



April 6, 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.

It has now been five weeks since I sent out SHS's first community letter regarding COVID-19 and three weeks since we asked people to stay home if it was safe to do so. I realize that this has been a difficult time for many of you and again want to express my appreciation for your role in keeping everyone safe during this crisis. It is pretty clear that the 'shelter at home' advice being given by Dr. Bonnie Henry will need to continue for the next few weeks, and perhaps longer. As the self-isolation continues, I wanted to update you on some of the projects Semiahmoo House Society (SHS) has been working on to keep people safe and as connected as possible at this time and to invite you to let us know how we are doing and where more support might be needed for you and your loved ones.

April 6 Update

Guidance Counselor

Shab Khan, Registered Family Counsellor, MPCC, RPC, will be providing support to people connected to Semiahmoo House Society during the COVID-19 pandemic. The counselling is meant for people SHS supports, including people already on the Guidance Counselor's active list, people on her wait list, family members, and home share providers. Priority will be given to the people in the most critical situations (environmental, health, or emotional). The support given will be virtual—through phone, email, or secure online platforms. Contact information below:

Guidance Counselor contact information:

Shab Khan, Registered Family Counsellor, M.P.C.C., R.P.C.
Telephone: 604-536-1242 Extension: 276
Email: s.khan@shsbc.ca

Personal COVID-19 Emergency Plans

SHS has developed a **Personal COVID-19 Emergency Plan** document that will be used to ensure that everything that needs to be thought about and planned for during the crisis is recorded. The document is available in Word or as a fillable PDF. These were distributed to people we support and their families/home share providers last week. Please fill in these forms and return them to the appropriate staff member/department. We are using these forms to ensure that people have plans to stay safe and to also identify any systemic gaps that we can help address.

The Personal COVID-19 Emergency Plan documents have been uploaded to the [Unit4All COVID-19 Information Page](#).

Peninsula Child Care (PCC)

PCC will be open on April 7th for children of staff members who are doing essential work and for the children of health care workers/first responders in South Surrey. Staff members and community health care workers or first responders who need childcare should contact Liz Deschenes (contact information at the end of this letter).

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal Protective Equipment is on many of our minds at this time. SHS is distributing fabric masks for all staff members who work in group homes and will also be distributing these masks to Community Services staff members who are still working directly with people we support (thank you to Tanya for getting this fabric mask project going with help from Joan and Leona!). These masks will be worn by staff members when supporting people at distances closer than six feet. The purpose of these masks is to minimize any chance of transmission of COVID-19 from staff members to people we support (on top of all the other protocols we have adopted to keep people safe). If someone we support in home share or residential services does get ill with COVID-19, we have N-95 masks, face shields, and other PPE to distribute to people we support, home share providers, and staff members who are at risk. Due to limited supplies, these PPE are reserved for cases of confirmed COVID-19 infection in staffed residential settings (group homes and Chorus) and home share homes only.

Online Support

Community Services (North and South Campuses), WISE Employment Services, and ABI Services have been supporting people remotely through phone calls, online social media and meeting platforms, and other electronic methods. Community Services staff members are also working together to create an online learning platform that will be trialed this month with people we support. Stay tuned for more information about this project. Please communicate with the relevant staff member listed at the end of this letter if you need more support at present.

Provincial Financial Support and Resources People with Disabilities

Last week, Minister Shane Simpson announced some financial assistance for people receiving the provincial disabilities benefit. People on disability assistance and not receiving federal Employment Insurance (EI) or the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) will automatically receive a \$300 supplement to their cheques for April, May and June. No action is required to receive this supplement. More information on this benefit and others can be found [here](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/income-assistance/on-assistance/covid) < <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/income-assistance/on-assistance/covid> >.

Additional Support

If you need additional support during these difficult times, please contact the relevant person listed at the end of this letter.

SHS Staff Member	Service/Program
Lise Boughen Director of Inclusive Living l.boughen@shsbc.ca 604 536 1242 ext. 227	Staffed Residential (Group Homes) Chorus Apartment Supports
Gale Cooper Manager, Community Support Network g.cooper@shsbc.ca 604 536 1242 ext. 231	Home Share Providers
Liz Deschenes Community Services Director e.deschenes@shsbc.ca 604-536-1242 ext. 234	Peninsula Child Care Acquired Brain Injury Services
Brianna Hopaluk Community Services Manager b.hopaluk@shsbc.ca 604 536 1242 ext. 232	South Campus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Development Services • Rec and Leisure
Teresa Randle Transitions Services Supervisor t.randle@shsbc.ca 604 536 1242 ext. 311	North Campus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitions • Focus Group
Kristyl Downing Program Coordinator—ABIS k.downing@shsbc.ca 604-592-1006 ext. 230	Acquired Brain Injury Services
Seema Tripathi Employment and Innovative Services Director s.tripathi@shsbc.ca 778 888 5916	WISE Employment Solutions Culinary Arts Program (CULA) SPARK tidyAlot

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: <https://uniti4all.com/covid-19-information/>