canada)
  - Mar 27: announced 75% wage subsidy, \$40,000 business loans, and deferral of sales tax and duties for small/medium sized businesses.
  - The Government enacted new legislation, including amendments to the *Food and Drugs Act* and the *Patent Act*. These legislative amendments will give the Minister of Health new powers to help prevent or alleviate shortages of drugs and medical devices.
  - Government and opposition parties in Parliament passed a \$107-billion economic aid package bill to help Canadians struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on Mar. 29 or 30, 2020

## Leonard, Christopher J HLTH:EX

---

**From:** Vandermolén, Chad HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** April 1, 2020 1:43 PM  
**To:** Hryciuk, Lorie HLTH:EX; Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX; Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX; BC IGR HLTH:EX; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX; Ruffell, Renata HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FOR TIME-SENSITIVE ACTION: Updated BC Program Note for 10 a.m. Thurs, Apl. 2  
**Attachments:** 2020 03 31 BCPN\_COVID-19\_FPT Health Ministers\_Coronavirus-FINAL.docx  
**Importance:** High

Good afternoon,

An FPT Ministers' call has been scheduled for Thurs., April 2 from 4:30-5:30 p.m. our time. Leveraging the attached, **please provide an approved updated BC Program Note by 10 a.m. Thursday, April 2.** IGR will then add our updated content and submit to HECC for vetting and Peter's final review and approval.

Many thanks,  
Chad

## BC Program Note

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>FPT Health Ministers' Teleconference: March 31, 2020</b> <b>Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)</b>
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- As of March 31, 2020 (11:30AM PST), there have been 1013 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 24 deaths in British Columbia (B.C.).
  - 348 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 107 cases in Interior Health;
  - 67 cases in Island Health;
  - 15 cases in Northern Health; and
  - 476 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- 128 of cases are hospitalized, 61 cases are in critical and intensive care, and 507 have recovered.
- There is some evidence that physical distancing, travel restrictions and other stringent measures have reduced B.C. COVID-19 cases growth trajectory from the expected 24% to 12%, based on B.C. Centre for Disease Control's (BCCDC) modelling.
- The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) declared a public health emergency on March 17. The next day, the Minister of Public Safety declared a provincial state of emergency to facilitate a coordinated province-wide response to COVID-19.

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C.

- B.C.'s PPE inventory is not at a level to sustain the pressure of growing case count and unreliable supply chains.
- B.C. needs to secure more PPE and is taking proactive measures to conserve PPE supplies.
- B.C. developed an "Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic Personal Protective Equipment Allocation Framework" as part of the provincial PPE conservation and supply strategy, with effective implementation on March 25, 2020.
- B.C. submitted a significant request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach. In addition, BC is pursuing leads for alternative supplies from any/all credible sources internationally and exploring creative/innovative production solutions locally.
- B.C. received a shipment of N95 respirators from the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS) last week and is expecting further N95 supplies to arrive this week.
- One million surgical masks arrived in B.C on March 30. Mask shipment, particularly N95, will continue until B.C. has a sustainable stockpile for the COVID-19 pandemic response.

## BC Program Note

### Health System Preparedness

- B.C. is focused on preparing its current capacity for: (i) critical care and ventilator capacity for critically ill patients, and (ii) current hospital bed capacity for less acute patients.
- All hospitals are directed to Outbreak Response Phase 2. Hospitals have postponed all non-urgent scheduled elective surgeries and asked to review operating room capacity to prioritize only urgent and emergency procedures.
- As of March 30, 2020, there are more than 4,238 vacant beds and more than 1,200 ventilators available across the health system.
- March 30: B.C. designated 19 hospitals as COVID-19 primary sites and announced the preparation of off-site treatment centres, including the Vancouver Convention Centre.
- As of March 31, 35 physicians and 444 nurses have re-registered following the B.C. government call out for emergency registration of non-practicing health-care professionals.
- 8-1-1 calls have increased from ~1,200 calls per day (pre-COVID) to over 6,500 per day. Nurses and patient navigation staff have been added to support this increase.

### Testing

- As of March 31, 2020, 43,229 tests have been completed in B.C.
- B.C.'s COVID-19 testing strategy remains focused on clusters and outbreaks, the elderly and high-risk patients and health-care workers, rather than the broader public.
- B.C. implemented an online self-assessment tool and an app (<https://bc.thrive.health/>) for British Columbian's to determine if they need further assessment or testing for COVID-19.
- B.C. has expanded COVID-19 testing capacity at five hospitals and at a number of health authority-led Community Assessment Centers.

### Prevention and Containment Measures

- March 30: B.C. issued new social distancing guidelines for grocery stores.
- March 30: B.C. suspended paid parking for patients and staff at all health authority-operated sites, effective April 1.
- B.C. previously introduced the following public health measures:
  - Directing all health sector employers to have employees work at only one site/facility.
  - Only allowing food vendors to sell in markets.
  - Discouraging in-person gatherings of any size.
  - Disallowing all public gatherings larger than 50 people.
  - Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.
  - Restricting family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only.
  - Suspending in-class instruction at all schools (post-secondary and Kindergarten to Grade 12).
  - Directing closure of casinos, businesses with liquor primary licenses, and personal service establishments (e.g. salons).
  - Directing dine-in food services to close or transition to take-out and delivery models only.
  - Directing businesses providing essential goods, services and transportation to maintain physical distancing of one to two meters for staff and customers.

## BC Program Note

- Suspending regular operations of the Supreme Court of B.C. The court will hear only essential and urgent matters.
- On March 26th, the Minister of Public Safety & Solicitor General announced use of extraordinary powers under a state of provincial emergency. Ministerial orders include:
  - *Supply chain*: Establishing a new Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit to co-ordinate goods and services distribution.
  - *Protecting consumers*: Banning the secondary resale of medical supplies, PPE, cleaning and other essential supplies; and restricting quantities of items purchased.
  - *Enforcement*: Enabling municipal bylaw officers to enforce the PHO's orders.
  - *Travel*: Ensuring all transportation services provide minimum service levels and priority access for residents, and essential goods and workers.
  - *Protecting B.C.'s most vulnerable*: Making it easier to support critical services for vulnerable people, like food banks and shelters.
  - *Co-ordination*: Suspending local states of emergency specific to the COVID-19 pandemic; giving municipal councils the flexibility to expedite decisions; and coordinating potential use of local publicly owned facilities for COVID-19 uses.

### Support Measures

- March 29: \$3M emergency grant for Food Banks B.C.
- March 25: Premier Horgan announced a temporary ban on tenant evictions, as well as rent freeze and financial support for tenants in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- March 23: Premier Horgan announced a \$5 billion relief plan to provide income supports, tax relief and direct funding for people, businesses and essential services.
- BC has also:
  - Expanded financial support for child-care providers to ensure parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to safe child care.
  - Expanded supports to protect vulnerable people and those experiencing homelessness, including identification of sites to support isolation for people experiencing homelessness and a ban on evictions for non-payment of rent in B.C. Housing-funded buildings.
  - Made amendments to the *Employment Standards Act* to protect workers and prevent layoffs.

### Border Measures

- March 28: Transport Canada introduced new measures requiring all air and intercity rail operators to screen passengers prior to boarding for signs of illness. Any traveler with COVID-19 symptoms will not be permitted to board. The measures came into effect on March 30.
- March 25: The Minister of Health announced an Emergency Order under the *Quarantine Act* (Mandatory Isolation) requiring mandatory self-isolation for 14 days for persons entering Canada.
- March 20: The Governor General issued an Order in Council (OIC) titled "Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order." Non-Canadian citizens and residents are

## BC Program Note

prohibited from entering Canada from the United States. The Canada-U.S. border was closed to all non-essential travel (e.g. tourism and recreation) on a temporary basis. Exemptions are in place regarding:

- Essential workers (e.g. airline and medical workers).
- Seasonal agricultural workers, fish/seafood workers, caregivers and other temporary foreign workers.
- International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18th, 2020.
- Permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16th but had not yet travelled to Canada.
- Exemptions already apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking. Minister Blair has indicated that borders on Indigenous reserves will also be unimpeded.
- Prime Minister Trudeau has indicated that asylum seekers entering at non-official border points will be turned back to the U.S.
- Increased screening measures are being implemented at airports, including more visible messaging, health screening at kiosks, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection of high-traffic areas and facilities at airports.
- As of March 18, 2020, international flights are being directed to four Canadian Airports, including Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of their citizenship, will not be permitted to board international flights to Canada. Those who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada will be barred from entering Canada, except for aircrews, diplomats, immediate family members of Canadian citizens, and U.S. citizens.
- The Federal Government has advised against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the United States.

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions

- In the State of Washington, 65,462 individuals have been tested. Washington has reported 4,896 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 189 deaths. Over two-thirds of confirmed cases are in King County (2,161) and Snohomish County (1,068).
  - On March 23, the Governor Inslee of WA issued a legally enforceable “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order for a minimum of two weeks.
  - Public health experts agree that the true number of people who have been infected with COVID-19 in Washington greatly exceeds the number of COVID-19 infections that have been laboratory-confirmed.<sup>1</sup>
  - The state has waived all costs associated with testing (i.e. lab fees).
  - On March 17, Governor Inslee signed a bill that reduces credentialing delays for health care workers, to facilitate their entry into the workforce to respond to the outbreak.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>

## BC Program Note

- As of March 29<sup>th</sup>, there were 140,904 cases across the U.S. Over half of cases were in New York (59,219 cases) and New Jersey (13,386). California (5,739) and Michigan (5,486) and Massachusetts (4,955) reported the next largest numbers of cases.
- Within Canada, all P/T jurisdictions have declared either a state of emergency and/or a public health emergency. Generally, the powers available to governments under a public health emergency are more limited than under a state of emergency.
- In addition to international travelers returning to provinces or territories, several PT jurisdictions are asking inter-provincial/territorial travelers to also isolate for 14 days. Some municipal governments are declaring states of emergency in order to stop the spread of COVID-19 in their communities.
- Ontario updates include:
  - March 28: 1) issued an emergency order banning gatherings of more than five people; 2) proclaimed legislation enabling central planning of public sector supplies; and 3) issued an emergency order for stiff penalties for price gouging.
  - March 25: announced \$7 billion in additional resources for the health care system and direct support for people and jobs. It also will make available \$10 billion in support for people and businesses through tax and other deferrals to improve their cash flow, protecting jobs and household budgets.
  - March 23: ordered closure of all non-essential workplaces for two weeks beginning March 25.
  - March 19: passed emergency legislation to support workers unable to work due to COVID-19.
  - March 17<sup>th</sup>: announced first stage of COVID-19 relief package with \$300M in funding.
- QC updates:
  - Mar 30: 1) Ordered closure of most businesses on Sundays throughout April, including grocery stores. Exceptions exist for gas stations, pharmacies, convenience stores and restaurants doing takeout. 2) \$133M of additional funding to private and public Long-term care homes. 3) Allowing legal documents (e.g. mortgages, wills) to be signed and approved virtually by lawyers and notaries.
  - Mar 28: 1) Prohibited non-essential travel to and from eight regions in the province, enforced with highway checkpoints; 2) Posted police along U.S. border to track returning travelers; 3) Closed all tourism-related lodgings, with exceptions for those designed to house returning U.S. travelers; and 4) provided health care workers on parental leave an additional six months to use benefits if they return to work.
  - Mar 24: Provincial government banned gatherings of two or more.
  - Mar 23: ordered closure of all non-essential businesses from March 25 until April 13.
- Federal update (Canada)
  - Mar 31: announced an investment of \$2 billion to support diagnostic testing and to purchase ventilators and PPE, including for bulk purchases with PTs; signed new procurement agreements with three Canadian companies to purchase and increase

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<sup>2</sup> [https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## BC Program Note

capacity to manufacture equipment and supplies including portable ventilators, surgical masks, and rapid testing kits.

- Mar 30: announced the military is “gearing up” to join the federal response to COVID-19; announced expanding wage subsidy for Canadian businesses, no matter their size.
- Mar 27: announced 75% wage subsidy, \$40,000 business loans, and deferral of sales tax and duties for small/medium sized businesses.
- The Government enacted new legislation, including amendments to the *Food and Drugs Act* and the *Patent Act*. These legislative amendments will give the Minister of Health new powers to help prevent or alleviate shortages of drugs and medical devices.
- Government and opposition parties in Parliament passed a \$107-billion economic aid package bill to help Canadians struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on Mar. 31, 2020

## Leonard, Christopher J HLTH:EX

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**From:** Vandermolen, Chad HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** March 25, 2020 11:37 AM  
**To:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX; Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX; BC IGR HLTH:EX; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX; Ruffell, Renata HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FOR TIME-SENSITIVE ACTION: any updates to yesterday's BCPN by 3: 30 p.m. today please  
**Attachments:** 2020 03 25\_BCPN\_COVID-19\_FPT DMs\_Coronavirus\_not PP approved.docx  
**Importance:** High

Good morning:

There is a premiers' call tomorrow at noon. IGR/HECC will update the latest case statistics following Dr. Henry's afternoon press conference, but if you would like any updates to the other PPH-led sections, please note them in the attached in either track changes or yellow-highlighting and return an Exec. Lead-approved version **by 3:30 p.m. today**. If you can amend the filename, also, that will assist with version control. Concurrently, IGR will be doing updates to the sections IGR has been leading of late.

Many thanks,  
Chad

## BC Program Note

<b>Agenda Item</b>	FPT Deputy Ministers' Teleconference: March 25, 2020 Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)
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- As of March 24, 2020 (3PM PST), there have been 617 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and thirteen deaths in B.C.
  - 194 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 41 cases in Interior Health;
  - 44 cases in Island Health;
  - 9 cases in Northern Health; and
  - 330 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- 59 of B.C.'s confirmed COVID-19 cases are in hospital; 34 cases are in ICU.
- 173 of the confirmed cases have recovered, based on the resolution of symptoms and two negative lab test results.
- As of March 22, 2020, a total of 26,681 tests have been completed in B.C. Testing capacity has increased to approximately 3,500 tests per day.
- On March 17, 2020, the Provincial Health Officer declared a public health emergency in B.C. to facilitate an even faster provincial response and enact further measures to protect British Columbians.
- On March 18, 2020, the Minister of Public Safety declared a provincial State of Emergency to facilitate a coordinated province-wide response to COVID-19 and enact broader measures to secure critical supplies and ensure access to essential goods and services.

**Commented [CV1]:** Per HECC/Keren Massey—Updated number from what PHO announced on Mar. 24

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C.

s.13; s.17

- B.C. urgently requires federal assistance to secure additional personal protective equipment and related supplies. On March 22, at the Deputy Minister level, BC advised Health Canada of an urgent need for N95 respirators, masks, and sanitizer (bottles). On March 23, 2020, B.C. received a shipment of 7,000 N95 respirators (2,000 S.17 model and 5,000 S.17 model) from the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS).
- BC is preparing an updated list of required supplies and PPE and will be submitting to Health Canada by Wednesday, March 25. The updated list will be informed by epidemiological modelling and anticipated utilization rates.
- BC also has an immediate need for 180 ventilators.
  - At the Deputy Minister level, BC has bilaterally requested federal assistance obtaining these as quickly as possible.
  - Also, the Council of the Federation (COF) Secretariat is preparing an aggregation of Provincial/Territorial ventilator need, which will include input from BC. The aggregation will be shared with all PTs.

## BC Program Note

### Health System Preparedness

- All hospitals are directed to Outbreak Response Phase 2. Hospitals must postpone all non-urgent scheduled surgeries and undertake only urgent and emergency procedures. Hospitals are also required to review operating-room capacity daily to prioritize urgent and emergency surgeries.
- As of March 24, 2020, 3,866 more acute care beds had been freed up by cancelling non-urgent elective surgeries and were available to prepare for serious illness caused by the coronavirus.
- Pharmacists are directed to provide patients with a prescription refill or an emergency supply of their medications, if needed.
- Provision of compensation for physicians to provide virtual-care services.
- Emergency registration of non-practicing or retired health-care professionals, including professionals from other jurisdictions and the armed forces.
- Nursing support is being augmented in response to the surge in calls to 8-1-1.

### Testing

- Prioritization of health care workers, people in hospitals, and those in long term care settings for COVID-19 testing. In particular, B.C.'s provincial COVID testing strategy has been modified to focus on clusters and outbreaks, patients in hospital and health-care workers.
- Implementation of a new self-assessment tool and an app to support people in determining whether they require further assessment or testing for COVID-19. Tool available at <https://bc.thrive.health/>
- Testing of all samples for influenza-like illness for COVID-19, influenza A and B, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV).
- Expanded COVID-19 testing capacity at St. Paul's Hospital, Victoria General Hospital, BC Children's and Women's Hospital, Royal Jubilee Hospital Microbiology Laboratory, and Kelowna Hospital, and through other Community Assessment Centers being established by Health Authorities.
- An Interim Order has been signed by Health Canada to ensure quicker approvals for the importation and sale of medical devices for COVID-19. As a result, two new diagnostic test kits are now available in Canada for COVID-19.
- Health Canada has introduced interim measures to ensure access to hand sanitizers, disinfectants, PPE (such as masks and gowns), and swabs. These measures include approval of products that may not meet current regulatory requirements and expedited approval of establishments and site licenses related to these products.

### Prevention and Containment Measures

- The following public health measures have been introduced in response to COVID-19 in B.C.:
  - Cancellation of all public gatherings larger than 50 people.
  - Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.

## BC Program Note

- Restriction of family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only. Essential visits include compassionate visits for end-of-life care and visits to support care needs, such as routine visits to assist with feeding and mobility.
- Closure of all personal service establishments such as barbershops, salons, nail estheticians, health spas, massage parlors, tattoo shops and others.
- All dine-in food services are directed to close or transition to take-out and delivery models only.
- Businesses that provide essential goods, services and transportation are being directed to maintain physical distancing of one to two meters for staff and customers.
- Closure of all casinos until further notice to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- Closure of businesses with liquor primary licenses, such as bars, pubs and night clubs.
- Suspension of regular operations of the Supreme Court of B.C. The court will hear only essential and urgent matters.
- Immediate suspension of in-class instruction at all schools (post-secondary and Kindergarten to Grade 12) until further notice.

### Support Measures

- Expanded financial support for child-care providers to ensure parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to safe child care.
- On March 23, 2020, Premier Horgan announced a \$5 billion relief plan to provide income supports, tax relief and direct funding for people, businesses and essential services.
- Expanded supports to protect vulnerable people and those experiencing homelessness, including identification of sites to support isolation for people experiencing homelessness and ban on evictions for non-payment of rent in B.C. Housing-funded buildings.
- Amendments to the *Employment Standards Act* to protect workers and prevent layoffs.

### Border Measures

- As of Friday, March 20, the Canada-U.S. border is closed to all non-essential travel (e.g. tourism and recreation) on a temporary basis. Exemptions are expected to be in place by early next week regarding:
  - Essential workers (e.g. airline and medical workers).
  - Seasonal agricultural workers, fish/seafood workers, caregivers and other temporary foreign workers
  - International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020

## BC Program Note

- Permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16<sup>th</sup> but had not yet travelled to Canada.
- Exemptions already apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking. Minister Blair has indicated that borders on Indigenous reserves will also be unimpeded.
- Prime Minister Trudeau has indicated that asylum seekers entering at non-official border points will be turned back to the U.S.
- With the exception of workers who are essential to the movement of goods and people, all travelers to Canada are being directed to self-isolate for 14 days. If symptoms arise, individuals are being directed to limit their contact with others and connect with their primary care provider, local public health unit or call 8-1-1.
- Increased screening measures are being implemented at airports, including more visible messaging, health screening at kiosks, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection of high-traffic areas and facilities at airports.
- As of March 18, 2020, international flights are being directed to four Canadian Airports, including Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of their citizenship, will not be permitted to board international flights to Canada. Those who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada will be barred from entering Canada, except for aircrews, diplomats, immediate family members of Canadian citizens, and U.S. citizens.
- The Federal Government has advised against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the United States.

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions

- As of March 23, there is a total of 2,494 confirmed cases and 115 deaths from COVID-19 in the American states which border BC (WA, OR, ID and AK).
- In the State of Washington, 33,933 individuals have been tested as of March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020. Washington has reported 2,221 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 110 deaths. Over three-quarters of confirmed cases are in King County (1,170) and Snohomish County (519).
  - Public health experts agree that the true number of people who have been infected with COVID-19 in Washington greatly exceeds the number of COVID-19 infections that have been laboratory-confirmed.<sup>1</sup>
  - The state has waived all costs associated with testing (i.e. lab fees).
  - On March 17, the Governor of Washington signed a bill that reduces credentialing delays for health care workers, to facilitate their entry into the workforce to respond to the outbreak.<sup>2</sup>
  - On March 23, the Governor of WA issued a legally enforceable "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order for a minimum of two weeks.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>

<sup>2</sup> [https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslcc-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslcc-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## BC Program Note

- On March 23, the Governor of Oregon issued a legally enforceable 'stay at home' order.
- Washington State (2,221 cases), New York (21,689), and California (1,931) account for nearly 60 percent of cases in the U.S.
- Within Canada, all P/T jurisdictions have declared either a state of emergency or a public health emergency. Generally, the powers available to governments under a public health emergency are more limited than under a state of emergency.
- In addition to international travelers returning to provinces or territories, several jurisdictions are asking inter-provincial/territorial travelers to also isolate for 14 days. Some municipal governments are declaring states of emergency in order to stop the spread of COVID-19 in their communities.
- Alberta updates include:
  - On March 15, government announced additional \$500M for testing, surveillance, and treatment of patients.
  - On March 17, \$60M announced for municipalities, charitable and non-profit organizations providing social services support for COVID-19.
  - On March 18, physician visits may be conducted through the app 'Babylon' by TELUS Health.
  - On March 19, \$50M announced for Emergency Isolation Support program in support of workers needing to self-isolate. Additionally, new pharmacy service billing code to allow COVID-19 assessments; lowered co-payment for certain groups; and pharmacists given discretion to provide a maximum 30-day supply of prescription drugs.
  - On March 20, government made amendments to the *Emergency Management Act*. Under the amended Act, a provincial state of emergency can now supplement and reinforce a local authority's state of emergency, allowing both levels of government to work more closely.
- Ontario updates include:
  - Closed all daycares, sports/entertainment facilities, private schools, and all bars and restaurants, (except for takeout / delivery) until March 31.
  - Working to enhance laboratory testing capacity to 5,000 daily.
  - Announced first stage of COVID-19 relief package with \$300M in funding.
  - Relief package funding will support 25 assessment centers, 750 acute care spaces and 75 critical care beds.
  - Relief package funding will support 1,000 backfill positions and 50 surge positions in rural/remote and indigenous communities.
  - Additional 500 ventilators ready for use.
  - On March 19, government passed emergency legislation to support workers unable to work due to COVID-19 and suspended noise by-laws to encourage the delivery of essential goods.
  - On March 23, ON ordered closure of all non-essential workplaces for two weeks beginning March 25.
- QC updates:
  - Provincial government decree banned gatherings of two or more and police have the authority to carry out warrants issued by public health authorities.

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### **BC Program Note**

- On March 23, ordered closure of all non-essential businesses from March 25 until April 13.
- Montreal opens walk-in clinic to test for anyone with symptoms of COVID-19. It is available to people both in cars and on foot, without an appointment.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on Mar. 24 or 25, 2020

## Leonard, Christopher J HLTH:EX

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**From:** Vandermolten, Chad HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** April 1, 2020 1:43 PM  
**To:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX; Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX; Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX; BC IGR HLTH:EX; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX; Ruffell, Renata HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FOR TIME-SENSITIVE ACTION: Updated BC Program Note for 10 a.m. Thurs, Apl. 2  
**Attachments:** 2020 03 31 BCPN\_COVID-19\_FPT Health Ministers\_Coronavirus-FINAL.docx  
**Importance:** High

Good afternoon,

An FPT Ministers' call has been scheduled for Thurs., April 2 from 4:30-5:30 p.m. our time. Leveraging the attached, **please provide an approved updated BC Program Note by 10 a.m. Thursday, April 2.** IGR will then add our updated content and submit to HECC for vetting and Peter's final review and approval.

Many thanks,  
Chad

## BC Program Note

<b>Agenda Item</b>	FPT Health Ministers' Teleconference: March 31, 2020 Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)
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- As of March 31, 2020 (11:30AM PST), there have been 1013 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 24 deaths in British Columbia (B.C.).
  - 348 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 107 cases in Interior Health;
  - 67 cases in Island Health;
  - 15 cases in Northern Health; and
  - 476 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- 128 of cases are hospitalized, 61 cases are in critical and intensive care, and 507 have recovered.
- There is some evidence that physical distancing, travel restrictions and other stringent measures have reduced B.C. COVID-19 cases growth trajectory from the expected 24% to 12%, based on B.C. Centre for Disease Control's (BCCDC) modelling.
- The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) declared a public health emergency on March 17. The next day, the Minister of Public Safety declared a provincial state of emergency to facilitate a coordinated province-wide response to COVID-19.

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C.

- B.C.'s PPE inventory is not at a level to sustain the pressure of growing case count and unreliable supply chains.
- B.C. needs to secure more PPE and is taking proactive measures to conserve PPE supplies.
- B.C. developed an "Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic Personal Protective Equipment Allocation Framework" as part of the provincial PPE conservation and supply strategy, with effective implementation on March 25, 2020.
- B.C. submitted a significant request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach. In addition, BC is pursuing leads for alternative supplies from any/all credible sources internationally and exploring creative/innovative production solutions locally.
- B.C. received a shipment of N95 respirators from the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS) last week and is expecting further N95 supplies to arrive this week.
- One million surgical masks arrived in B.C on March 30. Mask shipment, particularly N95, will continue until B.C. has a sustainable stockpile for the COVID-19 pandemic response.

## BC Program Note

### Health System Preparedness

- B.C. is focused on preparing its current capacity for: (i) critical care and ventilator capacity for critically ill patients, and (ii) current hospital bed capacity for less acute patients.
- All hospitals are directed to Outbreak Response Phase 2. Hospitals have postponed all non-urgent scheduled elective surgeries and asked to review operating room capacity to prioritize only urgent and emergency procedures.
- As of March 30, 2020, there are more than 4,238 vacant beds and more than 1,200 ventilators available across the health system.
- March 30: B.C. designated 19 hospitals as COVID-19 primary sites and announced the preparation of off-site treatment centres, including the Vancouver Convention Centre.
- As of March 31, 35 physicians and 444 nurses have re-registered following the B.C. government call out for emergency registration of non-practicing health-care professionals.
- 8-1-1 calls have increased from ~1,200 calls per day (pre-COVID) to over 6,500 per day. Nurses and patient navigation staff have been added to support this increase.

### Testing

- As of March 31, 2020, 43,229 tests have been completed in B.C.
- B.C.'s COVID-19 testing strategy remains focused on clusters and outbreaks, the elderly and high-risk patients and health-care workers, rather than the broader public.
- B.C. implemented an online self-assessment tool and an app (<https://bc.thrive.health/>) for British Columbian's to determine if they need further assessment or testing for COVID-19.
- B.C. has expanded COVID-19 testing capacity at five hospitals and at a number of health authority-led Community Assessment Centers.

### Prevention and Containment Measures

- March 30: B.C. issued new social distancing guidelines for grocery stores.
- March 30: B.C. suspended paid parking for patients and staff at all health authority-operated sites, effective April 1.
- B.C. previously introduced the following public health measures:
  - Directing all health sector employers to have employees work at only one site/facility.
  - Only allowing food vendors to sell in markets.
  - Discouraging in-person gatherings of any size.
  - Disallowing all public gatherings larger than 50 people.
  - Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.
  - Restricting family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only.
  - Suspending in-class instruction at all schools (post-secondary and Kindergarten to Grade 12).
  - Directing closure of casinos, businesses with liquor primary licenses, and personal service establishments (e.g. salons).
  - Directing dine-in food services to close or transition to take-out and delivery models only.
  - Directing businesses providing essential goods, services and transportation to maintain physical distancing of one to two meters for staff and customers.

## BC Program Note

- Suspending regular operations of the Supreme Court of B.C. The court will hear only essential and urgent matters.
- On March 26th, the Minister of Public Safety & Solicitor General announced use of extraordinary powers under a state of provincial emergency. Ministerial orders include:
  - *Supply chain*: Establishing a new Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit to co-ordinate goods and services distribution.
  - *Protecting consumers*: Banning the secondary resale of medical supplies, PPE, cleaning and other essential supplies; and restricting quantities of items purchased.
  - *Enforcement*: Enabling municipal bylaw officers to enforce the PHO's orders.
  - *Travel*: Ensuring all transportation services provide minimum service levels and priority access for residents, and essential goods and workers.
  - *Protecting B.C.'s most vulnerable*: Making it easier to support critical services for vulnerable people, like food banks and shelters.
  - *Co-ordination*: Suspending local states of emergency specific to the COVID-19 pandemic; giving municipal councils the flexibility to expedite decisions; and coordinating potential use of local publicly owned facilities for COVID-19 uses.

### Support Measures

- March 29: \$3M emergency grant for Food Banks B.C.
- March 25: Premier Horgan announced a temporary ban on tenant evictions, as well as rent freeze and financial support for tenants in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- March 23: Premier Horgan announced a \$5 billion relief plan to provide income supports, tax relief and direct funding for people, businesses and essential services.
- BC has also:
  - Expanded financial support for child-care providers to ensure parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to safe child care.
  - Expanded supports to protect vulnerable people and those experiencing homelessness, including identification of sites to support isolation for people experiencing homelessness and a ban on evictions for non-payment of rent in B.C. Housing-funded buildings.
  - Made amendments to the *Employment Standards Act* to protect workers and prevent layoffs.

### Border Measures

- March 28: Transport Canada introduced new measures requiring all air and intercity rail operators to screen passengers prior to boarding for signs of illness. Any traveler with COVID-19 symptoms will not be permitted to board. The measures came into effect on March 30.
- March 25: The Minister of Health announced an Emergency Order under the *Quarantine Act* (Mandatory Isolation) requiring mandatory self-isolation for 14 days for persons entering Canada.
- March 20: The Governor General issued an Order in Council (OIC) titled "Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order." Non-Canadian citizens and residents are

## BC Program Note

prohibited from entering Canada from the United States. The Canada-U.S. border was closed to all non-essential travel (e.g. tourism and recreation) on a temporary basis. Exemptions are in place regarding:

- Essential workers (e.g. airline and medical workers).
- Seasonal agricultural workers, fish/seafood workers, caregivers and other temporary foreign workers.
- International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18th, 2020.
- Permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16th but had not yet travelled to Canada.
- Exemptions already apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking. Minister Blair has indicated that borders on Indigenous reserves will also be unimpeded.
- Prime Minister Trudeau has indicated that asylum seekers entering at non-official border points will be turned back to the U.S.
- Increased screening measures are being implemented at airports, including more visible messaging, health screening at kiosks, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection of high-traffic areas and facilities at airports.
- As of March 18, 2020, international flights are being directed to four Canadian Airports, including Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of their citizenship, will not be permitted to board international flights to Canada. Those who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada will be barred from entering Canada, except for aircrews, diplomats, immediate family members of Canadian citizens, and U.S. citizens.
- The Federal Government has advised against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the United States.

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions

- In the State of Washington, 65,462 individuals have been tested. Washington has reported 4,896 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 189 deaths. Over two-thirds of confirmed cases are in King County (2,161) and Snohomish County (1,068).
  - On March 23, the Governor Inslee of WA issued a legally enforceable “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order for a minimum of two weeks.
  - Public health experts agree that the true number of people who have been infected with COVID-19 in Washington greatly exceeds the number of COVID-19 infections that have been laboratory-confirmed.<sup>1</sup>
  - The state has waived all costs associated with testing (i.e. lab fees).
  - On March 17, Governor Inslee signed a bill that reduces credentialing delays for health care workers, to facilitate their entry into the workforce to respond to the outbreak.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>

## BC Program Note

- As of March 29<sup>th</sup>, there were 140,904 cases across the U.S. Over half of cases were in New York (59,219 cases) and New Jersey (13,386). California (5,739) and Michigan (5,486) and Massachusetts (4,955) reported the next largest numbers of cases.
- Within Canada, all P/T jurisdictions have declared either a state of emergency and/or a public health emergency. Generally, the powers available to governments under a public health emergency are more limited than under a state of emergency.
- In addition to international travelers returning to provinces or territories, several PT jurisdictions are asking inter-provincial/territorial travelers to also isolate for 14 days. Some municipal governments are declaring states of emergency in order to stop the spread of COVID-19 in their communities.
- Ontario updates include:
  - March 28: 1) issued an emergency order banning gatherings of more than five people; 2) proclaimed legislation enabling central planning of public sector supplies; and 3) issued an emergency order for stiff penalties for price gouging.
  - March 25: announced \$7 billion in additional resources for the health care system and direct support for people and jobs. It also will make available \$10 billion in support for people and businesses through tax and other deferrals to improve their cash flow, protecting jobs and household budgets.
  - March 23: ordered closure of all non-essential workplaces for two weeks beginning March 25.
  - March 19: passed emergency legislation to support workers unable to work due to COVID-19.
  - March 17<sup>th</sup>: announced first stage of COVID-19 relief package with \$300M in funding.
- QC updates:
  - Mar 30: 1) Ordered closure of most businesses on Sundays throughout April, including grocery stores. Exceptions exist for gas stations, pharmacies, convenience stores and restaurants doing takeout. 2) \$133M of additional funding to private and public Long-term care homes. 3) Allowing legal documents (e.g. mortgages, wills) to be signed and approved virtually by lawyers and notaries.
  - Mar 28: 1) Prohibited non-essential travel to and from eight regions in the province, enforced with highway checkpoints; 2) Posted police along U.S. border to track returning travelers; 3) Closed all tourism-related lodgings, with exceptions for those designed to house returning U.S. travelers; and 4) provided health care workers on parental leave an additional six months to use benefits if they return to work.
  - Mar 24: Provincial government banned gatherings of two or more.
  - Mar 23: ordered closure of all non-essential businesses from March 25 until April 13.
- Federal update (Canada)
  - Mar 31: announced an investment of \$2 billion to support diagnostic testing and to purchase ventilators and PPE, including for bulk purchases with PTs; signed new procurement agreements with three Canadian companies to purchase and increase

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<sup>2</sup> [https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## BC Program Note

capacity to manufacture equipment and supplies including portable ventilators, surgical masks, and rapid testing kits.

- Mar 30: announced the military is “gearing up” to join the federal response to COVID-19; announced expanding wage subsidy for Canadian businesses, no matter their size.
- Mar 27: announced 75% wage subsidy, \$40,000 business loans, and deferral of sales tax and duties for small/medium sized businesses.
- The Government enacted new legislation, including amendments to the *Food and Drugs Act* and the *Patent Act*. These legislative amendments will give the Minister of Health new powers to help prevent or alleviate shortages of drugs and medical devices.
- Government and opposition parties in Parliament passed a \$107-billion economic aid package bill to help Canadians struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on Mar. 31, 2020

## Leonard, Christopher J HLTH:EX

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**From:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** March 31, 2020 8:09 AM  
**To:** Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX; Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX; BC IGR HLTH:EX; Vandermolén, Chad HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** RE: For Time-Sensitive Action: Request for updated BC Program note re Coronavirus  
**Attachments:** 2020 04 01 BCPN\_COVID-19\_FPT Deputy Health Ministers\_Coronavirus.docx

Attached is the approved note.

Lorie Hrycuik  
Executive Lead, Population & Public Health Division  
Ministry of Health  
Phone: (778) 974-3766 | Lorie.Hrycuik@gov.bc.ca

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**From:** Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX <Naomi.Cheah@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** March 30, 2020 7:22 PM  
**To:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX <Lorie.Hrycuik@gov.bc.ca>; Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX <Brian.Sagar@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX <Sukhmani.Billing@gov.bc.ca>; BC IGR HLTH:EX <BCIGR@gov.bc.ca>; Vandermolén, Chad HLTH:EX <Chad.Vandermolén@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: For Time-Sensitive Action: Request for updated BC Program note re Coronavirus  
**Importance:** High

Hi Brian and Lorie,

Please see attached the updated program note for your approval. The updated portion is in red font.

Brian asked to roll up the information one level up and to shorten it, which I did. I managed to cut PPH response section from 3 pages to 2 1/3 pages.

Have a good rest of your evening.

Thank you,  
Naomi

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**From:** Vandermolén, Chad HLTH:EX <Chad.Vandermolén@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** March 30, 2020 4:02 PM  
**To:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX <Lorie.Hrycuik@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX <Brian.Sagar@gov.bc.ca>; Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX <Naomi.Cheah@gov.bc.ca>; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX <Sukhmani.Billing@gov.bc.ca>; Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX <Kevin.Samra@gov.bc.ca>; BC IGR HLTH:EX <BCIGR@gov.bc.ca>; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX <Sylvia.Blake@gov.bc.ca>; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX <Richard.Almond@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: For Time-Sensitive Action: Request for updated BC Program note re Coronavirus

Thanks so much, Lorie/PPH!

--Chad

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**From:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** March 30, 2020 4:01 PM  
**To:** Vandermolén, Chad HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX; Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX; Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX; BC IGR HLTH:EX; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** Re: For Time-Sensitive Action: Request for updated BC Program note re Coronavirus

Chad. Will have a revised note to you by 10 am tomorrow morning.

Lorie Hrycuik | Executive Lead | Population and Public Health Division | 778 974-3766 | Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 30, 2020, at 3:41 PM, Vandermolén, Chad HLTH:EX <[Chad.Vandermolén@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Chad.Vandermolén@gov.bc.ca)> wrote:

Good afternoon,

There is a potential Health Ministers' call on Coronavirus for 4-5:00 p.m. our time tomorrow/Tues., Mar. 31. (After today's FPT DM call, 4-5 p.m., the next confirmed FPT DM call is Wed, April 1, from 4-5:00 p.m.) The HMM is likely to proceed as proposed, and Minister Dix is expected to participate, though he may be somewhat delayed due to the media availability prior to the proposed HMM call. **IGR is requesting PPH provide an Exec.-lead approved updated BCPN as soon as possible on Tues., Mar. 31** (most recent version is attached to be leveraged); we will update further and send to HECC for vetting and Peter's approval prior to the HMM.

Thanks,

Chad

<2020 03 30 DRAFT BCPN\_COVID-19\_FPT Deputy Health Ministers\_Coronavirus-547 pm  
Mar 29\_comments removed ver.docx>

## BC Program Note

### Agenda Item

FPT Deputy Health Ministers' Teleconference: April 1, 2020  
Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

- As of March 30, 2020 (1PM PST), there have been 970 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 19 deaths in British Columbia (B.C.).
  - 323 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 94 cases in Interior Health;
  - 67 cases in Island Health;
  - 14 cases in Northern Health; and
  - 472 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- 106 of cases are hospitalized, 60 cases are in critical and intensive care, and 469 (48%) have recovered.
- There is some evidence that physical distancing, travel restrictions and other stringent measures have reduced B.C. COVID-19 cases growth trajectory from the expected 24% to 12%, based on B.C. Centre for Disease Control's (BCCDC) modelling.
- The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) declared a public health emergency on March 17. The next day, the Minister of Public Safety declared a provincial state of emergency to facilitate a coordinated province-wide response to COVID-19.

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C.

s.13; s.17

- B.C.'s PPE inventory is not at a level to sustain the pressure of growing case count and unreliable supply chains.
- B.C. needs to secure more PPE and is taking proactive measures to conserve PPE supplies.
- B.C. developed an "Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic Personal Protective Equipment Allocation Framework" as part of the provincial PPE conservation and supply strategy, with effective implementation on March 25, 2020.
- B.C. submitted a significant request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach. In addition, BC is pursuing leads for alternative supplies from any/all credible sources internationally and exploring creative/innovative production solutions locally.
- B.C. received shipment of N95 respirators from the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS) last week and is expecting further N95 supplies to arrive this week.
- One million surgical masks arrived in B.C. on March 30. Mask shipment, particularly N95, will continue until B.C. has a sustainable stockpile for the COVID-19 pandemic response.
- BC identified the need for 180 ventilators in its request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach. 120 ventilators were ordered on March 5, 2020. As of March 24, 101 additional ventilators have arrived/will arrive shortly, have been identified for loan, or are being refurbished.

## BC Program Note

### Health System Preparedness

- B.C. is focused on preparing its current capacity for: (i) critical care and ventilator capacity for critically ill patients, and (ii) current hospital bed capacity for less acute patients.
- All hospitals are directed to Outbreak Response Phase 2. Hospitals have postponed all non-urgent scheduled elective surgeries and asked to review operating room capacity to prioritize only urgent and emergency procedures.
- As of March 30, 2020, 4,238 vacant beds and more than 1,200 ventilators are available across the health system.
- As of March 28, 28 physicians and 309 nurses have re-registered following the B.C. government call out for emergency registration of non-practicing health-care professionals.
- 8-1-1 calls have increased from ~1,200 calls per day (pre-COVID) to over 6,500 per day. Nurses and patient navigation staff have been added to support this increase.

### Testing

- As of March 30, 2020, 42,028 tests have been completed in B.C.
- B.C.'s COVID-19 testing strategy remains focused on clusters and outbreaks, the elderly and high-risk patients and health-care workers, rather than the broader public.
- B.C. implemented an online self-assessment tool and an app (<https://bc.thrive.health/>) for British Columbian's to determine if they need further assessment or testing for COVID-19.
- B.C. has expanded COVID-19 testing capacity at five hospitals and other health authority led Community Assessment Centers.

### Prevention and Containment Measures

- March 30: B.C. suspended paid parking for patient and staff at all health authority operated sites, effective April 1 to prevent COVID-19 transmission.
- On March 26th, the Minister of Public Safety & Solicitor General announced use of extraordinary powers under a state of provincial emergency. Ministerial orders include:
  - *Supply chain*: Establishing a new Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit to co-ordinate goods and services distribution.
  - *Protecting consumers*: Banning the secondary resale of medical supplies, PPE, cleaning and other essential supplies; and restricting quantities of items purchased.
  - *Enforcement*: Enabling municipal bylaw officers to enforce the PHO's orders.
  - *Travel*: Ensuring all transportation services provide minimum service levels and priority access for residents, and essential goods and workers.
  - *Protecting B.C.'s most vulnerable*: Making it easier to support critical services for vulnerable people, like food banks and shelters.
  - *Co-ordination*: Suspending local states of emergency specific to the COVID-19 pandemic; giving municipal councils the flexibility to expedite decisions; and coordinating potential use of local publicly owned facilities for COVID-19 uses.
- B.C. previously introduced the following public health measures:
  - Directing all health sector employers to have employees work at only one site/facility.
  - Only allowing food vendors to sell in markets.
  - Discouraging in-person gathering of any size.

## BC Program Note

- Disallowing all public gatherings larger than 50 people.
- Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.
- Restricting family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only.
- Suspending in-class instruction at all schools (post-secondary and Kindergarten to Grade 12).
- Directing closure of casinos, businesses with liquor primary licenses, and personal service establishments (e.g. salons).
- Directing dine-in food services to close or transition to take-out and delivery models only.
- Directing businesses providing essential goods, services and transportation to maintain physical distancing of one to two meters for staff and customers.
- Suspending regular operations of the Supreme Court of B.C. The court will hear only essential and urgent matters.

### Support Measures

- March 25: Premier Horgan announced a temporary ban on tenant evictions, as well as rent freeze and financial support for tenants in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- March 23: Premier Horgan announced a \$5 billion relief plan to provide income supports, tax relief and direct funding for people, businesses and essential services.
- BC has also:
  - Expanded financial support for child-care providers to ensure parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to safe child care.
  - Expanded supports to protect vulnerable people and those experiencing homelessness, including identification of sites to support isolation for people experiencing homelessness and a ban on evictions for non-payment of rent in B.C. Housing-funded buildings.
  - Made amendments to the *Employment Standards Act* to protect workers and prevent layoffs.

### Border Measures

- March 28: Transport Canada introduced new measures requiring all air and intercity rail operators to screen passengers prior to boarding for signs of illness. Any traveler with COVID-19 symptoms will not be permitted to board. The new measures will come into effect on March 30, 2020.
- March 25: The Minister of Health announced an Emergency Order under the *Quarantine Act* (Mandatory Isolation) requiring mandatory self-isolation for 14 days for persons entering Canada.
- March 20: The Governor General issued an Order in Council (OIC) titled "Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order." Non-Canadian citizens and residents are prohibited from entering Canada from the United States. The Canada-U.S. border was closed to all non-essential travel (e.g. tourism and recreation) on a temporary basis. Exemptions are in place regarding:
  - Essential workers (e.g. airline and medical workers).

## BC Program Note

- Seasonal agricultural workers, fish/seafood workers, caregivers and other temporary foreign workers.
- International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18th, 2020.
- Permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16th but had not yet travelled to Canada.
- Exemptions already apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking. Minister Blair has indicated that borders on Indigenous reserves will also be unimpeded.
- Prime Minister Trudeau has indicated that asylum seekers entering at non-official border points will be turned back to the U.S.
- Increased screening measures are being implemented at airports, including more visible messaging, health screening at kiosks, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection of high-traffic areas and facilities at airports.
- As of March 18, 2020, international flights are being directed to four Canadian Airports, including Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of their citizenship, will not be permitted to board international flights to Canada. Those who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada will be barred from entering Canada, except for aircrews, diplomats, immediate family members of Canadian citizens, and U.S. citizens.
- The Federal Government has advised against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the United States.

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions (as of Mar. 29)

- In the State of Washington, 59,206 individuals have been tested as of March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Washington has reported 4,310 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 189 deaths. Nearly 70% of confirmed cases are in King County (2,077) and Snohomish County (912).
  - On March 23, the Governor Inslee of WA issued a legally enforceable “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order for a minimum of two weeks.
  - Public health experts agree that the true number of people who have been infected with COVID-19 in Washington greatly exceeds the number of COVID-19 infections that have been laboratory-confirmed.<sup>1</sup>
  - The state has waived all costs associated with testing (i.e. lab fees).
  - On March 17, Governor Inslee signed a bill that reduces credentialing delays for health care workers, to facilitate their entry into the workforce to respond to the outbreak.<sup>2</sup>
- As of March 26<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. states with the most cases were New York (38,977 cases), New Jersey (6,876), California (3,777) and Washington (3,207).

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>

<sup>2</sup> [https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## BC Program Note

- Within Canada, all P/T jurisdictions have declared either a state of emergency and/or a public health emergency. Generally, the powers available to governments under a public health emergency are more limited than under a state of emergency.
- In addition to international travelers returning to provinces or territories, several PT jurisdictions are asking inter-provincial/territorial travelers to also isolate for 14 days. Some municipal governments are declaring states of emergency in order to stop the spread of COVID-19 in their communities.
- Ontario updates include:
  - March 28: 1) issued an emergency order banning gatherings of more than five people; 2) proclaimed legislation enabling central planning of public sector supplies; and 3) issued emergency order for stiff penalties for price gouging.
  - March 25: announced \$7 billion in additional resources for the health care system and direct support for people and jobs. It also will make available \$10 billion in support for people and businesses through tax and other deferrals to improve their cash flow, protecting jobs and household budgets.
  - March 23: ordered closure of all non-essential workplaces for two weeks beginning March 25.
  - March 19: passed emergency legislation to support workers unable to work due to COVID-19.
  - March 17<sup>th</sup>: announced first stage of COVID-19 relief package with \$300M in funding.
- QC updates:
  - Mar 28: 1) Prohibited non-essential travel to and from eight regions in the province, enforced with highway checkpoints; 2) Posted police along U.S. border to track returning travelers; 3) Closed all tourism-related lodgings, with exceptions for those designed to house returning U.S. travelers; and 4) provided health care workers on parental leave an additional six months to use benefits if they return to work.
  - March 24: Provincial government banned gatherings of two or more.
  - March 23: ordered closure of all non-essential businesses from March 25 until April 13.
- Federal update (Canada)
  - Mar 27: announced 75% wage subsidy, \$40,000 business loans, and deferral of sales tax and duties for small/medium sized businesses.
  - The Government enacted new legislation, including amendments to the *Food and Drugs Act* and the *Patent Act*. These legislative amendments will give the Minister of Health new powers to help prevent or alleviate shortages of drugs and medical devices.
  - Government and opposition parties in Parliament passed a \$107-billion economic aid package bill to help Canadians struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on Mar. 29 or 30, 2020

## Leonard, Christopher J HLTH:EX

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**From:** Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** March 30, 2020 7:22 PM  
**To:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX; Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX; BC IGR HLTH:EX; Vandermolén, Chad HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** RE: For Time-Sensitive Action: Request for updated BC Program note re Coronavirus  
**Attachments:** 2020 04 01 BCPN\_COVID-19\_FPT Deputy Health Ministers\_Coronavirus.docx

**Importance:** High

Hi Brian and Lorie,

Please see attached the updated program note for your approval. The updated portion is in red font.

Brian asked to roll up the information one level up and to shorten it, which I did. I managed to cut PPH response section from 3 pages to 2 1/3 pages.

Have a good rest of your evening.

Thank you,  
Naomi

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**From:** Vandermolén, Chad HLTH:EX <Chad.Vandermolén@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** March 30, 2020 4:02 PM  
**To:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX <Lorie.Hrycuik@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX <Brian.Sagar@gov.bc.ca>; Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX <Naomi.Cheah@gov.bc.ca>; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX <Sukhmani.Billing@gov.bc.ca>; Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX <Kevin.Samra@gov.bc.ca>; BC IGR HLTH:EX <BCIGR@gov.bc.ca>; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX <Sylvia.Blake@gov.bc.ca>; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX <Richard.Almond@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: For Time-Sensitive Action: Request for updated BC Program note re Coronavirus

Thanks so much, Lorie/PPH!

--Chad

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**From:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** March 30, 2020 4:01 PM  
**To:** Vandermolén, Chad HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX; Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX; Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX; BC IGR HLTH:EX; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** Re: For Time-Sensitive Action: Request for updated BC Program note re Coronavirus

Chad. Will have a revised note to you by 10 am tomorrow morning.

Lorie Hrycuik | Executive Lead | Population and Public Health Division | 778 974-3766 | Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 30, 2020, at 3:41 PM, Vandermolén, Chad HLTH:EX <[Chad.Vandermolén@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Chad.Vandermolén@gov.bc.ca)> wrote:

Good afternoon,

There is a potential Health Ministers' call on Coronavirus for 4-5:00 p.m. our time tomorrow/Tues., Mar. 31. (After today's FPT DM call, 4-5 p.m., the next confirmed FPT DM call is Wed, April 1, from 4-5:00 p.m.) The HMM is likely to proceed as proposed, and Minister Dix is expected to participate, though he may be somewhat delayed due to the media availability prior to the proposed HMM call. **IGR is requesting PPH provide an Exec.-lead approved updated BCPN as soon as possible on Tues., Mar. 31** (most recent version is attached to be leveraged); we will update further and send to HECC for vetting and Peter's approval prior to the HMM.

Thanks,  
Chad

<2020 03 30 DRAFT BCPN\_COVID-19\_FPT Deputy Health Ministers\_Coronavirus-547 pm  
Mar 29\_comments removed ver.docx>

## BC Program Note

### Agenda Item

FPT Deputy Health Ministers' Teleconference: April 1, 2020

Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

- As of March 30, 2020 (1PM PST), there have been 970 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 19 deaths in British Columbia (B.C.).
  - 323 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 94 cases in Interior Health;
  - 67 cases in Island Health;
  - 14 cases in Northern Health; and
  - 472 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- 106 of cases are hospitalized, 60 cases are in critical and intensive care, and 469 (48%) have recovered.
- There is some evidence that physical distancing, travel restrictions and other stringent measures have reduced B.C. COVID-19 cases growth trajectory from the expected 24% to 12%, based on B.C. Centre for Disease Control's (BCCDC) modelling.
- The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) declared a public health emergency on March 17. The next day, the Minister of Public Safety declared a provincial state of emergency to facilitate a coordinated province-wide response to COVID-19.

**Commented [CNH1]:** <http://www.bccdc.ca/about/news-stories/stories/2020/information-on-novel-coronavirus>

**Commented [CNH2]:** verbal update from Minister Dix and Bonnie today.  
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0115-000594>

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C.

s.13; s.17

- B.C.'s PPE inventory is not at a level to sustain the pressure of growing case count and unreliable supply chains.
- B.C. needs to secure more PPE and is taking proactive measures to conserve PPE supplies.
- B.C. developed an "Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic Personal Protective Equipment Allocation Framework" as part of the provincial PPE conservation and supply strategy, with effective implementation on March 25, 2020.
- B.C. submitted a significant request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach. In addition, BC is pursuing leads for alternative supplies from any/all credible sources internationally and exploring creative/innovative production solutions locally.
- B.C. received shipment of N95 respirators from the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS) last week and is expecting further N95 supplies to arrive this week.
- One million surgical masks arrived in B.C. on March 30. Mask shipment, particularly N95, will continue until B.C. has a sustainable stockpile for the COVID-19 pandemic response.
- BC identified the need for 180 ventilators in its request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach. 120 ventilators were ordered on March 5, 2020. As of March 24, 101 additional ventilators have arrived/will arrive shortly, have been identified for loan, or are being refurbished.

**Commented [CNH3]:** Kevin and Brian discussed and agreed on dialing the program note one level up.

## BC Program Note

### Health System Preparedness

- B.C. is focused on preparing its current capacity for: (i) critical care and ventilator capacity for critically ill patients, and (ii) current hospital bed capacity for less acute patients.
- All hospitals are directed to Outbreak Response Phase 2. Hospitals have postponed all non-urgent scheduled elective surgeries and asked to review operating room capacity to prioritize only urgent and emergency procedures.
- As of March 30, 2020, 4,238 vacant beds and more than 1,200 ventilators are available across the health system.
- As of March 28, 28 physicians and 309 nurses have re-registered following the B.C. government call out for emergency registration of non-practicing health-care professionals.
- 8-1-1 calls have increased from ~1,200 calls per day (pre-COVID) to over 6,500 per day. Nurses and patient navigation staff have been added to support this increase.

### Testing

- As of March 30, 2020, 42,028 tests have been completed in B.C.
- B.C.'s COVID-19 testing strategy remains focused on clusters and outbreaks, the elderly and high-risk patients and health-care workers, rather than the broader public.
- B.C. implemented an online self-assessment tool and an app (<https://bc.thrive.health/>) for British Columbians to determine if they need further assessment or testing for COVID-19.
- B.C. has expanded COVID-19 testing capacity at five hospitals and other health authority led Community Assessment Centers.

### Prevention and Containment Measures

- March 30: B.C. suspended paid parking for patient and staff at all health authority operated sites, effective April 1 to prevent COVID-19 transmission.
- On March 26th, the Minister of Public Safety & Solicitor General announced use of extraordinary powers under a state of provincial emergency. Ministerial orders include:
  - *Supply chain*: Establishing a new Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit to co-ordinate goods and services distribution.
  - *Protecting consumers*: Banning the secondary resale of medical supplies, PPE, cleaning and other essential supplies; and restricting quantities of items purchased.
  - *Enforcement*: Enabling municipal bylaw officers to enforce the PHO's orders.
  - *Travel*: Ensuring all transportation services provide minimum service levels and priority access for residents, and essential goods and workers.
  - *Protecting B.C.'s most vulnerable*: Making it easier to support critical services for vulnerable people, like food banks and shelters.
  - *Co-ordination*: Suspending local states of emergency specific to the COVID-19 pandemic; giving municipal councils the flexibility to expedite decisions; and coordinating potential use of local publicly owned facilities for COVID-19 uses.
- B.C. previously introduced the following public health measures:
  - Directing all health sector employers to have employees work at only one site/facility.
  - Only allowing food vendors to sell in markets.
  - Discouraging in-person gathering of any size.

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## BC Program Note

- Disallowing all public gatherings larger than 50 people.
- Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.
- Restricting family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only.
- Suspending in-class instruction at all schools (post-secondary and Kindergarten to Grade 12).
- Directing closure of casinos, businesses with liquor primary licenses, and personal service establishments (e.g. salons).
- Directing dine-in food services to close or transition to take-out and delivery models only.
- Directing businesses providing essential goods, services and transportation to maintain physical distancing of one to two meters for staff and customers.
- Suspending regular operations of the Supreme Court of B.C. The court will hear only essential and urgent matters.

### Support Measures

- March 25: Premier Horgan announced a temporary ban on tenant evictions, as well as rent freeze and financial support for tenants in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- March 23: Premier Horgan announced a \$5 billion relief plan to provide income supports, tax relief and direct funding for people, businesses and essential services.
- BC has also:
  - Expanded financial support for child-care providers to ensure parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to safe child care.
  - Expanded supports to protect vulnerable people and those experiencing homelessness, including identification of sites to support isolation for people experiencing homelessness and a ban on evictions for non-payment of rent in B.C. Housing-funded buildings.
  - Made amendments to the *Employment Standards Act* to protect workers and prevent layoffs.

### Border Measures

- March 28: Transport Canada introduced new measures requiring all air and intercity rail operators to screen passengers prior to boarding for signs of illness. Any traveler with COVID-19 symptoms will not be permitted to board. The new measures will come into effect on March 30, 2020.
- March 25: The Minister of Health announced an Emergency Order under the *Quarantine Act* (Mandatory Isolation) requiring mandatory self-isolation for 14 days for persons entering Canada.
- March 20: The Governor General issued an Order in Council (OIC) titled "Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order." Non-Canadian citizens and residents are prohibited from entering Canada from the United States. The Canada-U.S. border was closed to all non-essential travel (e.g. tourism and recreation) on a temporary basis. Exemptions are in place regarding:
  - Essential workers (e.g. airline and medical workers).

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## BC Program Note

- Seasonal agricultural workers, fish/seafood workers, caregivers and other temporary foreign workers.
- International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18th, 2020.
- Permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16th but had not yet travelled to Canada.
- Exemptions already apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking. Minister Blair has indicated that borders on Indigenous reserves will also be unimpeded.
- Prime Minister Trudeau has indicated that asylum seekers entering at non-official border points will be turned back to the U.S.
- Increased screening measures are being implemented at airports, including more visible messaging, health screening at kiosks, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection of high-traffic areas and facilities at airports.
- As of March 18, 2020, international flights are being directed to four Canadian Airports, including Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of their citizenship, will not be permitted to board international flights to Canada. Those who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada will be barred from entering Canada, except for aircrews, diplomats, immediate family members of Canadian citizens, and U.S. citizens.
- The Federal Government has advised against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the United States.

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions (as of Mar. 29)

- In the State of Washington, 59,206 individuals have been tested as of March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Washington has reported 4,310 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 189 deaths. Nearly 70% of confirmed cases are in King County (2,077) and Snohomish County (912).
  - On March 23, the Governor Inslee of WA issued a legally enforceable "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order for a minimum of two weeks.
  - Public health experts agree that the true number of people who have been infected with COVID-19 in Washington greatly exceeds the number of COVID-19 infections that have been laboratory-confirmed.<sup>1</sup>
  - The state has waived all costs associated with testing (i.e. lab fees).
  - On March 17, Governor Inslee signed a bill that reduces credentialing delays for health care workers, to facilitate their entry into the workforce to respond to the outbreak.<sup>2</sup>
- As of March 26<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. states with the most cases were New York (38,977 cases), New Jersey (6,876), California (3,777) and Washington (3,207).

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>

<sup>2</sup> [https://mcdium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://mcdium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## BC Program Note

- Within Canada, all P/T jurisdictions have declared either a state of emergency and/or a public health emergency. Generally, the powers available to governments under a public health emergency are more limited than under a state of emergency.
- In addition to international travelers returning to provinces or territories, several PT jurisdictions are asking inter-provincial/territorial travelers to also isolate for 14 days. Some municipal governments are declaring states of emergency in order to stop the spread of COVID-19 in their communities.
- Ontario updates include:
  - March 28: 1) issued an emergency order banning gatherings of more than five people; 2) proclaimed legislation enabling central planning of public sector supplies; and 3) issued emergency order for stiff penalties for price gouging.
  - March 25: announced \$7 billion in additional resources for the health care system and direct support for people and jobs. It also will make available \$10 billion in support for people and businesses through tax and other deferrals to improve their cash flow, protecting jobs and household budgets.
  - March 23: ordered closure of all non-essential workplaces for two weeks beginning March 25.
  - March 19: passed emergency legislation to support workers unable to work due to COVID-19.
  - March 17<sup>th</sup>: announced first stage of COVID-19 relief package with \$300M in funding.
- QC updates:
  - Mar 28: 1) Prohibited non-essential travel to and from eight regions in the province, enforced with highway checkpoints; 2) Posted police along U.S. border to track returning travelers; 3) Closed all tourism-related lodgings, with exceptions for those designed to house returning U.S. travelers; and 4) provided health care workers on parental leave an additional six months to use benefits if they return to work.
  - March 24: Provincial government banned gatherings of two or more.
  - March 23: ordered closure of all non-essential businesses from March 25 until April 13.
- Federal update (Canada)
  - Mar 27: announced 75% wage subsidy, \$40,000 business loans, and deferral of sales tax and duties for small/medium sized businesses.
  - The Government enacted new legislation, including amendments to the *Food and Drugs Act* and the *Patent Act*. These legislative amendments will give the Minister of Health new powers to help prevent or alleviate shortages of drugs and medical devices.
  - Government and opposition parties in Parliament passed a \$107-billion economic aid package bill to help Canadians struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on Mar. 29 or 30, 2020

## Leonard, Christopher J HLTH:EX

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**From:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** April 20, 2020 5:20 PM  
**To:** Vandermolén, Chad HLTH:EX; Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX; Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** BC IGR HLTH:EX; Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX; Ruffell, Renata HLTH:EX; Amyot, Sarah HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** RE: FOR TIME-SENSITIVE ACTION: Update to BC Program Note on Coronavirus  
**Attachments:** 2020 04 21 Draft BCPN\_COVID-19\_FPT Health Ministers\_Coronavirus update.docx

Attached note approved. Getting long again.

Lorie Hrycuik  
Executive Lead, Population & Public Health Division  
Ministry of Health  
Phone: (778) 974-3766 | Lorie.Hrycuik@gov.bc.ca

---

**From:** Vandermolén, Chad HLTH:EX <Chad.Vandermolén@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** April 20, 2020 8:54 AM  
**To:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX <Lorie.Hrycuik@gov.bc.ca>; Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX <Brian.Sagar@gov.bc.ca>; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX <Sukhmani.Billing@gov.bc.ca>; Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX <Naomi.Cheah@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** BC IGR HLTH:EX <BCIGR@gov.bc.ca>; Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX <Kevin.Samra@gov.bc.ca>; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX <Sylvia.Blake@gov.bc.ca>; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX <Richard.Almond@gov.bc.ca>; Ruffell, Renata HLTH:EX <Renata.Ruffell@gov.bc.ca>; Amyot, Sarah HLTH:EX <Sarah.Amyot@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FOR TIME-SENSITIVE ACTION: Update to BC Program Note on Coronavirus

Good morning,

The next FPT Health Ministers' teleconference is tomorrow afternoon. If you have any updates/edits to the attached BCPN (particularly to the Long-Term Care, PPE, Health System Preparedness, or BC's Prevention and Control Measures sections), please provide the approved changes by 3:30 p.m. today. Please note: there no need to update the case count, testing, and vacant hospital bed data, as I will get the April 20 numbers early this afternoon and will update the numbers again to reflect those updated stats.

Many thanks,  
Chad

## BC Program Note

### Agenda Item

FPT Health Ministers' Teleconference: April 21, 2020  
Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

- As of April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 (12:00PM PST), there have been 1,699 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 86 deaths in British Columbia (B.C.).
  - 705 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 153 cases in Interior Health;
  - 102 cases in Island Health;
  - 39 cases in Northern Health;
  - 700 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- 104 individuals are hospitalized, 49 are in critical and intensive care, and 1039 (61%) have recovered.
- B.C.'s stringent public health measures have slowed down the transmission of COVID-19.
- Further modelling will be used to guide B.C.'s policies, plan and develop B.C.'s strategies to reopen society, business and health care system.
- B.C.'s provincial state of emergency has been extended until April 28. It was first declared on March 18<sup>th</sup>.

### Long-Term Care—Highlights in Support of Health Ministers' Roundtable

- Seniors residing in Long Term Care (LTC) facilities are at a higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19. LTC facilities require enhanced protection measures to limit the spread of the virus. The Ministry of Health and Provincial Health Officer (PHO) have taken the following actions to protect LTC residents and staff:
  - Mar 13: Interim COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) LTC Guidance was issued.
  - Mar 17: The PHO issued a letter to LTC operators to restrict visitors to LTC facilities to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Visitors are restricted to:
    - visits for compassionate care (end of life and critical illness)
    - visits considered paramount to resident care and wellbeing, such as assistance with feeding or mobility
  - Mar 18: Issued temporary policy direction to restrict Admissions, Transfers & Programming to limit movement across facilities and limit potential exposure from community
    - Limited community admissions to high risk needs only
    - Prioritize admissions to LTC from Acute care to build acute care capacity
    - Temporarily suspend Adult Day Programs and in Facility Respite Programs to limit exposure and build acute care capacity

## BC Program Note

- Mar 27: Temporarily extended the length of time a resident can be absent from LTC, recognizing that some families would prefer and are able to care for their loved ones at home during this time.
- Mar 26 to Apr 10: Orders under the PHO and *Emergency Protection Act* (EPA) to restrict the movement of staff between LTC and Assisted Living facilities, ensuring staff work in only one facility in order to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 between facilities. Work is underway now to operationalize and implement the Orders at the regional health authority level.
- Given the COVID-19 situation is rapidly evolving the Ministry is continually reviewing all temporary policy changes to respond to the situation and our approach will continue to evolve as we move forward through this pandemic.
- In addition to the temporary policy amendments, BC has also put in place a number of measures related to infection, prevention and control in LTC:
  - There is passive and active screening of staff and essential visitors upon entry to LTC.
  - Residents are going through enhanced screening for respiratory symptoms and fever; at minimum once daily.
  - The BC Centre for Disease Control released guidance to the LTC sector related to the appropriate use of PPE and the Ministry has communicated a process and contact information for access to PPE supplies for all LTC facilities in BC.
  - The BC Care Providers Association was provided \$10 million from the Ministry of Health to develop and manage the province-wide program focussed equipment and technology to improve safety and quality for residents in LTC. The initial focus of the funding will be to support LTC and AL operators with infection prevention and control in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C.

- s.13; s.17 s.16  
s.16 There is a global shortage of all types of disposable isolation gowns due to increased global demand.
- B.C. is continuing to work with the Government of Canada (GoC) to secure international supply, with private industry to re-direct production to PPE manufacturing, securing private donations of PPE, and, exploring innovative options to safely extend the use of the N95 masks already in the health system. Mask procurement and replenishment, particularly N95s, will continue until B.C. has a sustainable supply for the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Apr 13: 109,800 N95 respirators, 51K face shields and 1.2 million gloves arrived in B.C., with more expected to arrive this week. Testing on PPEs is being done to ensure they are safe and effective.
- Apr 12: Alberta announced shipment of 250K N95 masks to B.C.
- Apr 7: 1) Public Services and Procurement Minister Anita Anand announced that Canada received eight million surgical masks from China; 2) s.16  
s.16 , and Prime Minister Trudeau

## BC Program Note

announced that 500K N95 mask were to arrive from 3M on April 8; 3) the government is working with companies in Canada to produce 30,000 ventilators.

- Apr 3: The GoC signed an agreement with <sup>s.17</sup> to manage the distribution of medical supplies across Canada.
- Apr 2: FPT Health Ministers approved the “Draft Allocation of Scarce Resources COVID-19 Interim Response Strategy” to support rapid distribution of PPE products.
  - 80% of federally-acquired PPE is to be allocated to PTs on a per capita basis, with 20% retained in the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS) to be subsequently allocated to address critical shortages identified by PTs.
- Apr 1: B.C. launched the COVID-19 Supply Hub to expedite sourcing of medical and essential supplies. B.C. developed an “Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic Personal Protective Equipment Allocation Framework” as part of the provincial PPE conservation and supply strategy, with effective implementation on March 25, 2020.

### Health System Preparedness

- Apr 20: B.C. announced the Indigenous Rural Remote Support Strategy Framework. The framework will ensure people living in rural, remote and Indigenous communities in B.C. have access to critical health care they can count on to meet their unique needs during the COVID-19 pandemic and into the future.
- Critical care capacity has been sufficient to care for both COVID-19 and non-COVID patients to date.
- Apr 14: The Ministry is developing and finalizing a ventilator allocation framework.
- As of April 20<sup>th</sup>, there are 4,309 vacant beds available across the health system, including 514 critical care beds. On April 7<sup>th</sup>, there were more than 1,200 ventilators available.
- Apr 6: 55 ventilators from the NESS arrived in B.C.
- Mar 30: B.C. designated 19 hospitals as COVID-19 primary sites and announced the preparation of off-site treatment centres, including the Vancouver Convention Centre.
- As of April 20<sup>th</sup>, 71 physicians and approximately 1045 nurses have re-registered following the B.C. government call out for emergency registration of non-practicing health-care professionals.

### Testing

- On April 9<sup>th</sup>, B.C. broadened its COVID-19 testing criteria. Anyone with symptoms with COVID-19 or in contact with a COVID-19 positive case can be tested now through community healthcare providers. This will allow health officials to quickly identify new community cases and to isolate them.
- As of April 20<sup>th</sup>, 59,185 tests have been completed in B.C.
- B.C. is using an online self-assessment tool and app (<https://bc.thrive.health/>) to help residents determine if they need further assessment or testing. As of April 15<sup>th</sup>, the service had 175,858 users.

### B.C.’s Prevention and Containment Measures

- Apr 10:

## BC Program Note

- The PHO issued a new Travellers and Employers Order to support provincial measures on self-isolation for returning travellers. (See "Border Measures" section, pages 4-5, for further details.)
- The PHO issued a new single site order, "Facility Staff Assignment Order," that replaces the previous order that restricted employees to work at a single facility in long term care facilities and private hospitals. The new Order expanded the list of facilities to include assisted living facilities and provincial mental health facilities.
- Using orders under the EPA, the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General developed a new labour agreement, "Health Care Labour Adjustment" with health care employers and unions. The Agreement supports the implementation of employees working at a single facility, while ensuring stable work schedules and equitable wages for all employees without causing financial hardships and service disruption.
- Apr 8: Closure of all provincial parks.
- Apr 7: Announcement of partnership with local governments, non-profits, and the hotel industry to provide over 900 spaces for vulnerable individuals and health care workers who need a safe place to self-isolate.
- Apr 6: The PHO stated that non-medical face covering is an option to keep droplets in, when one is not able to maintain physical distance. However, face covering has not been formally recommended.
- Apr 4: Lockdown of a federal correction facility in Mission after cases were confirmed.
- Mar 26: The Minister of Public Safety & Solicitor General announced use of extraordinary powers under a state of provincial emergency. Ministerial orders include: i) coordinating goods and services distribution provincially; ii) banning secondary resale of PPE, medical and essential supplies and limiting the purchase of them; iii) enabling municipal bylaw officers to enforce the PHO's orders; iv) providing minimum transportation service levels and priority access for residents, and essential goods and workers; v) improving access to critical services for vulnerable people; and vi) coordinating with municipalities for a rapid response to COVID-19.
- Other selected public health measures implemented by B.C. include:
  - Issuing new PHO guidelines for municipal bylaw officers and compliance officers to enforce compliance with the PHO's orders.
  - Providing \$5 million to expand mental health services and provide new services.
  - Discouraging gatherings of any size and disallowing gatherings larger than 50 people.
  - Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.
  - Restricting family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only.
  - Suspending in-class instruction at all schools and post-secondary institutions.
  - Directing closure of casinos, businesses with liquor primary licenses, and personal service establishments (e.g. salons).
  - Directing food services to close or transition to take-out model only.
  - Directing businesses providing essential goods, services and transportation to maintain physical distancing of two meters for staff and customers.
  - Directing long-term care facilities and private hospitals to have employees work at only one site/facility.

## BC Program Note

- Providing \$10M to enhance infection prevention and control and improve quality and safety in long-term care and assisted living homes.

### Border Measures

#### *Recent measures*

- Apr 15: GoC temporarily reduces service hours at land border crossings
- Apr 14: GoC updated mandatory requirements for travelers entering Canada. New measures to take effect on April 15<sup>th</sup>:
  - Travelers are expected to make plans for isolation or quarantine in advance of arrival and will be required to confirm they have access to basic necessities.
  - Travelers without an appropriate place to isolate or quarantine will be required to go to a place designated by the Chief Public Health Officer, even if they are asymptomatic.
  - All travelers arriving in Canada will be required to wear a non-medical mask or face covering while proceeding to their place of isolation or quarantine.
- Apr 10: International travelers (including U.S.) coming to B.C. are legally required to provide a self-isolation plan before or upon arrival to B.C., regardless of their point of entry to Canada.
  - Provincial officers are available at Vancouver International Airport and major land border crossing to provide assistance and ensure self-isolation plans are complete.
  - If a traveler does not have a self-isolation plan or is unable to safely carry one out as determined by officials, they may be sent to an accommodation provided by government where they can safely complete their 14-day self-isolation.
  - Emergency Management BC will assist travelers with necessary food deliveries, prescription drugs and other supplies.
- Apr 5<sup>th</sup>: Transport Canada introduced the following measures:
  - Canadian cruise ships prohibited from mooring, navigating, or transiting in Canadian Arctic Waters.
  - Foreign passenger vessels seeking to enter Arctic Waters required to give the Minister of Transport 60 days of notice and are subject to any terms the Minister determines necessary.
  - All commercial marine vessels with capacity of more than 12 passengers are: 1) prohibited from engaging in non-essential activities; 2) required to reduce maximum passenger volumes by 50% or implement alternative practices to reduce risk of infection spread; and 3) required to conduct health screening of all passengers.

#### *Other select key measures*

- Mar 28: Transport Canada required all air and intercity rail operators to perform passenger health screening prior to boarding.
- Mar 25: Federal Minister of Health announced an Emergency Order under the *Quarantine Act* requiring 14 days mandatory self-isolation for persons entering Canada.
- Mar 20: The Governor General issued an Order in Council (*Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada*) prohibiting non-Canadian citizens and residents from entering Canada

## BC Program Note

from the U.S. The Canada-U.S. border was closed to all non-essential travel,<sup>1</sup> with exemptions for essential workers, temporary foreign workers, and those approved for student permits or permanent residency before travel restrictions were announced.

- As of March 18, 2020, international flights are being directed to four Canadian Airports, including YVR. Those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of their citizenship, are not permitted to board international flights to Canada. Those who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada are prohibited from entering Canada, with exceptions for aircrews, diplomats, and immediate family members of Canadian citizens.

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions

#### **United States:**

- Washington State (as of April 13<sup>th</sup>):
  - 10,694 confirmed cases; 541 deaths.
  - Legally enforceable “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order in place since Mar 23.
- Other U.S. States (as of April 14<sup>th</sup>):
  - 605,390 confirmed cases and 24,582 deaths across the U.S.
  - 45% of U.S. cases are in New York (201,834) and New Jersey (68,824)
  - Apr 8: New York State Governor Cuomo stated at a press conference that the state’s COVID-19 curve is flattening.
- Massachusetts (28,163) and Michigan (27,001) reported the next highest numbers of cases.

#### **Canada:**

- Ontario (as of April 14<sup>th</sup>):
  - 8,447 confirmed cases and 385 deaths
  - 795 in hospital, including 254 in intensive care and 188 on ventilators.
  - Apr 15: Issued emergency order preventing long-term care staff from working at multiple homes. ON has stated plans to work with the federal government to address wages for workers prevented from working at more than one home.
  - Apr 13: Extended state of emergency by another 28 days.
  - Apr 8: Premier Ford publicly expressed frustration with low testing rates in the province, stating that he wanted every long-term care resident, front-line health-care worker and first responder tested.
  - *Key measures:*
    - Closure of non-essential workplaces
    - Prohibition on gatherings of more than five people
    - Additional punishments for failure to comply with emergency orders, including imprisonment
    - Legislation enabling central planning of public sector supplies
- Quebec (as of April 15<sup>th</sup>):
  - 14,680 confirmed cases; 984 hospitalizations; 487 deaths.

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<sup>1</sup> Exemptions apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking.

## BC Program Note

- Apr 14-15: 1) Premier Legault estimated that the province requires 2,000 trained health-care workers for high-needs long-term care homes; 2) announced plans to allow single pre-existing primary caregivers to be allowed to visit and care for patients in seniors' residences.
- Apr 13: 1) Province re-designating mining, residential construction, auto mechanics and landscaping operations as essential services (most effective April 15; residential construction effective April 20); 2) Premier Legault announced plans to inspect all 2,600 seniors' residences to ensure they are operating safely.
- Apr 8: Premier Legault announced that all employees and residents of long-term care homes would be systematically tested for COVID-19.
- Apr 7: Projections released by the Quebec government predict the province's hospitalizations will peak around April 18<sup>th</sup>.
- *Key measures:*
  - Prohibited gatherings of two or more
  - Closed all non-essential businesses; closed most other businesses on Sundays
  - Prohibited non-essential travel to and from 12 regions in the province, including the Ottawa-Gatineau border
  - Posted police along the U.S. border to track returning travelers
- Alberta (as of April 14<sup>th</sup>):
  - 1,870 confirmed cases; 48 deaths
  - 115 people hospitalized *over the course of* the pandemic, including 35 in ICU
  - Apr 13: announced that every Albertan with symptoms would be eligible for testing
  - Apr 8: Released modelling projecting a "probable" peak around mid-May
- Government of Canada:
  - Apr 15: GoC announces: 1) a wage boost for essential workers, which will be cost-shared with PTs; and 2) expanded eligibility of the Canada Emergency Response Benefit to include those who have exhausted regular EI benefits; 3) launch of an online mental wellness portal and app.
  - Apr 9: GoC released data and modelling projecting 22,580 to 31,850 cases and 500-700 deaths nationwide by April 16<sup>th</sup>. Assuming strong epidemic controls, the model predicts the pandemic to peak in mid-late spring, with additional responses to outbreaks required in the following months.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020

## Leonard, Christopher J HLTH:EX

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**From:** Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** April 6, 2020 7:47 PM  
**To:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX; Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX; BC IGR HLTH:EX; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX; Vandermolen, Chad HLTH:EX; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Request for Updated BCPN  
**Attachments:** 2020 04 07 DRAFT BCPN\_COVID-19\_FPT Health Ministers\_Coronavirus.docx  
**Importance:** High

Hi Lorie and Brian,

Please find attached the draft for your review. New additions are in red. It's due tomorrow 9am.

Have a good evening.

Thanks,  
Naomi

---

**From:** Vandermolen, Chad HLTH:EX <Chad.Vandermolen@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** April 6, 2020 8:28 AM  
**To:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX <Lorie.Hrycuik@gov.bc.ca>; Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX <Brian.Sagar@gov.bc.ca>; Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX <Naomi.Cheah@gov.bc.ca>; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX <Sukhmani.Billing@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX <Kevin.Samra@gov.bc.ca>; BC IGR HLTH:EX <BCIGR@gov.bc.ca>; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX <Sylvia.Blake@gov.bc.ca>; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX <Richard.Almond@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** Request for Updated BCPN

Good morning,

Health Canada has indicated potential Health Ministers' teleconferences for Tues. and Thursday of this week, for 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. our time. Please provide an approved updated BC Program Note (leveraging the attached) by 9:00 a.m. Tues., April 7. Following that, we will layer on our IGR updates and route through HECC for vetting and Peter's review and approval.

Sincere thanks,  
Chad

## BC Program Note

### Agenda Item

FPT Health Ministers' Teleconference: April 7, 2020  
Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

- As of April 6, 2020 (11:30AM PST), there have been 1,266 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 39 deaths in British Columbia (B.C.).
  - 450 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 128 cases in Interior Health;
  - 79 cases in Island Health;
  - 23 cases in Northern Health;
  - 586 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- 140 individuals are hospitalized, 72 are in critical and intensive care, and 783 (62%) have recovered.
- On April 4, a federal correction facility in Mission was placed under a lockdown, after s.22 cases of COVID-19 were confirmed.
- On April 1, B.C.'s provincial state of emergency was extended until April 14.
- The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) declared a public health emergency on March 17. The next day, the Minister of Public Safety declared a provincial state of emergency.

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C.

- s.16
- B.C. is continuing to pursue a multi-faceted PPE strategy that includes work with the Government of Canada (GoC) to secure international supply, work with private industry to re-direct production to PPE manufacturing, securing private donations of PPE, and exploring innovative options to safely extend the use of the N95s already in the health system.
- Apr 3: The GoC signed an agreement with s.17 to manage the distribution of medical supplies across Canada.
- Apr 1: B.C. launched the COVID-19 Supply Hub to expedite sourcing of medical and essential supplies.
- Mar 30: the GoC shared a "Draft Allocation of Scarce Resources COVID-19 Interim Response Strategy," to support rapid distribution of products; PTs were provided a revised draft on April 1. Allocation amongst PTs is based on an "80/20" formula—80% of federally acquired PPE is to be allocated to PTs on a per capita basis, with 20% to be retained in the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS) to be subsequently allocated to address critical shortages identified by PTs.
- s.16
- B.C.'s PPE inventory is not at a level to sustain the pressure of growing case count and unreliable supply chains. B.C. needs to secure more PPE and is taking proactive measures to conserve PPE supplies.

## BC Program Note

- B.C. developed an “Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic Personal Protective Equipment Allocation Framework” as part of the provincial PPE conservation and supply strategy, with effective implementation on March 25, 2020.
- B.C. submitted a significant request to Health Canada under their “Collaborative Bulk Buy” approach. In addition, BC is pursuing leads for alternative supplies from any/all credible sources internationally and exploring creative/innovative production solutions locally.
- B.C. received a shipment of N95 respirators from the NESS last week and is expecting further N95 supplies to arrive this week.
- One million surgical masks arrived in B.C on March 30. Mask shipment, particularly N95s, will continue until B.C. has a sustainable stockpile for the COVID-19 pandemic response.

### Health System Preparedness

- B.C. is focused on preparing its current capacity for: (i) critical care and ventilator capacity for critically ill patients, and (ii) current hospital bed capacity for less acute patients.
- All hospitals are directed to Outbreak Response Phase 2. Hospitals have postponed all non-urgent scheduled elective surgeries and asked to review operating room capacity to prioritize only urgent and emergency procedures.
- On April 6, 55 ventilators from the NESS arrived in B.C. As of April 1, there are more than 4,422 vacant beds and more than 1,200 ventilators available across the health system.
- On March 30, B.C. designated 19 hospitals as COVID-19 primary sites and announced the preparation of off-site treatment centres, including the Vancouver Convention Centre.
- As of March 31, 35 physicians and 444 nurses have re-registered following the B.C. government call out for emergency registration of non-practicing health-care professionals.
- 8-1-1 calls have increased from ~1,200 calls per day (pre-COVID) to over 6,500 per day. Nurses and patient navigation staff have been added to support this increase.

### Testing

- As of April 1, 2020, 50,350 tests have been completed in B.C.
- B.C.’s COVID-19 testing strategy remains focused on clusters and outbreaks, the elderly and high-risk patients and health-care workers, rather than the broader public.
- B.C. implemented an online self-assessment tool and an app (<https://bc.thrive.health/>) for British Columbian’s to determine if they need further assessment or testing for COVID-19.
- B.C. has expanded COVID-19 testing capacity at five hospitals and at a number of health authority-led Community Assessment Centers.

### Prevention and Containment Measures

- Apr 6: The PHO stated that non-medical face covering is an option to keep droplets in, when one might not be able to maintain physical distance. However, face covering is not a requirement and nor a recommendation.
- Apr 6: B.C. Ferries starts screening passengers for COVID-19 symptoms or recent international travel as part of new measures required by Transport Canada.
- B.C. has introduced the following public health measures:

## BC Program Note

- Issuing new social distancing guidelines for grocery stores.
- Suspending paid parking for patients and staff at all health authority-operated sites.
- Directing all health sector employers to have employees work at only one site/facility.
- Only allowing food vendors to sell in markets.
- Discouraging in-person gatherings of any size.
- Disallowing all public gatherings larger than 50 people.
- Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.
- Restricting family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only.
- Suspending in-class instruction at all schools (post-secondary and Kindergarten to Grade 12).
- Directing closure of casinos, businesses with liquor primary licenses, and personal service establishments (e.g. salons).
- Directing dine-in food services to close or transition to take-out and delivery models only.
- Directing businesses providing essential goods, services and transportation to maintain physical distancing of one to two meters for staff and customers.
- Suspending regular operations of the Supreme Court of B.C. The court will hear only essential and urgent matters.
- On March 26th, the Minister of Public Safety & Solicitor General announced use of extraordinary powers under a state of provincial emergency. Ministerial orders include:
  - *Supply chain*: Establishing a new Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit to co-ordinate goods and services distribution.
  - *Protecting consumers*: Banning the secondary resale of medical supplies, PPE, cleaning and other essential supplies; and restricting quantities of items purchased.
  - *Enforcement*: Enabling municipal bylaw officers to enforce the PHO's orders.
  - *Travel*: Ensuring all transportation services provide minimum service levels and priority access for residents, and essential goods and workers.
  - *Protecting B.C.'s most vulnerable*: Making it easier to support critical services for vulnerable people, like food banks and shelters.
  - *Co-ordination*: Suspending local states of emergency specific to the COVID-19 pandemic; giving municipal councils the flexibility to expedite decisions; and coordinating potential use of local publicly owned facilities for COVID-19 uses.

### B.C.'s Support Measures

- April 2: Additional financial supports announced for individuals receiving income assistance or disability assistance.
- April 1: Hydro bill relief measures; \$5M cash flow access for amateur sport sector organizations.
- Mar 29: \$3M emergency grant for Food Banks B.C.
- Mar 25: Temporary ban on tenant evictions, rent freeze and financial support for tenants.
- Mar 23: \$5B relief plan for income supports, tax relief and direct funding for people, businesses and essential services.
- BC has also:

## BC Program Note

- Expanded financial support for child-care providers to ensure parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to safe child care.
- Expanded supports to protect vulnerable people and those experiencing homelessness, including identifying sites to support isolation for people experiencing homelessness and a ban on evictions for non-payment of rent in B.C. Housing-funded buildings.
- Amended the *Employment Standards Act* to protect workers and prevent layoffs.

### Border Measures

- Mar 28: Transport Canada introduced new measures requiring all air and intercity rail operators to screen passengers prior to boarding for signs of illness. Travelers with COVID-19 symptoms not be permitted to board. The measures came into effect on March 30.
- Mar 25: Federal Minister of Health announced an Emergency Order under the *Quarantine Act* (Mandatory Isolation) requiring mandatory self-isolation for 14 days for persons entering Canada.
- Mar 20: The Governor General issued an Order in Council (OIC) titled "Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order." Non-Canadian citizens and residents are prohibited from entering Canada from the United States. The Canada-U.S. border was closed to all non-essential travel (e.g. tourism and recreation) on a temporary basis. Exemptions are in place regarding:
  - Essential workers (e.g. airline and medical workers).
  - Seasonal agricultural workers, fish/seafood workers, caregivers and other temporary foreign workers.
  - International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18th, 2020.
  - Permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16th but had not yet travelled to Canada.
- Exemptions already apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking. Minister Blair has indicated that borders on Indigenous reserves will also be unimpeded.
- Prime Minister Trudeau has indicated that asylum seekers entering at non-official border points will be turned back to the U.S.
- Increased screening measures are being implemented at airports, including more visible messaging, health screening at kiosks, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection of high-traffic areas and facilities at airports.
- As of March 18, 2020, international flights are being directed to four Canadian Airports, including Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of their citizenship, will not be permitted to board international flights to Canada. Those who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada will be barred from entering Canada, except for aircrews, diplomats, immediate family members of Canadian citizens, and U.S. citizens.
- The Federal Government has advised against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the United States.

## BC Program Note

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions

- In the State of Washington, 74,798 individuals have been tested as of March 31<sup>st</sup>. Washington has reported 5,984 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 247 deaths. Nearly 62 percent of confirmed cases are in King County (2,468) and Snohomish County (1,221).
  - On March 23, Governor Inslee of WA issued a legally enforceable “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order for a minimum of two weeks, which prohibited all gatherings and closed all non-essential businesses.
  - The state has waived all costs associated with testing (i.e. lab fees).
  - On March 17, Governor Inslee signed a bill that reduces credentialing delays for health care workers, to facilitate their entry into the workforce to respond to the outbreak.<sup>1</sup>
- As of April 1st, there were 186,101 cases and 3,603 deaths across the U.S. Around half of the cases were in New York (74,427 cases) and New Jersey (18,696). California (8,131), Michigan (7,615) and Massachusetts (6,620) reported the next largest numbers of cases.
- Within Canada, all P/T jurisdictions have declared either a state of emergency and/or a public health emergency.
- In addition to international travelers returning to provinces or territories, several PT jurisdictions are asking inter-provincial/territorial travelers to also isolate for 14 days.
- In AB and NL, medical students are being asked to assist with contact tracing.
- Ontario updates include:
  - Apr 1: 1) Local health units urged to use powers to enforce self-isolation; 2) anyone charged under emergency powers required to ID themselves or be fined \$750 or \$1000. In addition, failure to comply with an emergency order could carry punishments of up to one-year imprisonment or a fine of up to \$100,000 for an individual, \$500,000 for a director of a corporation, or \$10,000,000 for a corporation; 3) \$50M announced for innovations and supply manufacturing
  - March 28: 1) issued an emergency order banning gatherings of more than five people; 2) proclaimed legislation enabling central planning of public sector supplies; and 3) issued an emergency order for stiff penalties for price gouging.
  - March 25: 1) announced \$7 billion in additional resources for the health care system and direct support for people and jobs. 2) Will make available \$10 billion in support for people and businesses through tax and other deferrals to improve their cash flow, protecting jobs and household budgets.
  - Mar 17-23: 1) Announced first stage of COVID-19 relief package (\$300M); 2) passed emergency legislation to support those unable to work due to COVID-19; 3) ordered closure of all non-essential workplaces.
- QC updates:
  - Apr 1: Announced: 1) access restrictions in four more regions, including the Ottawa-Gatineau border; 2) \$40M for movement of transport of essential goods and personnel to remote regions; 3) \$10M for local volunteer organizations.

<sup>1</sup> [https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## BC Program Note

- Mar 31: Premier invited Quebecers to participate in COVID-19 clinical study.
- Mar 30: 1) Ordered closure of most businesses on Sundays throughout April, including grocery stores. Exceptions exist for gas stations, pharmacies, convenience stores and restaurants doing takeout. 2) \$133M of additional funding to private and public Long-term care homes. 3) Allowing legal documents (e.g. mortgages, wills) to be signed and approved virtually by lawyers and notaries.
- Mar 28: 1) Prohibited non-essential travel to and from eight regions in the province, enforced with highway checkpoints; 2) Posted police along U.S. border to track returning travelers; 3) Closed all tourism-related lodgings, with exceptions for those designed to house returning U.S. travelers; and 4) provided health care workers on parental leave an additional six months to use benefits if they return to work.
- Mar 23/24: 1) Ordered closure of all non-essential businesses until April 13; 2) banned gatherings of two or more.
- Federal update (Canada)
  - Apr 1: 1) Scheduled a recall of parliament to pass \$71B in additional financial assistance. Provided details on 75% wage subsidy and emergency response benefit. 2) Dr. Harpreet S. Kochhar made Associate Deputy Minister of Health to support efforts to combat COVID-19.
  - Mar 31: announced an investment of \$2 billion to support diagnostic testing and to purchase ventilators and PPE, including for bulk purchases with PTs; signed new procurement agreements with three Canadian companies to purchase and increase capacity to manufacture equipment and supplies including portable ventilators, surgical masks, and rapid testing kits.
  - Mar 30: announced the military is “gearing up” to join the federal response to COVID-19; announced expanding wage subsidy for Canadian businesses, no matter their size.
  - Mar 27: announced 75% wage subsidy, \$40,000 business loans, and deferral of sales tax and duties for small/medium sized businesses.
  - Enacted legislative amendments to give the Minister of Health new powers to help prevent or alleviate shortages of drugs and medical devices.
  - Passed \$107-billion economic aid package bill.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020

## Leonard, Christopher J HLTH:EX

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**From:** Vandermolen, Chad HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** April 6, 2020 8:28 AM  
**To:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX; Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX; Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX; BC IGR HLTH:EX; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** Request for Updated BCPN  
**Attachments:** 2020 04 02 DRAFT BCPN\_COVID-19\_FPT Health Ministers\_Coronavirus-FINAL.docx

Good morning,

Health Canada has indicated potential Health Ministers' teleconferences for Tues. and Thursday of this week, for 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. our time. Please provide an approved updated BC Program Note (leveraging the attached) by 9:00 a.m. Tues., April 7. Following that, we will layer on our IGR updates and route through HECC for vetting and Peter's review and approval.

Sincere thanks,  
Chad

## BC Program Note

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>FPT Health Ministers' Teleconference: April 2, 2020</b> <b>Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)</b>
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- As of April 1, 2020 (11:30AM PST), there have been 1,121 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 31 deaths in British Columbia (B.C.).
  - 386 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 121 cases in Interior Health;
  - 72 cases in Island Health;
  - 17 cases in Northern Health; and
  - 525 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- 149 individuals are hospitalized, 68 are in critical and intensive care, and 641 (57%) have recovered.
- On April 1, B.C.'s provincial state of emergency was extended until April 14.
- The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) declared a public health emergency on March 17. The next day, the Minister of Public Safety declared a provincial state of emergency to facilitate a coordinated province-wide response to COVID-19.

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C.

- On March 30, the Government of Canada shared a "Draft Allocation of Scarce Resources COVID-19 Interim Response Strategy," to support rapid distribution of products; PTs were provided a revised draft on April 1. Allocation amongst PTs is based on an "80/20" formula—80% of federally acquired PPE is to be allocated to PTs on a per capita basis, with 20% to be retained in the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS) to be subsequently allocated to address critical shortages identified by PTs.

s.16

- On April 1, B.C. launched the COVID-19 Supply Hub to expedite sourcing of medical and essential supplies.
- B.C.'s PPE inventory is not at a level to sustain the pressure of growing case count and unreliable supply chains.
- B.C. needs to secure more PPE and is taking proactive measures to conserve PPE supplies.
- B.C. developed an "Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic Personal Protective Equipment Allocation Framework" as part of the provincial PPE conservation and supply strategy, with effective implementation on March 25, 2020.
- B.C. submitted a significant request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach. In addition, BC is pursuing leads for alternative supplies from any/all credible sources internationally and exploring creative/innovative production solutions locally.
- B.C. received a shipment of N95 respirators from the NESS last week and is expecting further N95 supplies to arrive this week.

## BC Program Note

- One million surgical masks arrived in B.C. on March 30. Mask shipment, particularly N95s, will continue until B.C. has a sustainable stockpile for the COVID-19 pandemic response.

### Health System Preparedness

- B.C. is focused on preparing its current capacity for: (i) critical care and ventilator capacity for critically ill patients, and (ii) current hospital bed capacity for less acute patients.
- All hospitals are directed to Outbreak Response Phase 2. Hospitals have postponed all non-urgent scheduled elective surgeries and asked to review operating room capacity to prioritize only urgent and emergency procedures.
- As of April 1, there are more than 4,192 vacant beds and more than 1,200 ventilators available across the health system.
- On March 30, B.C. designated 19 hospitals as COVID-19 primary sites and announced the preparation of off-site treatment centres, including the Vancouver Convention Centre.
- As of March 31, 35 physicians and 444 nurses have re-registered following the B.C. government call out for emergency registration of non-practicing health-care professionals.
- 8-1-1 calls have increased from ~1,200 calls per day (pre-COVID) to over 6,500 per day. Nurses and patient navigation staff have been added to support this increase.

### Testing

- As of April 1, 2020, 44,639 tests have been completed in B.C.
- B.C.'s COVID-19 testing strategy remains focused on clusters and outbreaks, the elderly and high-risk patients and health-care workers, rather than the broader public.
- B.C. implemented an online self-assessment tool and an app (<https://bc.thrive.health/>) for British Columbian's to determine if they need further assessment or testing for COVID-19.
- B.C. has expanded COVID-19 testing capacity at five hospitals and at a number of health authority-led Community Assessment Centers.

### Prevention and Containment Measures

- B.C. has introduced the following public health measures:
  - Issuing new social distancing guidelines for grocery stores.
  - Suspending paid parking for patients and staff at all health authority-operated sites.
  - Directing all health sector employers to have employees work at only one site/facility.
  - Only allowing food vendors to sell in markets.
  - Discouraging in-person gatherings of any size.
  - Disallowing all public gatherings larger than 50 people.
  - Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.
  - Restricting family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only.
  - Suspending in-class instruction at all schools (post-secondary and Kindergarten to Grade 12).
  - Directing closure of casinos, businesses with liquor primary licenses, and personal service establishments (e.g. salons).
  - Directing dine-in food services to close or transition to take-out and delivery models only.

## BC Program Note

- Directing businesses providing essential goods, services and transportation to maintain physical distancing of one to two meters for staff and customers.
- Suspending regular operations of the Supreme Court of B.C. The court will hear only essential and urgent matters.
- On March 26th, the Minister of Public Safety & Solicitor General announced use of extraordinary powers under a state of provincial emergency. Ministerial orders include:
  - *Supply chain*: Establishing a new Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit to co-ordinate goods and services distribution.
  - *Protecting consumers*: Banning the secondary resale of medical supplies, PPE, cleaning and other essential supplies; and restricting quantities of items purchased.
  - *Enforcement*: Enabling municipal bylaw officers to enforce the PHO's orders.
  - *Travel*: Ensuring all transportation services provide minimum service levels and priority access for residents, and essential goods and workers.
  - *Protecting B.C.'s most vulnerable*: Making it easier to support critical services for vulnerable people, like food banks and shelters.
  - *Co-ordination*: Suspending local states of emergency specific to the COVID-19 pandemic; giving municipal councils the flexibility to expedite decisions; and coordinating potential use of local publicly owned facilities for COVID-19 uses.

### B.C.'s Support Measures

- April 2: Additional financial supports announced for individuals receiving income assistance or disability assistance.
- April 1: Hydro bill relief measures; \$5M cash flow access for amateur sport sector organizations.
- Mar 29: \$3M emergency grant for Food Banks B.C.
- Mar 25: Temporary ban on tenant evictions, rent freeze and financial support for tenants.
- Mar 23: \$5B relief plan for income supports, tax relief and direct funding for people, businesses and essential services.
- BC has also:
  - Expanded financial support for child-care providers to ensure parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to safe child care.
  - Expanded supports to protect vulnerable people and those experiencing homelessness, including identifying sites to support isolation for people experiencing homelessness and a ban on evictions for non-payment of rent in B.C. Housing-funded buildings.
  - Amended the *Employment Standards Act* to protect workers and prevent layoffs.

### Border Measures

- Mar 28: Transport Canada introduced new measures requiring all air and intercity rail operators to screen passengers prior to boarding for signs of illness. Travelers with COVID-19 symptoms not be permitted to board. The measures came into effect on March 30.
- Mar 25: Federal Minister of Health announced an Emergency Order under the *Quarantine Act* (Mandatory Isolation) requiring mandatory self-isolation for 14 days for persons entering Canada.

## BC Program Note

- Mar 20: The Governor General issued an Order in Council (OIC) titled "Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order." Non-Canadian citizens and residents are prohibited from entering Canada from the United States. The Canada-U.S. border was closed to all non-essential travel (e.g. tourism and recreation) on a temporary basis. Exemptions are in place regarding:
  - Essential workers (e.g. airline and medical workers).
  - Seasonal agricultural workers, fish/seafood workers, caregivers and other temporary foreign workers.
  - International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18th, 2020.
  - Permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16th but had not yet travelled to Canada.
- Exemptions already apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking. Minister Blair has indicated that borders on Indigenous reserves will also be unimpeded.
- Prime Minister Trudeau has indicated that asylum seekers entering at non-official border points will be turned back to the U.S.
- Increased screening measures are being implemented at airports, including more visible messaging, health screening at kiosks, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection of high-traffic areas and facilities at airports.
- As of March 18, 2020, international flights are being directed to four Canadian Airports, including Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of their citizenship, will not be permitted to board international flights to Canada. Those who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada will be barred from entering Canada, except for aircrews, diplomats, immediate family members of Canadian citizens, and U.S. citizens.
- The Federal Government has advised against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the United States.

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions

- In the State of Washington, 74,798 individuals have been tested as of March 31<sup>st</sup>. Washington has reported 5,984 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 247 deaths. Nearly 62 percent of confirmed cases are in King County (2,468) and Snohomish County (1,221).
  - On March 23, Governor Inslee of WA issued a legally enforceable "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order for a minimum of two weeks, which prohibited all gatherings and closed all non-essential businesses.
  - The state has waived all costs associated with testing (i.e. lab fees).
  - On March 17, Governor Inslee signed a bill that reduces credentialing delays for health care workers, to facilitate their entry into the workforce to respond to the outbreak.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## BC Program Note

- As of April 1st, there were 186,101 cases and 3,603 deaths across the U.S. Around half of the cases were in New York (74,427 cases) and New Jersey (18,696). California (8,131), Michigan (7,615) and Massachusetts (6,620) reported the next largest numbers of cases.
- Within Canada, all P/T jurisdictions have declared either a state of emergency and/or a public health emergency.
- In addition to international travelers returning to provinces or territories, several PT jurisdictions are asking inter-provincial/territorial travelers to also isolate for 14 days.
- In AB and NL, medical students are being asked to assist with contact tracing.
- Ontario updates include:
  - Apr 1: 1) Local health units urged to use powers to enforce self-isolation; 2) anyone charged under emergency powers required to ID themselves or be fined \$750 or \$1000. In addition, failure to comply with an emergency order could carry punishments of up to one-year imprisonment or a fine of up to \$100,000 for an individual, \$500,000 for a director of a corporation, or \$10,000,000 for a corporation; 3) \$50M announced for innovations and supply manufacturing
  - March 28: 1) issued an emergency order banning gatherings of more than five people; 2) proclaimed legislation enabling central planning of public sector supplies; and 3) issued an emergency order for stiff penalties for price gouging.
  - March 25: 1) announced \$7 billion in additional resources for the health care system and direct support for people and jobs. 2) Will make available \$10 billion in support for people and businesses through tax and other deferrals to improve their cash flow, protecting jobs and household budgets.
  - Mar 17-23: 1) Announced first stage of COVID-19 relief package (\$300M); 2) passed emergency legislation to support those unable to work due to COVID-19; 3) ordered closure of all non-essential workplaces.
- QC updates:
  - Apr 1: Announced: 1) access restrictions in four more regions, including the Ottawa-Gatineau border; 2) \$40M for movement of transport of essential goods and personnel to remote regions; 3) \$10M for local volunteer organizations.
  - Mar 31: Premier invited Quebecers to participate in COVID-19 clinical study.
  - Mar 30: 1) Ordered closure of most businesses on Sundays throughout April, including grocery stores. Exceptions exist for gas stations, pharmacies, convenience stores and restaurants doing takeout. 2) \$133M of additional funding to private and public Long-term care homes. 3) Allowing legal documents (e.g. mortgages, wills) to be signed and approved virtually by lawyers and notaries.
  - Mar 28: 1) Prohibited non-essential travel to and from eight regions in the province, enforced with highway checkpoints; 2) Posted police along U.S. border to track returning travelers; 3) Closed all tourism-related lodgings, with exceptions for those designed to house returning U.S. travelers; and 4) provided health care workers on parental leave an additional six months to use benefits if they return to work.
  - Mar 23/24: 1) Ordered closure of all non-essential businesses until April 13; 2) banned gatherings of two or more.
- Federal update (Canada)

## BC Program Note

- Apr 1: 1) Scheduled a recall of parliament to pass \$71B in additional financial assistance. Provided details on 75% wage subsidy and emergency response benefit. 2) Dr. Harpreet S. Kochhar made Associate Deputy Minister of Health to support efforts to combat COVID-19.
- Mar 31: announced an investment of \$2 billion to support diagnostic testing and to purchase ventilators and PPE, including for bulk purchases with PTs; signed new procurement agreements with three Canadian companies to purchase and increase capacity to manufacture equipment and supplies including portable ventilators, surgical masks, and rapid testing kits.
- Mar 30: announced the military is "gearing up" to join the federal response to COVID-19; announced expanding wage subsidy for Canadian businesses, no matter their size.
- Mar 27: announced 75% wage subsidy, \$40,000 business loans, and deferral of sales tax and duties for small/medium sized businesses.
- Enacted legislative amendments to give the Minister of Health new powers to help prevent or alleviate shortages of drugs and medical devices.
- Passed \$107-billion economic aid package bill.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020

## Leonard, Christopher J HLTH:EX

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**From:** Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** April 7, 2020 8:23 AM  
**To:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX; Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX; BC IGR HLTH:EX; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX; Vandermolen, Chad HLTH:EX; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** TIME SENSITIVE: due 9 am today Request for Updated BCPN  
**Attachments:** 2020 04 07 DRAFT BCPN\_COVID-19\_FPT Health Ministers\_Coronavirus.docx  
**Importance:** High

Good morning,

Just a reminder to review and approve the program note.

Thank you,  
Naomi

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**From:** Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** April 6, 2020 7:47 PM  
**To:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX <Lorie.Hrycuik@gov.bc.ca>; Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX <Brian.Sagar@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX <Kevin.Samra@gov.bc.ca>; BC IGR HLTH:EX <BCIGR@gov.bc.ca>; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX <Sylvia.Blake@gov.bc.ca>; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX <Richard.Almond@gov.bc.ca>; Vandermolen, Chad HLTH:EX <Chad.Vandermolen@gov.bc.ca>; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX <Sukhmani.Billing@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: Request for Updated BCPN  
**Importance:** High

Hi Lorie and Brian,

Please find attached the draft for your review. New additions are in red. It's due tomorrow 9am.

Have a good evening.

Thanks,  
Naomi

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**From:** Vandermolen, Chad HLTH:EX <Chad.Vandermolen@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** April 6, 2020 8:28 AM  
**To:** Hrycuik, Lorie HLTH:EX <Lorie.Hrycuik@gov.bc.ca>; Sagar, Brian HLTH:EX <Brian.Sagar@gov.bc.ca>; Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX <Naomi.Cheah@gov.bc.ca>; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX <Sukhmani.Billing@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX <Kevin.Samra@gov.bc.ca>; BC IGR HLTH:EX <BCIGR@gov.bc.ca>; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX <Sylvia.Blake@gov.bc.ca>; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX <Richard.Almond@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** Request for Updated BCPN

Good morning,

Health Canada has indicated potential Health Ministers' teleconferences for Tues. and Thursday of this week, for 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. our time. Please provide an approved updated BC Program Note (leveraging the attached) by 9:00

a.m. Tues., April 7. Following that, we will layer on our IGR updates and route through HECC for vetting and Peter's review and approval.

Sincere thanks,  
Chad

## BC Program Note

### Agenda Item

FPT Health Ministers' Teleconference: April 7, 2020  
Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

- As of April 6, 2020 (11:30AM PST), there have been 1,266 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 39 deaths in British Columbia (B.C.).
  - 450 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 128 cases in Interior Health;
  - 79 cases in Island Health;
  - 23 cases in Northern Health;
  - 586 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- 140 individuals are hospitalized, 72 are in critical and intensive care, and 783 (62%) have recovered.
- On April 4, a federal correction facility in Mission was placed under a lockdown, after<sup>s.22</sup> cases of COVID-19 were confirmed.
- On April 1, B.C.'s provincial state of emergency was extended until April 14.
- The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) declared a public health emergency on March 17. The next day, the Minister of Public Safety declared a provincial state of emergency.

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C.

- s.16
- B.C. is continuing to pursue a multi-faceted PPE strategy that includes work with the Government of Canada (GoC) to secure international supply, work with private industry to re-direct production to PPE manufacturing, securing private donations of PPE, and exploring innovative options to safely extend the use of the N95s already in the health system.
- Apr 3: The GoC signed an agreement with<sup>s.17</sup> to manage the distribution of medical supplies across Canada.
- Apr 1: B.C. launched the COVID-19 Supply Hub to expedite sourcing of medical and essential supplies.
- Mar 30: the GoC shared a "Draft Allocation of Scarce Resources COVID-19 Interim Response Strategy," to support rapid distribution of products; PTs were provided a revised draft on April 1. Allocation amongst PTs is based on an "80/20" formula—80% of federally acquired PPE is to be allocated to PTs on a per capita basis, with 20% to be retained in the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS) to be subsequently allocated to address critical shortages identified by PTs.

s.16

## BC Program Note

- B.C.'s PPE inventory is not at a level to sustain the pressure of growing case count and unreliable supply chains. B.C. needs to secure more PPE and is taking proactive measures to conserve PPE supplies.
- B.C. developed an "Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic Personal Protective Equipment Allocation Framework" as part of the provincial PPE conservation and supply strategy, with effective implementation on March 25, 2020.
- B.C. submitted a significant request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach. In addition, BC is pursuing leads for alternative supplies from any/all credible sources internationally and exploring creative/innovative production solutions locally.
- B.C. received a shipment of N95 respirators from the NESS last week and is expecting further N95 supplies to arrive this week.
- One million surgical masks arrived in B.C on March 30. Mask shipment, particularly N95s, will continue until B.C. has a sustainable stockpile for the COVID-19 pandemic response.

### Health System Preparedness

- B.C. is focused on preparing its current capacity for: (i) critical care and ventilator capacity for critically ill patients, and (ii) current hospital bed capacity for less acute patients.
- All hospitals are directed to Outbreak Response Phase 2. Hospitals have postponed all non-urgent scheduled elective surgeries and asked to review operating room capacity to prioritize only urgent and emergency procedures.
- On April 6, 55 ventilators from the NESS arrived in B.C. As of April 1, there are more than 4,422 vacant beds and more than 1,200 ventilators available across the health system.
- On March 30, B.C. designated 19 hospitals as COVID-19 primary sites and announced the preparation of off-site treatment centres, including the Vancouver Convention Centre.
- As of March 31, 35 physicians and 444 nurses have re-registered following the B.C. government call out for emergency registration of non-practicing health-care professionals.
- 8-1-1 calls have increased from ~1,200 calls per day (pre-COVID) to over 6,500 per day. Nurses and patient navigation staff have been added to support this increase.

### Testing

- As of April 1, 2020, 50,350 tests have been completed in B.C.
- B.C.'s COVID-19 testing strategy remains focused on clusters and outbreaks, the elderly and high-risk patients and health-care workers, rather than the broader public.
- B.C. implemented an online self-assessment tool and an app (<https://bc.thrive.health/>) for British Columbian's to determine if they need further assessment or testing for COVID-19.
- B.C. has expanded COVID-19 testing capacity at five hospitals and at a number of health authority-led Community Assessment Centers.

### Prevention and Containment Measures

- Apr 6: The PHO stated that non-medical face covering is an option to keep droplets in, when one might not be able to maintain physical distance. However, face covering is not a requirement and nor a recommendation.

## BC Program Note

- Apr 6: B.C. Ferries starts screening passengers for COVID-19 symptoms or recent international travel as part of new measures required by Transport Canada.
- B.C. has introduced the following public health measures:
  - Issuing new social distancing guidelines for grocery stores.
  - Suspending paid parking for patients and staff at all health authority-operated sites.
  - Directing all health sector employers to have employees work at only one site/facility.
  - Only allowing food vendors to sell in markets.
  - Discouraging in-person gatherings of any size.
  - Disallowing all public gatherings larger than 50 people.
  - Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.
  - Restricting family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only.
  - Suspending in-class instruction at all schools (post-secondary and Kindergarten to Grade 12).
  - Directing closure of casinos, businesses with liquor primary licenses, and personal service establishments (e.g. salons).
  - Directing dine-in food services to close or transition to take-out and delivery models only.
  - Directing businesses providing essential goods, services and transportation to maintain physical distancing of one to two meters for staff and customers.
  - Suspending regular operations of the Supreme Court of B.C. The court will hear only essential and urgent matters.
- On March 26th, the Minister of Public Safety & Solicitor General announced use of extraordinary powers under a state of provincial emergency. Ministerial orders include:
  - *Supply chain*: Establishing a new Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit to co-ordinate goods and services distribution.
  - *Protecting consumers*: Banning the secondary resale of medical supplies, PPE, cleaning and other essential supplies; and restricting quantities of items purchased.
  - *Enforcement*: Enabling municipal bylaw officers to enforce the PHO's orders.
  - *Travel*: Ensuring all transportation services provide minimum service levels and priority access for residents, and essential goods and workers.
  - *Protecting B.C.'s most vulnerable*: Making it easier to support critical services for vulnerable people, like food banks and shelters.
  - *Co-ordination*: Suspending local states of emergency specific to the COVID-19 pandemic; giving municipal councils the flexibility to expedite decisions; and coordinating potential use of local publicly owned facilities for COVID-19 uses.

### B.C.'s Support Measures

- April 2: Additional financial supports announced for individuals receiving income assistance or disability assistance.
- April 1: Hydro bill relief measures; \$5M cash flow access for amateur sport sector organizations.
- Mar 29: \$3M emergency grant for Food Banks B.C.
- Mar 25: Temporary ban on tenant evictions, rent freeze and financial support for tenants.

## BC Program Note

- Mar 23: \$5B relief plan for income supports, tax relief and direct funding for people, businesses and essential services.
- BC has also:
  - Expanded financial support for child-care providers to ensure parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to safe child care.
  - Expanded supports to protect vulnerable people and those experiencing homelessness, including identifying sites to support isolation for people experiencing homelessness and a ban on evictions for non-payment of rent in B.C. Housing-funded buildings.
  - Amended the *Employment Standards Act* to protect workers and prevent layoffs.

### Border Measures

- Mar 28: Transport Canada introduced new measures requiring all air and intercity rail operators to screen passengers prior to boarding for signs of illness. Travelers with COVID-19 symptoms not be permitted to board. The measures came into effect on March 30.
- Mar 25: Federal Minister of Health announced an Emergency Order under the *Quarantine Act* (Mandatory Isolation) requiring mandatory self-isolation for 14 days for persons entering Canada.
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  - Essential workers (e.g. airline and medical workers).
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  - International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18th, 2020.
  - Permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16th but had not yet travelled to Canada.
- Exemptions already apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking. Minister Blair has indicated that borders on Indigenous reserves will also be unimpeded.
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## BC Program Note

Canada, except for aircrews, diplomats, immediate family members of Canadian citizens, and U.S. citizens.

- The Federal Government has advised against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the United States.

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions

- In the State of Washington, 74,798 individuals have been tested as of March 31<sup>st</sup>. Washington has reported 5,984 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 247 deaths. Nearly 62 percent of confirmed cases are in King County (2,468) and Snohomish County (1,221).
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  - The state has waived all costs associated with testing (i.e. lab fees).
  - On March 17, Governor Inslee signed a bill that reduces credentialing delays for health care workers, to facilitate their entry into the workforce to respond to the outbreak.<sup>1</sup>
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- In addition to international travelers returning to provinces or territories, several PT jurisdictions are asking inter-provincial/territorial travelers to also isolate for 14 days.
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## BC Program Note

- QC updates:
  - Apr 1: Announced: 1) access restrictions in four more regions, including the Ottawa-Gatineau border; 2) \$40M for movement of transport of essential goods and personnel to remote regions; 3) \$10M for local volunteer organizations.
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  - Mar 27: announced 75% wage subsidy, \$40,000 business loans, and deferral of sales tax and duties for small/medium sized businesses.
  - Enacted legislative amendments to give the Minister of Health new powers to help prevent or alleviate shortages of drugs and medical devices.
  - Passed \$107-billion economic aid package bill.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020

## Leonard, Christopher J HLTH:EX

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**From:** Vandermolén, Chad HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** March 28, 2020 11:04 AM  
**To:** Hryciuk, Lorie HLTH:EX; Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX; Billing, Sukhmani HLTH:EX; Cheah, Naomi HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Samra, Kevin HLTH:EX; Almond, Richard HLTH:EX; BC IGR HLTH:EX; Blake, Sylvia HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FOR TIME-SENSITIVE ACTION: Update of BC Program Note for Monday FPT DM Teleconference (Coronavirus)  
**Attachments:** 2020 03 27 DRAFT\_BCPN\_COVID-19\_FPT Health Ministers\_Coronavirus\_FINAL.docx  
**Importance:** High

Good morning,

There is an FPT DM Teleconference to discuss coronavirus on Monday from 11 a.m. to noon our time. **If possible, please update the PPH-led portions of the attached BC Program Note** (this note was approved by Peter the evening of Mar. 26 for use on the Friday morning FPT Ministers' call), **and return to me with Executive Lead approval by 2:00 p.m., Sunday, Mar. 29.** IGR will update the portions on Border Measures and Select Highlights from other jurisdictions on Sunday. Per established process, we will route the resulting draft including PPH and IGR updates through HECC for Peter Pokorny's review, editing and approval prior to Monday's DM call.

Many thanks,  
Chad

## BC Program Note

<b>Agenda Item</b>	FPT Health Ministers' Teleconference: March 27, 2020 Situational Update on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)
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- As of March 26, 2020 (3PM PST), there have been 725 confirmed cases of COVID-19, and 14 deaths in B.C.
  - 241 cases in Fraser Health;
  - 62 cases in Interior Health;
  - 52 cases in Island Health;
  - 11 cases in Northern Health; and
  - 359 in Vancouver Coastal Health.
- As of March 25, 66 of B.C.'s confirmed COVID-19 cases are in hospital; 26 cases are in ICU.
- 186 of the confirmed cases have recovered.
- On March 17, 2020, the Provincial Health Officer declared a public health emergency in B.C. to facilitate an even faster provincial response and enact further measures to protect British Columbians.
- On March 18, 2020, the Minister of Public Safety declared a provincial State of Emergency to facilitate a coordinated province-wide response to COVID-19 and enact broader measures to secure critical supplies and ensure access to essential goods and services.

### Key Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other Equipment Supply Issues for B.C.

- BC has submitted a significant request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach.
- On March 23, 2020, B.C. received a shipment of 7,000 N95 respirators (2,000 s.<sup>17</sup> model and 5,000 s.<sup>17</sup> model) from the National Emergency Strategic Stockpile (NESS).
- BC is expecting arrival of an additional 6,000 N95 respirators (by air) on March 26 and a larger load of supplies (by truck) on Monday, March 30.
- While the emergency supplies from Canada are appreciated and helpful, BC's PPE inventory is not at a level to sustain the pressure of a growing case count and unreliable supply chains.
- Beyond the request to Canada, BC is pursuing leads for supply from any/all credible sources internationally and exploring creative/innovative production solutions locally.
- BC also has an immediate need for 180 ventilators. BC identified the need for 180 ventilators in its request to Health Canada under their "Collaborative Bulk Buy" approach.

### Health System Preparedness

- All hospitals are directed to Outbreak Response Phase 2. Hospitals have postponed all non-urgent scheduled surgeries and undertake only urgent and emergency procedures. Hospitals are also required to review operating-room capacity daily to prioritize urgent and emergency surgeries.
- As of March 26, 2020, 3,903 acute care beds had been freed up by cancelling non-urgent elective surgeries.

## BC Program Note

- Pharmacists are directed to provide patients with a prescription refill or an emergency supply of their medications, if needed.
- The Ministry of Health has made provisions for compensation of physicians providing virtual-care services.
- Emergency registration of non-practicing or retired health-care professionals is underway, including professionals from other jurisdictions and the armed forces. As of March 26, 26 physicians and 248 nurses have re-registered and made themselves available to assist in healthcare delivery.
- 8-1-1 calls have increased from ~1,200 calls per day (pre-COVID) to over 6,500 per day. Nurses and patient navigation staff have been added to support this increase.

### Testing

- As of March 26, 2020, 34,561 tests have been completed in B.C.
- B.C.'s provincial COVID testing strategy focuses on clusters and outbreaks, patients in hospital, residents of Long Term Care facilities and health-care workers.
- BC has implemented an online self-assessment tool and an app to support people in determining whether they require further assessment or testing for COVID-19. Tools available at <https://bc.thrive.health/>
- BC has expanded COVID-19 testing capacity at St. Paul's Hospital, Victoria General Hospital, BC Children's and Women's Hospital, Royal Jubilee Hospital Microbiology Laboratory, and Kelowna Hospital, and through other Community Assessment Centers being established by Health Authorities.

### Prevention and Containment Measures

- On March 26th, Minister Farnworth (PSSG) announced use of extraordinary powers under a state of provincial emergency. Ministerial orders include:
  - *Supply chain*: Establishing a new Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit to co-ordinate goods and services distribution; taking a more active role in co-ordinating essential goods and services movement by land, air, marine and rail; and suspending any bylaws that restrict goods delivery at any time of day.
  - *Protecting consumers*: Banning the secondary resale of food, medical supplies, personal protective equipment, cleaning and other essential supplies; and restricting quantities of items purchased at point of sale.
  - *Enforcement*: Enabling municipal bylaw officers to support enforcement of the Provincial Health Officer's orders for business closures and gatherings, in line with offences under the *Public Health Act*.
  - *Travel*: Ensuring all passenger and car-ferry services provide minimum service levels and priority access for residents, and essential goods and workers.
  - *Protecting B.C.'s most vulnerable*: Making it easier to support critical services for vulnerable people, like food banks and shelters.
  - *Co-ordination*: Suspending local states of emergency specific to the COVID-19 pandemic, except for the City of Vancouver; giving municipal councils the ability to hold more flexible meetings to expedite decisions; and co-ordinating potential use of

## BC Program Note

local publicly owned facilities, like community centres, for self-isolation, testing, medical care, warehousing and distribution.

- B.C. previously introduced the following public health measures:
  - Disallowing all public gatherings larger than 50 people.
  - Recommending physical distancing of two meters between individuals.
  - Restricting family and visitors to all health care facilities to 'essential' visitors only.
  - Suspending in-class instruction at all schools (post-secondary and Kindergarten to Grade 12).
  - Directing closure of casinos, businesses with liquor primary licenses, and personal service establishments (e.g. salons).
  - Directing dine-in food services to close or transition to take-out and delivery models only.
  - Directing businesses providing essential goods, services and transportation to maintain physical distancing of one to two meters for staff and customers.
  - Suspending regular operations of the Supreme Court of B.C. The court will hear only essential and urgent matters.

### Support Measures

- March 25: Premier Horgan announced a temporary ban on tenant evictions, as well as rent freeze and financial support for tenants in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- March 23: Premier Horgan announced a \$5 billion relief plan to provide income supports, tax relief and direct funding for people, businesses and essential services.
- Expanded financial support for child-care providers to ensure parents who must work during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have access to safe child care.
- Expanded supports to protect vulnerable people and those experiencing homelessness, including identification of sites to support isolation for people experiencing homelessness and ban on evictions for non-payment of rent in B.C. Housing-funded buildings.
- Amendments to the *Employment Standards Act* to protect workers and prevent layoffs.

### Border Measures

- March 24: The Governor General issued an OIC titled Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order (Mandatory Isolation). The order delineates mandatory isolation and/or quarantine requirements for persons entering Canada.
- March 20: the Canada-U.S. border was closed to all non-essential travel (e.g. tourism and recreation) on a temporary basis. Exemptions are in place regarding:
  - Essential workers (e.g. airline and medical workers).
  - Seasonal agricultural workers, fish/seafood workers, caregivers and other temporary foreign workers
  - International students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18th, 2020
  - Permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16th but had not yet travelled to Canada.

## BC Program Note

- Exemptions already apply for movement of essential goods and services required to secure supply chains, including trucking. Minister Blair has indicated that borders on Indigenous reserves will also be unimpeded.
- Prime Minister Trudeau has indicated that asylum seekers entering at non-official border points will be turned back to the U.S.
- Increased screening measures are being implemented at airports, including more visible messaging, health screening at kiosks, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection of high-traffic areas and facilities at airports.
- As of March 18, 2020, international flights are being directed to four Canadian Airports, including Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Those who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of their citizenship, will not be permitted to board international flights to Canada. Those who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada will be barred from entering Canada, except for aircrews, diplomats, immediate family members of Canadian citizens, and U.S. citizens.
- The Federal Government has advised against all non-essential travel outside of Canada, including to the United States.

### Select Highlights from Other Jurisdictions (as of Mar. 25)

- In the State of Washington, 34,181 individuals have been tested as of March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Washington has reported 2,469 cases of COVID-19, resulting in 123 deaths. Over three-quarters of confirmed cases are in King County (1,277) and Snohomish County (614).
  - On March 23, the Governor Inslee of WA issued a legally enforceable “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” order for a minimum of two weeks.
  - Public health experts agree that the true number of people who have been infected with COVID-19 in Washington greatly exceeds the number of COVID-19 infections that have been laboratory-confirmed.<sup>1</sup>
  - The state has waived all costs associated with testing (i.e. lab fees).
  - On March 17, Governor Inslee signed a bill that reduces credentialing delays for health care workers, to facilitate their entry into the workforce to respond to the outbreak.<sup>2</sup>
- Over 55 percent of cases in the U.S. are in New York (26,358 cases) and New Jersey (3,675). California (2,511) and Washington State (2,469) report the next highest numbers of cases.
- Within Canada, all P/T jurisdictions have declared either a state of emergency and/or a public health emergency. Generally, the powers available to governments under a public health emergency are more limited than under a state of emergency.
- In addition to international travelers returning to provinces or territories, several PT jurisdictions are asking inter-provincial/territorial travelers to also isolate for 14 days. Some municipal governments are declaring states of emergency in order to stop the spread of COVID-19 in their communities.
- Ontario updates include:

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>

<sup>2</sup> [https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-signs-bill-package-to-support-state-effort-combating-the-covid-19-outbreak-ab5d12edfe3d?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

## BC Program Note

- March 25: the Ontario government announced: \$7 billion in additional resources for the health care system and direct support for people and jobs. It also will make available \$10 billion in support for people and businesses through tax and other deferrals to improve their cash flow, protecting jobs and household budgets.
- March 23: ON ordered closure of all non-essential workplaces for two weeks beginning March 25.
- March 19, government passed emergency legislation to support workers unable to work due to COVID-19.
- March 17<sup>th</sup>: Announced first stage of COVID-19 relief package with \$300M in funding.
- QC updates:
  - Provincial government banned gatherings of two or more.
  - On March 23, ordered closure of all non-essential businesses from March 25 until April 13.
- Federal update (Canada)
  - The Government enacted new legislation, including amendments to the *Food and Drugs Act* and the *Patent Act*. These legislative amendments will give the Minister of Health new powers to help prevent or alleviate shortages of drugs and medical devices.
  - Government and opposition parties in Parliament passed a \$107-billion economic aid package bill to help Canadians struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approved by: Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister on Mar. 26, 2020

## Moulton, Holly HLTH:EX

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**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** May 19, 2020 10:07 AM  
**To:** Dix, Adrian HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX; Moulton, Holly HLTH:EX; Yeung, Lucinda HLTH:EX; van Baarsen, Amanda HLTH:EX; Prevost, Jean-Marc GCPE:EX  
**Subject:** PPE Messaging

- As with previous Tuesdays, I have an update on the PPE that we've received over the last week.
- To recap, cumulatively, I've already announced that the following PPE has arrived in BC:
  - Approximately 4,000,000 N95 respirators – 63,700 of these are from the Federal government's bulk procurement
  - Close to 3,500,000 surgical masks – 146,800 of these are from the Federal government's bulk procurement
  - Over 1,000,000 pieces of eye protection (including goggles and face shields) – 212,848 of these are face shields from the Federal government's bulk procurement
  - Approximately 11 million pairs of gloves – 440,000 of these are from the Federal government's bulk procurement; and
  - Close to 1,000,000 gowns.
- Today, I can tell you that we've received the following PPE since I updated you last Tuesday:
  - 14,730 N95 respirators;
  - 786,155 surgical masks;
  - 15,013,050 pairs of gloves;
  - 265,348 pieces of eye protection; and
  - 320,190 gowns
- As always, any product that we receive that isn't from a trusted, reliable vendor, will be subject to assessment and testing before it gets into the health system. This also includes masks and respirators received from the Federal government and from donations as well.

## **Moulton, Holly HLTH:EX**

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**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** May 26, 2020 11:22 AM  
**To:** Dix, Adrian HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX; Moulton, Holly HLTH:EX; Yeung, Lucinda HLTH:EX; van Baarsen, Amanda HLTH:EX; Prevost, Jean-Marc GCPE:EX  
**Subject:** PPE Messaging

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- To recap, cumulatively, I've previously announced that the following PPE has arrived in BC:
  - Approximately 4,000,000 N95 respirators – 63,700 of these are from the Federal government's bulk procurement
  - Approximately 4,250,000 surgical masks – 146,800 of these are from the Federal government's bulk procurement
  - Over 1,250,000 pieces of eye protection (including goggles and face shields) – 381,696 of these are face shields from the Federal government's bulk procurement
  - Approximately 26 million pairs of gloves – 440,000 of these are from the Federal government's bulk procurement; and
  - Approximately 1,300,000 gowns.
- Today, I can tell you that we've received the following PPE since I updated you last Tuesday:
  - 151,772 N95 respirators;
  - 255,600 surgical masks;
  - 1,380,700 pairs of gloves;
  - 7,405 pieces of eye protection; and
  - 233,250 gowns
- As always, any product that we receive that isn't from a trusted, reliable vendor, will be subject to assessment and testing before it gets into the health system. This also includes masks and respirators received from the Federal government and from donations as well.
- On the topic of PPE testing, I'd also like to mention that we've recently received a new machine that we'll be able to use to test masks and respirators right here in BC. The machine, called the TSI 8310A, is used by leading filter manufacturers and test centres

## **Moulton, Holly HLTH:EX**

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**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** June 2, 2020 9:43 AM  
**To:** Dix, Adrian HLTH:EX  
**Cc:** Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX; Moulton, Holly HLTH:EX; Prevost, Jean-Marc GCPE:EX; van Baarsen, Amanda HLTH:EX; Yeung, Lucinda HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** PPE Messaging  
**Attachments:** PPE Messaging (June 2).docx; PPE Deck (June 1).pptx

Hi Minister – I've attached expanded PPE messaging for your Tuesday update. In addition to the usual update on PPE received, it also covers two new topics:

1. Successful testing and planned introduction of an N95 equivalent product in the days ahead; and
2. Ministry's plan to post an updated PPE Framework, which will provide revised guidance and direction on appropriate use of PPE in various clinical settings.

For your reference only, I've also attached the deck that we walked through last week.

If you have any concerns or would like any changes, please let me know.

Thanks,  
Peter

Peter Pokorny  
Associate Deputy Minister  
Corporate Services  
Ministry of Health  
(778) 698-8046

## PPE Messaging – June 2, 2020

- Today I'll provide another update on the PPE situation in BC
- As usual, I'll report on how much PPE has arrived in BC over the last week, but today I'll also provide more detail on our overall supply and demand situation, and what we're doing to ensure that healthcare workers continue to have access to PPE so they can protect themselves, their colleagues, and their patients from COVID-19
- Starting with a general supply update, last week I announced that, cumulatively, the following PPE has arrived in BC since March:
  - **Over 4,000,000 N95 or equivalent respirators**
    - 76,700 (~2%) are from the Federal government's Bulk Procurement
  - **Approximately 4,500,000 surgical masks**
    - 146,800 (~3%) are from the Federal government's Bulk Procurement
  - **Over 1,250,000 pieces of eye protection, including goggles and face shields**
    - 381,696 (~30%) are from the Federal government's Bulk Procurement
  - **Approximately 27,000,000 pairs of gloves**
    - 600,000 (~2%) are from the Federal government's Bulk Procurement; and
  - **Over 1,300,000 gowns**
    - 30,700 (~2%) are from the Federal government's Bulk Procurement

- Today, I can tell you that over the last week (since last Tuesday's update), we've received the following PPE in BC:
  - **100,170 N95 or equivalent respirators**
  - **728,150 surgical masks**
  - **514,426 pieces of eye protection**
  - **3,109,600 pairs of gloves; and**
  - **732,290 gowns**
- As I've said many times before, we assess and test PPE and make sure it meets or exceeds safety requirements before it makes its way into the health system.
- And as announced last week, BC has sourced a leading filtration efficiency testing machine that will be used in the near future to test our PPE right here in BC.
- In the interim, until our testing lab is fully up and running, we've been working with UBC and other international, accredited laboratories to have our non-traditional masks and respirators tested for both filtration efficiency and fluid resistance.
- Just last week, we received excellent news from two separate, independent, accredited laboratories that confirmed results we had received from UBC testing. We learned that a respirator BC has procured from a new manufacturer in China has exceeded the National

Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) standards that Health Canada requires of the products we use in our health system.

- This new respirator has also passed fluid resistance testing conducted by independent laboratories and has had excellent results in terms of sample fit-testing to confirm that the respirators seal to the faces of a majority of healthcare workers.
- This is excellent news for two reasons:
  - We have a significant inventory of this product (3 million respirators) in BC, and are now assured that the product is safe and effective for our healthcare workers; and
  - The availability of this equivalent product will reduce our reliance on the traditional 3M respirators that have been extremely difficult to procure due to global demand and supply chain issues.
- We have not yet introduced these equivalent respirators for use in the health system, as we're taking the time in the coming days to communicate with healthcare workers about the new product and, very importantly, to make sure the respirators pass individual fit-tests with every single employee that may need to wear them.
- This significant boost of 3 million N95 equivalent respirators puts us in good stead as we ramp up our health system, catch up on scheduled surgery volumes, and prepare our province for a potential second wave of COVID-19.

- While we're extremely pleased that we've successfully sourced a significant inventory of N95 equivalent respirators, the hard work of sourcing more surgical masks, gowns, and other important PPE continues.
- In BC, we've done this the right way. In a very uncertain and dynamic global market for PPE, we've worked with supply chain experts to ensure we're dealing with credible and reliable suppliers, and we've established a robust assessment and testing protocol that is designed to ensure that PPE will be deemed safe by experts before it is worn by our healthcare workers.
- With the news many are hearing about PPE quality or counterfeiting in other jurisdictions, I know that healthcare workers and the public have concerns about the safety and effectiveness of PPE. The Ministry will be posting its *PPE Assessment and Testing Protocol* later this week as part of its update to *BC's PPE Framework*.
- I encourage anyone with concerns about the quality of PPE used in BC's health system, or with questions about how BC is managing its PPE inventory, to look at that document, which will be posted by Friday of this week.
- Our success sourcing safe and effective PPE in BC is something to be proud of. This success was not based on luck. Thanks to:
  - Our healthcare workers that have worked hard to conserve our PPE inventories

- The supply chain and logistics teams at the Provincial Health Services Authority and Regional Health Authorities for their navigation of an unprecedented global market for PPE and for their coordinated provincial approach; and
- The Occupational Safety and Health teams across our health system that work every day to ensure healthcare workers are protected and know how to safely use their PPE.
- We'll continue to source the PPE we need in BC and I'll continue to keep the public updated on our PPE situation going forward.

# **COVID 19: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Management and Planning for Safe Healthcare in BC**

June 1, 2020

**CONFIDENTIAL – NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION**

# Focus of Presentation

- What is PPE and why is it important?
- BC's Management of PPE – Past, Present, and Future:
  - Demand for PPE
  - Supply / Sources of PPE
  - Assessment and Testing of PPE
  - Appropriate Use of PPE
- BC's Overall Supply and Demand Situation for PPE

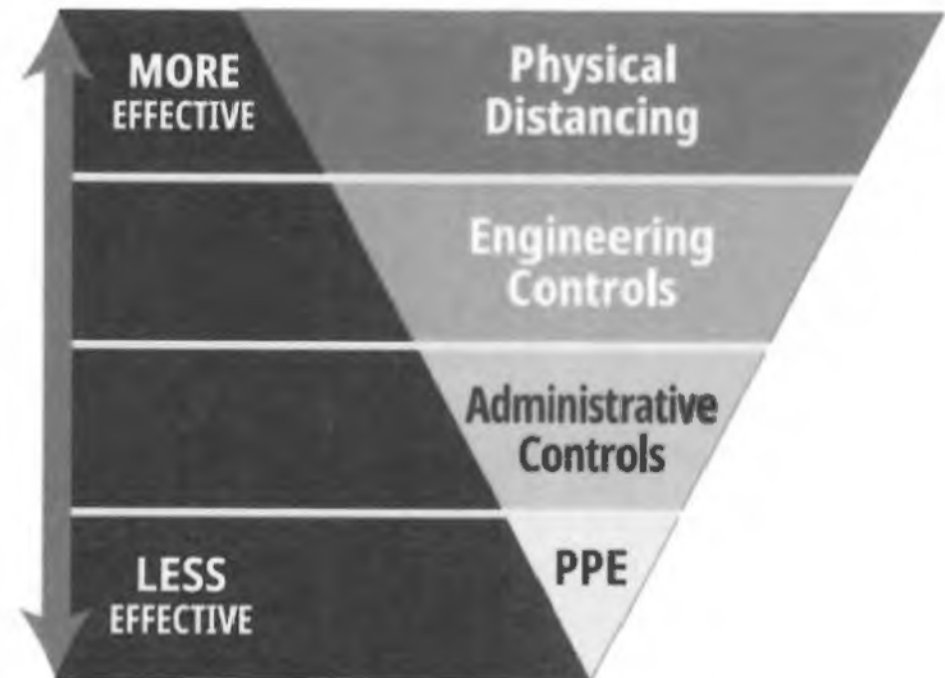
# What is PPE?

PPE in the context of healthcare includes:

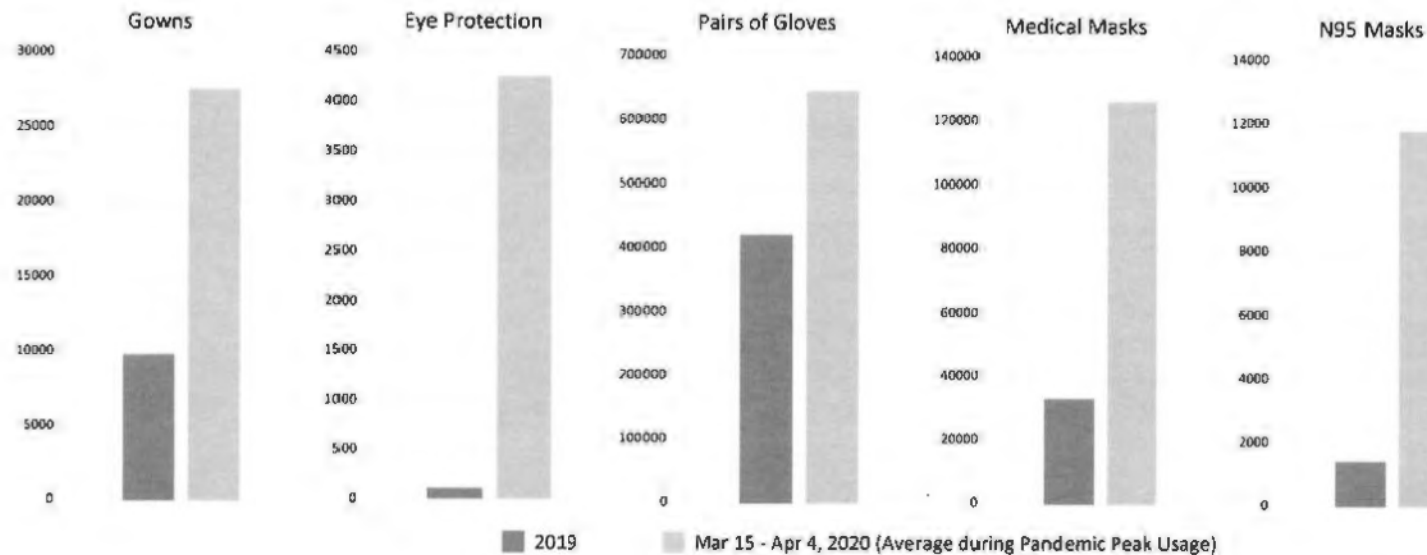
- Respirator (e.g. N95 or KN95 respirator)
  - Filters out airborne particles
  - Requires individual “fit-testing” to ensure a tight seal
- Mask (e.g. surgical or procedural mask)
  - Blocks droplets/mucus transmission to/from nose and mouth
  - No fit-testing required
- Eye Protection (e.g. goggles or face shield)
  - Blocks droplet/mucus transmission to eyes
- Gloves
  - Prevent hands from becoming contaminated
  - Must always be used in combination with rigorous hand-washing
- Gown
  - Prevents contamination of a healthcare worker’s clothes when they’ve had direct contact with patients

# Why is PPE important?

- PPE is a standard infection prevention and control precaution
- While PPE is important (and visible), it is the least effective control for reducing transmission
- Different kinds of transmission risks need different types of PPE
- COVID-19 is spread primarily through “droplet spread”. This information helps us know what kinds of PPE might be needed
- Availability of safe, effective PPE is essential to protect BC’s healthcare workers and patients



# Demand for PPE – Pre and During COVID-19



- During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the average daily usage of PPE increased substantially from 2019 levels
- For example, before COVID-19, BC utilized approximately 10,000 gowns per day. During the peak of COVID, BC used about 27,000 gowns per day, even with fewer total patients in hospital.
- BC's demand for PPE in response to COVID-19 is not unique – there was, and continues to be, unprecedented demand across the globe

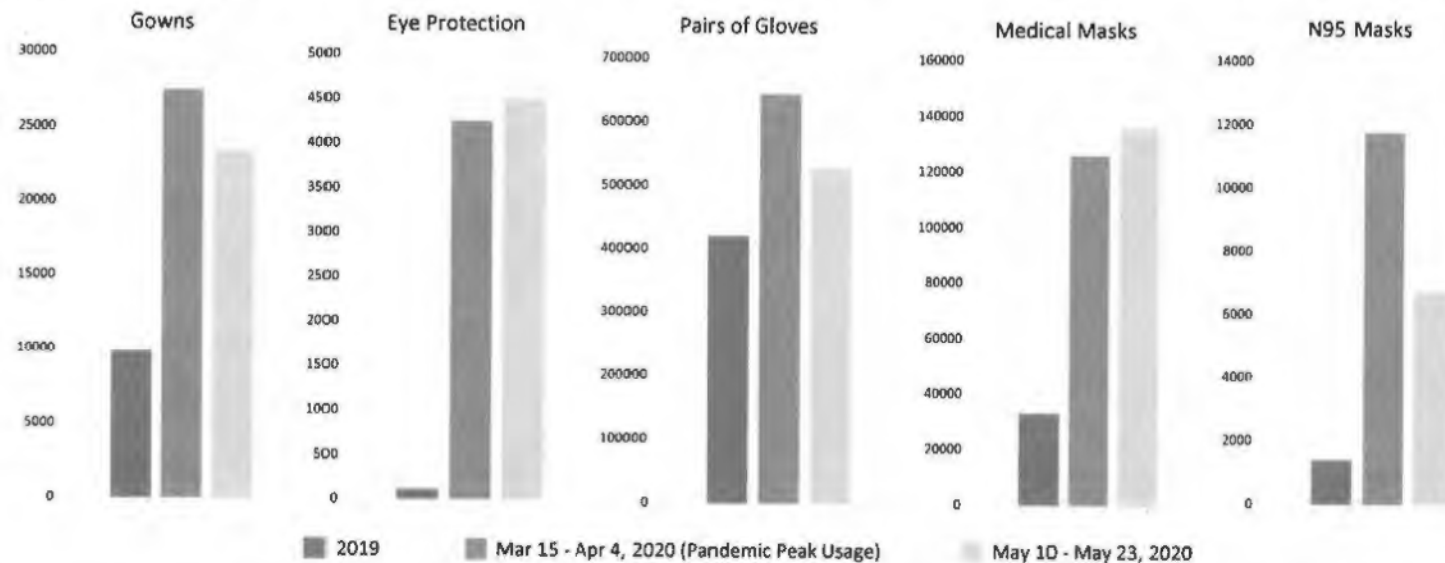
# Supply of PPE

- Globally, there have been significant challenges securing adequate stock of PPE and supplies, driven by:
  - Jurisdictions taking an abundance of caution in dealing with the virus (little was known about transmission) leading to unprecedented demand
  - Protectionist import/export policies internationally;
  - Major disruption to global manufacturing capacity and supply chains; and
  - Increased prevalence of counterfeit products and/or financial scams.
- BC has had to adapt quickly to a complex and dynamic international market for PPE and other supplies

## BC's Response – Determining Demand

- Provided clear PPE Allocation Framework rooted in evidence (from COVID-19 and other droplet-spread infections) and key ethical principles
- Created a “model” to determine BC's PPE demand:
  - Based on the PPE Allocation Framework (what's needed in various clinical settings)
  - Based on a whole of BC approach
  - Utilized the epidemiology modeling from the BCCDC
  - Utilized data on visits to ER, hospital, admissions, number of long term care residents, etc.
  - Utilized the number of health care providers involved in delivery of care
  - Model is updated on a regular basis as the inputs above change to ensure ongoing usefulness for planning
  - Included a contingency to ensure a very conservative estimate of demand
- BC took an active and strategic approach to sourcing PPE

# Daily usage of most PPE is now on the decline



- PPE daily usage has started to decline for most items with decreasing numbers of COVID-19 patients in our health system and effective utilization/conservation practices
- Some items, however, are increasing. For example, medical mask usage has increased due to the shift from N95 masks to medical masks with fewer COVID-19 patients and due to greater numbers of patients going to the hospital
- Decline in usage does not mean we've reduced efforts to source PPE – we must ensure we're prepared

# BC's Approach to Sourcing PPE

There have been four main approaches to procuring/sourcing PPE:

1. Wherever possible, continue to use traditional relationships between PHSA and trusted suppliers
2. Leverage BC's Supply Hub portal for new leads/suppliers and donations
3. Secure PPE from the Federal government's Bulk Procurement initiative and/or National Emergency Supply Stockpile
4. Pursue large, bulk quantity purchases through non-traditional approaches and sources.

## BC's Success in Sourcing PPE

- As of May 26, 2020, BC has sourced the following PPE (since March):
  - Over 4 million N95 respirators and equivalents
  - Over 4.5 million procedure/surgical masks
  - Over 1.25 million pieces of eye protection (goggles & face shields)
  - Approximately 27 million gloves
  - Over 1.3 million gowns
- BC has worked hard to ensure healthcare workers have PPE where and when they need it to work safely
- Any product that is from a non-traditional vendor/manufacturer is assessed before it gets into the health system (including donations and Federal supplies)

# Due Diligence, Assessment, and Testing of PPE

- BC is working with independent supply chain experts to ensure any potential transactions with new suppliers are vetted for supplier credibility and reliability
- BC has implemented a robust assessment and testing protocol that:
  - Firewalls any untested product from PHSA's distribution system
  - Checks for proper documentation/certification of product
  - Checks for irregularities in products (e.g. design issues, rips, etc.)
  - Ensures new products can pass a general fit-test (where required)
  - Tests for filtration and fluid resistance (where required)
- The primary purpose of the testing approach is to ensure that PPE will not make it into the health system if it has not met or exceeded safety requirements

# Current Inventory and Expected Shipments

Supply Category	Quantity on Hand	Quantities Expected Within Next 45 Days	Quantities with Unstated ETA
N95 Respirators and Equivalents	3,848,000	378,000	3,297,000
Surgical / Procedure Masks	3,578,000	2,659,000	1,218,000
Gloves (pairs)	14,374,000	23,644,000	1,038,000
Eye Protection (goggles/shields)	729,000	261,000	305,000
Gowns	940,000	29,000	1,862,000

- Very conservative inventory:
  - Does not include PPE undergoing testing
  - Does not include potential bulk purchases
  - Does not include opportunities for domestic production

# Can we meet our needs going forward?

Supply Category	s.17
N95	s.17
N95	
N95	
N95 Other/Equivalent	
Procedure Mask	
Surgical Mask	
Non-surgical Gloves	
Surgical Gloves	
Eye Protection (goggles/shields)	
Non-surgical Gowns	
Surgical Gowns	

- Information above is based on quantities on hand (as at June 1, 2020) and those quantities expected to arrive within the next 45 days from a reliable, known vendor. Table does not include supplies with an unknown arrival date, supplies from non-traditional vendors, or supplies "in testing". This makes for a conservative approach.

# Appropriate Use of PPE

- BC's PPE Framework provides updated guidance and direction to the health system on the appropriate use of PPE during the COVID-19 pandemic
- The Framework provides an evidence-based approach to PPE use; as our knowledge of risk and evidence grows, the Framework is revised
- Conservation and safe/appropriate use of PPE will keep healthcare workers safe and will ensure our inventory meets health system needs
- Risk Assessment is key prior to every patient interaction – Infection prevention and control precautions (including PPE) mitigate risk where it exists

# PPE Risk Management in BC

- In response to COVID-19, PPE inventory levels are monitored daily
- When faced with risk of PPE depletion, mitigation strategies are implemented.

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# Actions taken to Mitigate Risk of PPE Depletion

- Usage of PPE has been extended (e.g. through cohorting COVID-19 patients to reduce donning/doffing of PPE by staff)
- Intensive efforts to procure traditional and safe equivalent PPE
- PPE inventories are secured and monitored daily at the site level
- N95 respirators are being reprocessed as a contingency
- Healthcare workers have done a very effective job of extending use of PPE – e.g. wearing the same mask until or unless it's damaged or soiled

# Summary

- BC's demand for PPE grew at a rapid and unprecedented rate, at the same time as manufacturing capacity and supply chains faltered
- BC's response included determining our supply needs based on guidelines and modelling. This ensured safety of health care workers and responsible use of PPE
- BC instituted daily inventory monitoring and took action to source safe and effective PPE
- Health care providers have effectively used the PPE Framework (guidelines on use) and conserved PPE. Framework has been updated based on better understanding of risk, evidence, and PPE inventories.
- We have sufficient PPE for the foreseeable future and continue to source PPE to ensure we have adequate inventory to support health system "restart" and a potential second wave of COVID-19.

## Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX

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**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** August 13, 2020 9:43 AM  
**To:** Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FW: PPE Messaging  
**Attachments:** PPE Messaging (June 2).docx; PPE Deck (June 1).pptx

Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister  
Corporate Services  
Ministry of Health  
Office: 778-698-9108  
A/Senior Executive Assistant: [crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca](mailto:crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca)

**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** June 2, 2020 9:43 AM  
**To:** Dix, Adrian HLTH:EX <[Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <[Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca)>; Moulton, Holly HLTH:EX <[Holly.Moulton@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Holly.Moulton@gov.bc.ca)>; Prevost, Jean-Marc GCPE:EX <[Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca)>; van Baarsen, Amanda HLTH:EX <[Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca)>; Yeung, Lucinda HLTH:EX <[Lucinda.Yeung@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Lucinda.Yeung@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** PPE Messaging

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1. Successful testing and planned introduction of an N95 equivalent product in the days ahead; and
2. Ministry's plan to post an updated PPE Framework, which will provide revised guidance and direction on appropriate use of PPE in various clinical settings.

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Thanks,  
Peter

Peter Pokorny  
Associate Deputy Minister  
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Ministry of Health  
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## PPE Messaging – June 2, 2020

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    - 146,800 (~3%) are from the Federal government's Bulk Procurement
  - **Over 1,250,000 pieces of eye protection, including goggles and face shields**
    - 381,696 (~30%) are from the Federal government's Bulk Procurement
  - **Approximately 27,000,000 pairs of gloves**
    - 600,000 (~2%) are from the Federal government's Bulk Procurement; and
  - **Over 1,300,000 gowns**
    - 30,700 (~2%) are from the Federal government's Bulk Procurement

- Today, I can tell you that over the last week (since last Tuesday's update), we've received the following PPE in BC:
  - **100,170 N95 or equivalent respirators**
  - **728,150 surgical masks**
  - **514,426 pieces of eye protection**
  - **3,109,600 pairs of gloves; and**
  - **732,290 gowns**
- As I've said many times before, we assess and test PPE and make sure it meets or exceeds safety requirements before it makes its way into the health system.
- And as announced last week, BC has sourced a leading filtration efficiency testing machine that will be used in the near future to test our PPE right here in BC.
- In the interim, until our testing lab is fully up and running, we've been working with UBC and other international, accredited laboratories to have our non-traditional masks and respirators tested for both filtration efficiency and fluid resistance.
- Just last week, we received excellent news from two separate, independent, accredited laboratories that confirmed results we had received from UBC testing. We learned that a respirator BC has procured from a new manufacturer in China has exceeded the National

Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) standards that Health Canada requires of the products we use in our health system.

- This new respirator has also passed fluid resistance testing conducted by independent laboratories and has had excellent results in terms of sample fit-testing to confirm that the respirators seal to the faces of a majority of healthcare workers.
- This is excellent news for two reasons:
  - We have a significant inventory of this product (3 million respirators) in BC, and are now assured that the product is safe and effective for our healthcare workers; and
  - The availability of this equivalent product will reduce our reliance on the traditional 3M respirators that have been extremely difficult to procure due to global demand and supply chain issues.
- We have not yet introduced these equivalent respirators for use in the health system, as we're taking the time in the coming days to communicate with healthcare workers about the new product and, very importantly, to make sure the respirators pass individual fit-tests with every single employee that may need to wear them.
- This significant boost of 3 million N95 equivalent respirators puts us in good stead as we ramp up our health system, catch up on scheduled surgery volumes, and prepare our province for a potential second wave of COVID-19.

- While we're extremely pleased that we've successfully sourced a significant inventory of N95 equivalent respirators, the hard work of sourcing more surgical masks, gowns, and other important PPE continues.
- In BC, we've done this the right way. In a very uncertain and dynamic global market for PPE, we've worked with supply chain experts to ensure we're dealing with credible and reliable suppliers, and we've established a robust assessment and testing protocol that is designed to ensure that PPE will be deemed safe by experts before it is worn by our healthcare workers.
- With the news many are hearing about PPE quality or counterfeiting in other jurisdictions, I know that healthcare workers and the public have concerns about the safety and effectiveness of PPE. The Ministry will be posting its *PPE Assessment and Testing Protocol* later this week as part of its update to *BC's PPE Framework*.
- I encourage anyone with concerns about the quality of PPE used in BC's health system, or with questions about how BC is managing its PPE inventory, to look at that document, which will be posted by Friday of this week.
- Our success sourcing safe and effective PPE in BC is something to be proud of. This success was not based on luck. Thanks to:
  - Our healthcare workers that have worked hard to conserve our PPE inventories

- The supply chain and logistics teams at the Provincial Health Services Authority and Regional Health Authorities for their navigation of an unprecedented global market for PPE and for their coordinated provincial approach; and
- The Occupational Safety and Health teams across our health system that work every day to ensure healthcare workers are protected and know how to safely use their PPE.
- We'll continue to source the PPE we need in BC and I'll continue to keep the public updated on our PPE situation going forward.

## Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX

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**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** August 13, 2020 9:43 AM  
**To:** Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FW: PPE Messaging

Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister  
Corporate Services  
Ministry of Health  
Office: 778-698-9108  
A/Senior Executive Assistant: [crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca](mailto:crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca)

**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** May 26, 2020 11:22 AM  
**To:** Dix, Adrian HLTH:EX <[Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <[Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca)>; Moulton, Holly HLTH:EX <[Holly.Moulton@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Holly.Moulton@gov.bc.ca)>; Yeung, Lucinda HLTH:EX <[Lucinda.Yeung@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Lucinda.Yeung@gov.bc.ca)>; van Baarsen, Amanda HLTH:EX <[Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca)>; Prevost, Jean-Marc GCPE:EX <[Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** PPE Messaging

- As with previous Tuesdays, I have an update on the PPE that we've received over the last week.
- To recap, cumulatively, I've previously announced that the following PPE has arrived in BC:
  - Approximately 4,000,000 N95 respirators – 63,700 of these are from the Federal government's bulk procurement
  - Approximately 4,250,000 surgical masks – 146,800 of these are from the Federal government's bulk procurement
  - Over 1,250,000 pieces of eye protection (including goggles and face shields) – 381,696 of these are face shields from the Federal government's bulk procurement
  - Approximately 26 million pairs of gloves – 440,000 of these are from the Federal government's bulk procurement; and
  - Approximately 1,300,000 gowns.
- Today, I can tell you that we've received the following PPE since I updated you last Tuesday:
  - 151,772 N95 respirators;
  - 255,600 surgical masks;

- 1,380,700 pairs of gloves;
  - 7,405 pieces of eye protection; and
  - 233,250 gowns
- As always, any product that we receive that isn't from a trusted, reliable vendor, will be subject to assessment and testing before it gets into the health system. This also includes masks and respirators received from the Federal government and from donations as well.
- On the topic of PPE testing, I'd also like to mention that we've recently received a new machine that we'll be able to use to test masks and respirators right here in BC. The machine, called the TSI 8310A, is used by leading filter manufacturers and test centres around the world. It will be used here in BC to test the filter efficiency and function of respiratory masks and compute results so we can ensure that any masks and respirators that we procure from new international manufacturers are in fact safe and effective from a filtration perspective. The machine is being set up and calibrated, but will be up and running soon. In the meantime, we'll continue to send any non-traditional respiratory masks that we receive to third-party filtration labs for testing. Our testing efforts to date and the new testing machine that we have purchased will put us in good stead if and when we do introduce non-traditional but equivalent respirators to healthcare workers in BC.

## Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX

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**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** August 13, 2020 9:42 AM  
**To:** Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FW: PPE Messaging

Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister  
Corporate Services  
Ministry of Health  
Office: 778-698-9108  
A/Senior Executive Assistant: [crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca](mailto:crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca)

**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** May 19, 2020 10:07 AM  
**To:** Dix, Adrian HLTH:EX <[Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <[Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca)>; Moulton, Holly HLTH:EX <[Holly.Moulton@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Holly.Moulton@gov.bc.ca)>;  
Yeung, Lucinda HLTH:EX <[Lucinda.Yeung@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Lucinda.Yeung@gov.bc.ca)>; van Baarsen, Amanda HLTH:EX  
<[Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca)>; Prevost, Jean-Marc GCPE:EX <[Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** PPE Messaging

- As with previous Tuesdays, I have an update on the PPE that we've received over the last week.
- To recap, cumulatively, I've already announced that the following PPE has arrived in BC:
  - Approximately 4,000,000 N95 respirators – 63,700 of these are from the Federal government's bulk procurement
  - Close to 3,500,000 surgical masks – 146,800 of these are from the Federal government's bulk procurement
  - Over 1,000,000 pieces of eye protection (including goggles and face shields) – 212,848 of these are face shields from the Federal government's bulk procurement
  - Approximately 11 million pairs of gloves – 440,000 of these are from the Federal government's bulk procurement; and
  - Close to 1,000,000 gowns.
- Today, I can tell you that we've received the following PPE since I updated you last Tuesday:
  - 14,730 N95 respirators;
  - 786,155 surgical masks;
  - 15,013,050 pairs of gloves;

- 265,348 pieces of eye protection; and
  - 320,190 gowns
- As always, any product that we receive that isn't from a trusted, reliable vendor, will be subject to assessment and testing before it gets into the health system. This also includes masks and respirators received from the Federal government and from donations as well.

## Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX

---

**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** August 13, 2020 9:42 AM  
**To:** Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FW: UPDATED PPE Messaging

Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister  
Corporate Services  
Ministry of Health  
Office: 778-698-9108  
A/Senior Executive Assistant: [crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca](mailto:crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca)

**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** May 12, 2020 2:06 PM  
**To:** Dix, Adrian HLTH:EX <Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca>; Moulton, Holly HLTH:EX <Holly.Moulton@gov.bc.ca>; Yeung, Lucinda HLTH:EX <Lucinda.Yeung@gov.bc.ca>; van Baarsen, Amanda HLTH:EX <Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca>; Prevost, Jean-Marc GCPE:EX <Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** UPDATED PPE Messaging

Hi Minister – as requested, I've added some information (in red) showing what's been received from the Federal government.

- We're continuing to make sure our healthcare workers have the PPE they need to protect themselves, each other, and their patients.
- As with previous Tuesdays, I have an update on what we've received over the last week.
- To recap, cumulatively, I've already announced that the following PPE has arrived in BC:
  - Over 3,750,000 N95 respirators – 63,700 of these are from the Federal government's bulk procurement
  - Over 3,000,000 surgical masks – 146,800 of these are from the Federal government's bulk procurement
  - Close to 1,000,000 pieces of eye protection (including goggles and face shields) – 44,000 of these are face shields from the Federal government's bulk procurement
  - Almost 6 million pairs of gloves; and
  - Several hundred thousand gowns
- Today, I can tell you that we received the following PPE since I updated you last Tuesday:

- 44,000 3M N95 respirators (these are the 3M brand respirators that healthcare workers are used to using in the delivery of care);
  - 85,000 Alternate Brand N95 respirators (subject to testing, these would serve as a backup to our traditional 3M products, if we need them);
  - 324,000 surgical masks;
  - Over 5,000,000 pairs of gloves;
  - Close to 100,000 pieces of eye protection; and
  - Over 500,000 gowns
- As always, any product that we receive that isn't from a trusted, reliable vendor, will be subject to assessment and testing before it gets into the health system. We are also testing any alternative N95 respirators received from the Federal government.
  - Beyond our testing process, we're also keeping very close contact with Health Canada and other jurisdictions as they receive PPE and test it. We're sharing information so that we can help each other to know what vendors or products are acceptable.
  - Once again, I'm able to say that while BC is testing and establishing a contingency of alternative products, we have not had to put alternative products into the healthcare system to this point. With the decline of COVID-19 in BC, we believe we'll be in good shape to continue to protect our healthcare workers with the steady supply we received from our traditional, familiar vendors.

## Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX

---

**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** August 13, 2020 9:42 AM  
**To:** Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FW: PPE Messaging

Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister  
Corporate Services  
Ministry of Health  
Office: 778-698-9108  
A/Senior Executive Assistant: [crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca](mailto:crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca)

**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** May 12, 2020 11:58 AM  
**To:** Dix, Adrian HLTH:EX <Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca>; Moulton, Holly HLTH:EX <Holly.Moulton@gov.bc.ca>; Yeung, Lucinda HLTH:EX <Lucinda.Yeung@gov.bc.ca>; van Baarsen, Amanda HLTH:EX <Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca>; Prevost, Jean-Marc GCPE:EX <Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** PPE Messaging

- We're continuing to make sure our healthcare workers have the PPE they need to protect themselves, each other, and their patients.
- As with previous Tuesdays, I have an update on what we've received over the last week.
- To recap, cumulatively, I've already announced that the following PPE has arrived in BC:
  - Over 3,750,000 N95 respirators
  - Over 3,000,000 surgical masks
  - Close to 1,000,000 pieces of eye protection (including goggles and face shields)
  - Almost 6 million pairs of gloves; and
  - Several hundred thousand gowns
- Today, I can tell you that we received the following PPE since I updated you last Tuesday:
  - 44,000 3M N95 respirators (these are the 3M brand respirators that healthcare workers are used to using in the delivery of care);
  - 85,000 Alternate Brand N95 respirators (subject to testing, these would serve as a backup to our traditional 3M products, if we need them);
  - 324,000 surgical masks;
  - Over 5,000,000 pairs of gloves;

- Close to 100,000 pieces of eye protection; and
  - Over 500,000 gowns
- As always, any product that we receive that isn't from a trusted, reliable vendor, will be subject to assessment and testing before it gets into the health system
- Beyond our testing process, we're also keeping very close contact with Health Canada and other jurisdictions as they receive PPE and test it. We're sharing information so that we can help each other to know what vendors or products are acceptable.
- Once again, I'm able to say that while BC is testing and establishing a contingency of alternative products, we have not had to put alternative products into the healthcare system to this point. With the decline of COVID-19 in BC, we believe we'll be in good shape to continue to protect our healthcare workers with the steady supply we received from our traditional, familiar vendors.

## Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX

---

**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** August 13, 2020 9:42 AM  
**To:** Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FW: PPE Messaging

Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister  
Corporate Services  
Ministry of Health  
Office: 778-698-9108  
A/Senior Executive Assistant: [crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca](mailto:crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca)

**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** May 5, 2020 12:21 PM  
**To:** Dix, Adrian HLTH:EX <[Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <[Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca)>; Moulton, Holly HLTH:EX <[Holly.Moulton@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Holly.Moulton@gov.bc.ca)>; van Baarsen, Amanda HLTH:EX <[Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca)>; Prevost, Jean-Marc GCPE:EX <[Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** PPE Messaging

- The work that I've previously talked about continues – we're receiving PPE and we're keeping pace with health system needs.
- Like other jurisdictions, we're not in a position to stockpile or point to a surplus of PPE, but we're making sure that healthcare workers in BC have the PPE they need to keep themselves and their patients safe. This is true across the health spectrum – from our hospitals to emergency health services to Long Term Care and Assisted Living.
- Over the last few Tuesdays, I've provided updates on what we've received and what we're doing with that supply. To recap, cumulatively, I've already announced that the following PPE has arrived in BC:
  - Over 3,750,000 N95 respirators;
  - Close to 3,000,000 surgical masks;
  - Close to 1,000,000 pieces of eye protection (which includes goggles and face shields);
  - Almost 6 million pairs of gloves; and
  - Several hundred thousand gowns.

- Today I can tell you that we received the following PPE just yesterday:
  - 503,000 gowns
  - 100,000 surgical masks
  - 29,000 pairs of goggles
- Those are big numbers, but remember that we need to test PPE and make sure that it's safe, and that it meets or exceeds Canadian standards for PPE, before it gets into the system.
- We're doing that. We're doing the testing. We have a robust protocol for testing PPE.
- While we test new and alternative PPE that we've received, I'm happy to say that we've managed to maintain a steady supply of our traditional, familiar products that healthcare workers can continue to use.
- BC has done an excellent job in an extremely competitive and challenging international marketplace to protect our healthcare workers, and that work will continue.

## Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX

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**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** August 13, 2020 9:41 AM  
**To:** Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FW: PPE Messaging

Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister  
Corporate Services  
Ministry of Health  
Office: 778-698-9108  
A/Senior Executive Assistant: [crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca](mailto:crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca)

**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** April 28, 2020 12:29 PM  
**To:** Dix, Adrian HLTH:EX <[Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <[Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca)>; Moulton, Holly HLTH:EX <[Holly.Moulton@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Holly.Moulton@gov.bc.ca)>; van Baarsen, Amanda HLTH:EX <[Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca)>; Prevost, Jean-Marc GCPE:EX <[Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** PPE Messaging

- We are still keeping pace with demand for PPE in our health system
- We have managed to maintain some supply from traditional vendors, and our hard work to seek out new and credible suppliers has yielded some good results
- I provided a brief update last Tuesday (April 21) on PPE that we had received
- Today, I can tell you that in the past week we've received the following from vendors and donors:
  - Over 170,000 N95 respirators;
  - Over 350,000 pieces of eye protection (face shields and goggles);
  - Over 100,000 surgical masks;
  - Over 185,000 gowns; and
  - Almost 5 million pairs of gloves
- As another key indicator of our success, since the start of COVID-19 in BC, we have not had to move any alternative N95 respirators into use in our health system.
- This has given us the opportunity to secure a contingency of alternate sources from reliable and credible vendors and, importantly, to take the time

to test these products for their filtration, fluid resistance, fit, and overall effectiveness.

- If the day comes when we are introducing alternative PPE, we'll know it's safe and effective, and we'll have had the time to make sure health care workers have the knowledge that they're protected and safe.
- I acknowledged this point last week, but will say it again – thank you to the health care workers all across BC (from the Emergency Departments, to ICU, to Long Term Care and Assisted Living settings) for doing your part to conserve and use PPE in an appropriate way. You're keeping yourselves, your colleagues, and your patients safe

Here's what you announced last week:

**From Shipments (China) – cumulative including PHSA and VCHA efforts – REQUIRES TESTING:**

N95s or alternate (KN95)	3,700,000
Surgical Mask	1,000,000
Face Shields	300,000
Gloves	1,000,000

**From Federal Government – TESTED and in the system:**

N95s	98,700
Surgical Masks	918,700
Gloves	224,400

**From Alberta – not yet received** <sup>s.17</sup> **so will not require testing:**

N95s	250,000
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**Donated** – PHSA is sorting through various donations at a Staging Warehouse that's been stood up in <sup>s.15; s.17</sup> It will all require testing.

## Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX

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**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** August 13, 2020 9:41 AM  
**To:** Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FW: PPE Messaging

Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister  
Corporate Services  
Ministry of Health  
Office: 778-698-9108  
A/Senior Executive Assistant: [crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca](mailto:crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca)

**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** April 20, 2020 2:16 PM  
**To:** Dix, Adrian HLTH:EX <[Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** Prevost, Jean-Marc GCPE:EX <[Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca)>; Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <[Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** PPE Messaging

- BC continues to receive PPE from international sources.
- As you're seeing from international media, it's a real challenge to source PPE.
- We're receiving PPE from vendors and manufacturers that we hadn't had relationships with in the past.
- It's an absolute necessity that we make sure that the PPE we source is safe and effective before it makes its way into our health system.
- Any alternative product or donated product that we receive goes through a process led by experts to ensure it's safe:
  - We check to ensure that the product has appropriate certification and documentation;
  - We check the equivalency of the product against the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) standards that we use in Canada;
  - We manually inspect the product for tears and irregularities;
  - For N95 respirators, we test the seal and fit of the mask;
  - And if we're unsure of any of the steps I just mentioned, we send the mask away for laboratory testing to confirm that filtration and fluid resistance are suitable for use.
- In addition to that due diligence, we are committed to engaging with unions and stakeholders and healthcare workers BEFORE any alternative product is introduced into the system.

- We want to be absolutely certain that PPE is safe and effective and, importantly, that health care workers are educated and feel safe in the product before we ask them to use an alternative product.
- I need to be clear that we're approaching that point where we'll need to introduce alternative or sterilized PPE.
- Our healthcare workers have done a great job of extending use and conserving the product that we typically use in our health system, but it is running low.
- Like other jurisdictions we're struggling to replace our traditional products in the context of global demand, but safe and effective alternatives exist.
- Use of alternative and equivalent PPE are on the horizon – likely within the next week.
- So that's why I raised the issues I've just mentioned regarding our due diligence and ensuring the safety of product before it enters our health system.

## Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX

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**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** August 13, 2020 9:41 AM  
**To:** Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FW: PPE Messaging

Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister  
Corporate Services  
Ministry of Health  
Office: 778-698-9108  
A/Senior Executive Assistant: [crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca](mailto:crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca)

**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** April 13, 2020 12:58 PM  
**To:** Dix, Adrian HLTH:EX <[Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <[Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca)>; Prevost, Jean-Marc GCPE:EX <[Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca)>; van Baarsen, Amanda HLTH:EX <[Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** PPE Messaging

- We continue to have success sourcing PPE from: traditional vendors; new international vendors (China); the Federal government; and donations.
- We've also had a generous offer from Alberta to share 250,000 N95 respirators with us. This is a great example of provinces working together to ensure that we don't find ourselves in critical situations with only days left of supply on hand.
- As I've said before, our supply continues to arrive in amounts that are keeping us 5-7 days ahead of the need. While we'd love to be in a position to say we're flush for a month, that just isn't the case for us or any other jurisdiction. That's why we're working so incredibly hard to keep our new supply chains running.
- As an example of a shipment of PPE that arrived in BC over the weekend:
  - N95 Respirators: 109,800
  - Face Shields: 51,000
  - Gloves (pairs in varied sizes): 1,200,000
- More shipments (some much larger) are expected this week and in the weeks ahead. We're keeping ourselves ahead of the curve in terms of demand and utilization.
- I'd like to reiterate that despite unprecedented international demand for PPE, BC is making sure that our acute care settings, Long Term Care, and Assisted Living, and other areas of the health system have the PPE they need to keep health care workers and our most vulnerable populations safe. We appreciate that there are needs outside of those priority areas and we're working hard to bolster our supply so we can continue to meet needs across the full spectrum of health care.

- I'd also like to acknowledge the tremendous work that is underway to sort, assess, and test PPE that is coming in from unfamiliar sources to make sure that every piece of PPE that comes into BC is safe and effective before it makes its way into the health system.

## Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX

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**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** August 13, 2020 9:40 AM  
**To:** Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FW: PPE Messaging

Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister  
Corporate Services  
Ministry of Health  
Office: 778-698-9108  
A/Senior Executive Assistant: [crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca](mailto:crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca)

**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** April 9, 2020 2:07 PM  
**To:** Dix, Adrian HLTH:EX <[Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** Prevost, Jean-Marc GCPE:EX <[Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca)>; Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <[Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca)>; van Baarsen, Amanda HLTH:EX <[Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** PPE Messaging

### Update on Efforts to Source PPE:

- We are getting PPE from a variety of new vendors and suppliers in China. Importantly, we are taking our time to inspect and test any and all PPE that comes into BC before it gets anywhere near the health system.
- Here are some examples of recent success sourcing PPE:

#### Personal protective equipment supplies received since April 1, 2020 DONATIONS

100,000	surgical masks
83,000	N95 masks
10,000	goggles
20,000	gloves
1,760	protective coveralls

#### PURCHASED

800,000	surgical masks
157,000	isolation gowns
85,000 pairs	gloves
54,000	N95 masks

#### FEDERAL

900,000	surgical masks
36,000	N95 masks

**With regard to the story about a journalist procuring 10 N95 masks in 72 hours and questioning BC's efforts to protect health care workers:**

- Not all PPE is created equal. Beyond certification, respiratory protection requires fit-testing to ensure proper protection and the model the journalist is demonstrating does not meet our minimum fit-test requirements.
- The masks the journalist was able to buy are large and with no metal nose piece to form to the upper nose. No ability to fit our staff or achieve a successful fit-test.
- During SARS, a large purchase of the that particular brand was made and even when we ran low on N95s, we couldn't deploy them.
- Experts in BC assess all PPE to ensure it will provide employees the full level of protection required.
- For the protection of health care workers, this is about more than quantity and speed of delivery – it's about quality and safety.

Peter Pokorny  
Associate Deputy Minister  
Corporate Services  
Ministry of Health  
(778) 698-8046

## Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX

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**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** August 13, 2020 1:30 PM  
**To:** Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Draft PPE Messaging

Peter Pokorny, Associate Deputy Minister  
Corporate Services  
Ministry of Health  
Office: 778-698-9108  
A/Senior Executive Assistant: [crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca](mailto:crystal.gold@gov.bc.ca)

**From:** Pokorny, Peter HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** March 30, 2020 10:14 AM  
**To:** Dix, Adrian HLTH:EX <[Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Adrian.Dix@gov.bc.ca)>; Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <[Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca)>; Prevost, Jean-Marc GCPE:EX <[Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jean-Marc.Prevost@gov.bc.ca)>; van Baarsen, Amanda HLTH:EX <[Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Amanda.vanBaarsen@gov.bc.ca)>; Moulton, Holly HLTH:EX <[Holly.Moulton@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Holly.Moulton@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Draft PPE Messaging

Proposed messaging on PPE below for consideration. Thanks.

### Key Messages:

- The global response to COVID-19 has led to significant international demand for PPE
- Global manufacturing capacity and supply chain disruption is an issue for all jurisdictions that are responding to COVID-19
- I'm acknowledging the challenges, but want to be clear, particularly to health care workers, that we are taking significant steps to ensure that health care workers are protected and have the appropriate PPE when they need it and where they need it.
- Our approach is focused around preparation, not desperation.
- There are two key pieces of work that I want to update you on today, to provide more perspective on the work that we're doing to ensure an adequate supply of PPE and keep our healthcare workers safe.

### 1. Efforts to Increase Supply

- Despite the challenges, BC does continue to receive supply of PPE. In the last few weeks, we've received several orders from various suppliers, including N95 masks, surgical masks, gowns, eye protection, and other PPE that are critical to keeping our healthcare workers safe.
- The challenge is that global demand is resulting in a situation where our previous suppliers aren't able to provide the bulk, large quantity shipments that will provide us with the comfort we need to say we no longer need to pursue other supply options.
- That's not to say there hasn't been success on large bulk orders. Just today, we received a shipment of 1 million surgical masks. Later this week, we expect to receive other large orders for N95 masks and other key supplies.

Peter Pokorny  
Associate Deputy Minister  
Corporate Services  
Ministry of Health  
(778) 698-8046