



SEMAHMOO  
HOUSE  
SOCIETY

PENINSULA  
ESTATES HOUSING  
SOCIETY

THE  
SEMAHMOO  
FOUNDATION

April 20, 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.*

### **April 20 Update**

It is with great sadness that I share the news that Ariis Knight, who we supported in her South Surrey home (SHS group home), passed away at Peace Arch Hospital over the weekend. While her passing was not COVID-19 related, the present crisis did have an impact on her final days as neither SHS staff members nor her family members were allowed to visit her in the hospital. Ariis was a bright spark of a young woman with an impeccable fashion sense and a smile that would light up any room she was in. Our hearts go out to her family, the compassionate staff members who supported her, and anyone who was lucky enough to know her. More information about how her life will be remembered/celebrated will come once that has been figured out.

On the operational side of things, we are adapting our services to the COVID-19 reality: today SHS Community Services launched two classes that will be part of the Online Campus we are developing. The classes, put on by Note by Note Therapy (Music and singing from your favourite musicians—bring your own instrument and enjoy) and Frances Morris (Relax with yoga, dance around your house or get a good workout in!) are scheduled for every day this week. Community Services participants should have received a separate email with the schedule and Zoom information. Our plan is to trial these classes (and our future Online Campus) with Community Services and Rec and Leisure before opening them up to the whole SHS community in the next two weeks.

SHS has also been supporting Kudoz South Surrey, who are running a variety of online experiences that are open to all. This week's offerings include making Seafoam Candy with their Quarantine Kitchen and Friday Fallout with DJ C+ where participants will learn a few DJ tips, groove, and just hang out. You can sign up to these online activities on Kudoz South Surrey's Facebook Page: < <https://www.facebook.com/KudozSouthFraser/> >

### **Important and Ongoing Information**

#### **Personal COVID-19 Emergency Plans**

The purpose of these documents is to identify areas where support is needed if people get sick or injured during this crisis. It is not critical for Community Service participants to send a copy of the document to SHS—the document is for your use and you should share it (or not) with the people who need to see it. If you identify areas where additional support may be needed, please contact us and we can assist you in figuring out those areas. People supported in home share and staffed residential settings (group homes and Chorus) are asked to return their forms to SHS.

The Personal COVID-19 Emergency Plan documents have been uploaded to the [Uniti4All COVID-19 Information Page](#).

### **Self-Advocate Work**

Semiahmoo House Society and The Semiahmoo Foundation has been supporting self-advocates to have a voice during the COVID-19 pandemic. I wanted to share with you some of the advocacy work that two self-advocate groups that we are associated with have been doing. The Provincial Self-Advocate Leadership Network (SALN) have been creating news releases and sending them to provincial and federal leaders, and the Self-Advocates of Semiahmoo (SAS) have created five public awareness videos about COVID 19. SALN news releases and SAS videos can be found on the [Uniti4All COVID-19 webpage](#) < <https://uniti4all.com/covid-19-information/> >

### **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

### **Peninsula Child Care (PCC)**

PCC re-opened last week 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)**

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 (by Fraser Health) in staffed residential settings (group homes and Chorus) and home share homes only.

### **Online Support**

We are supporting daily (Mon-Fri) coffeehouse meetings through Rec & Leisure Services. These meetings are open to all and are a chance to catch up with each other and see some friendly faces. If you are interested in joining those calls, please contact Anita Bhatti (contact information at end of letter).

If you are using any online social sites or games with your family and friends that you recommend we look into, please send them to the staff members connected to the service you use at the end of this letter.

We will begin to roll out our Online Campus this week. This Campus will feature ways to connect and learn from staff members and experts.

**WISE Employment Solutions**

The WISE team is figuring out how to do the discovery process with job-seekers online. More information about this will follow next week.

**Rec & Leisure**

We have cancelled all May and June Rec & Leisure events. Participants will receive refunds for those sessions.

**Provincial Financial Support and Resources People with Disabilities**

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, please contact the relevant person listed on the next page.

SHS Staff Member	Service/Program
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
Liz Deschenes Community Services Director <a href="mailto:e.deschenes@shsbc.ca">e.deschenes@shsbc.ca</a> 604-536-1242 ext. 234	Peninsula Child Care Acquired Brain Injury Services
Brianna Hopaluk Community Services Manager <a href="mailto:b.hopaluk@shsbc.ca">b.hopaluk@shsbc.ca</a> 604 536 1242 ext. 232	South Campus (formerly PD)
Teresa Randle Transitions Services Supervisor <a href="mailto:t.randle@shsbc.ca">t.randle@shsbc.ca</a> 604 536 1242 ext. 311	North Campus (formerly Transitions) Focus Group Encore
Anita Bhatti Recreation and Leisure Services Program Coordinator <a href="mailto:a.bhatti@shsbc.ca">a.bhatti@shsbc.ca</a> 604-536-1242 ext. 255	Rec & Leisure Services
Kristyl Downing Program Coordinator—ABIS <a href="mailto:k.downing@shsbc.ca">k.downing@shsbc.ca</a> 604-592-1006 ext. 230	Acquired Brain Injury Services
Seema Tripathi Employment and Innovative Services Director <a href="mailto:s.tripathi@shsbc.ca">s.tripathi@shsbc.ca</a> 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://unit4all.com/covid-19-information/>