



SEMAHMOO  
HOUSE  
SOCIETY

PENINSULA  
ESTATES HOUSING  
SOCIETY

THE  
SEMAHMOO  
FOUNDATION

March 23, 2020

Re: COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear Semiahmoo House Society Community,

I am addressing this letter to the whole Semiahmoo House Society community: people we support, the families of people we support, home share providers, and all our staff members. For the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will be working together, with as few boundaries as possible to ensure that everyone is supported and safe.

Thank you all for the proactive steps that you have all taken to ensure that you and your loved ones are safe at home. It's good to see that the rest of the community is also now hunkering down and that people who are gathering in groups in the community are being called out for it.

### **March 23 Update**

**Limiting the number of different staff supporting people in SHS group homes.** Lise and the Inclusive Living team, including SHS's nurse, Kim, have done an incredible job gathering needed medical gear—masks, face shields, gowns, etc--and exceptional work ensuring that there are no staff members working in SHS group homes who are also working for another employer. This means that we have had to give up some of our staff members so they can work 100% for other organizations, including Fraser Health, and that we will be running a tight ship, but in this crisis, the fewer people in a home, the better, so I am feeling like we are almost set for our group homes. Thank you to our wonderful staff members who have volunteered to take people they know in our groups homes to the staff member's home for the duration of this crisis. This will make us all safer.

**Community Support Workers have been calling and checking in on the people they support and their families/home share providers.** We are working on some creative way of increasing connection through the use of technology that we will be experimenting with over the next little while. I know that quite a few people we support and staff members are connecting through social media, such as Facebook and Instagram. People supported in home shares who are not part of SHS's Community Services are included in all of our plans. If you have any questions or feel that you need some more support, please don't hesitate to contact Brianna (Community Services) or Gale (Community Support Network—Home Share).

**Acquired Brain Injury Services (ABIS)—connecting with people who need support.** ABIS staff members have been connecting with people we are funded to support (as opposed to people who attend drop in sessions) to check up on them and ensure they are doing as best they can at this time.

**Peninsula Child Care is now closed.** We may reopen it in the future if it is needed for children of our staff members who are supporting people in group homes, health providers, and first responders.

## What this all means to you.

At present, we need to continue hunkering down at home, as you have been doing over the weekend. This is likely going to be our situation for the next six weeks, and likely more. If your situation changes and you need more support in some way, please don't hesitate to reach out to the appropriate person at the end of this letter.

Lise Boughen Director of Inclusive Living <a href="mailto:l.boughen@shsbc.ca">l.boughen@shsbc.ca</a> 604 536 1242 ext. 227	Staffed Residential (Group Homes) Chorus Apartment Supports
Gale Cooper Manager, Community Support Network <a href="mailto:g.cooper@shsbc.ca">g.cooper@shsbc.ca</a> 604 536 1242 ext. 231	Home Share Providers
Brianna Hopaluk Community Services Manager <a href="mailto:b.hopaluk@shsbc.ca">b.hopaluk@shsbc.ca</a> 604 536 1242 ext. 232 (until the return of Liz Deschenes)	Personal Development Services Acquired Brain Injury Services Transitions Focus Group Rec and Leisure

Sincerely,



Doug Tennant  
CEO, Semiahmoo House Society

## Resources

While there is much media coverage of the COVID-19 virus it is important to be sure the information is reputable and up to date. Here are five sites that will keep you informed (google the name if this is not an electronic letter):

- [Public Health Authority of Canada](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [BC Ministry of Health](#)
- [Government of Canada Travel Advisories](#)
- [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)

SHS's communications about COVID-19 and our response can be found here:

[www.unity4all.com/coronavirus-communications/](http://www.unity4all.com/coronavirus-communications/)