



SEMIAHMOO
HOUSE
SOCIETY

PENINSULA
ESTATES HOUSING
SOCIETY

THE
SEMIAHMOO
FOUNDATION

May 1, 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.

May 1st Update

It's now been two months since I first communicated with you about SHS's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and six weeks since we asked people who had safe homes to stay home. Six weeks ago, I said that we would need to do this for the next six weeks. Well, it's been six weeks and I am going to ask you to continue on with what we are doing for the next two weeks at least. However, I do believe that if things continue as they are today, we will be able to begin re-activating some of our services gradually in mid-May, while continuing to use and develop our online supports for people. The intent of today's letter is to share some of the re-activation scenarios for SHS services. We hope that this will help you prepare for when the provincial government gives us guidance for the re-opening of BC (as some other provinces have already shared their plans, I'm expecting that BC will share their plan next week). More about the SHS re-activation plans will be shared with you in the next two weeks. Similar to the re-opening strategies we are seeing in Canadian provinces, all of our plans will utilize a phased approach. It's likely that we will begin with our re-activation mid-May, after Victoria Day—that will depend on our safety protocols and the advice we get from the Provincial Health Officer.

Community Services

Overview: Community Services re-activation will be as person-centred as possible with one-to-one support but fewer hours per person of direct support than before the COVID-19 pandemic. There will be the opportunity to access more learning and connection through SHS's Online Campus, which will be launched next week. Large group gatherings will not take place until we are sure it is safe to do so—likely not for a year at least.

Phase 1: Community Services will be a combination of the Online Campus and in person supports. This will include staff members contacting people and their families to coordinate one-to-one service delivery. This service delivery will vary depending on a person's needs but will be a few hours a week for most people. SHS's Online Campus will deliver at least 30 hours of content each week, which will be accessible to all Community Service participants (and others).

Phase 2: In addition to all actions in Phase 1, staff partnering up with other workers and with the people they support and in smaller groups. People will meet in the community or at any of the available SHS locations (we will schedule times to ensure groups are not large at these locations).

Phase 3: Group size slowly increasing. Possible 7 day a week schedule, a combination of online support and in-person support based on a person's needs and the resources we have available. Rec and Leisure will be incorporated into this schedule.

The timing of all these phases will depend on our safety protocols and advice from the Provincial Health Officer.

Acquired Brain Injury Services (ABIS)

Rod and others have been hard at work creating classes for the Online Campus. ABIS participants will be welcomed to join these and other classes and activities online. The re-activation of ABIS will likely involve smaller groups getting together, in line with provincial and SHS safety protocols.

Employment and Innovative Services

Employment and Innovative Services have claimed the phrase “Reboot & Revive” for their re-activation plan. They will Reboot & Revive using technology, including online learning labs they are developing for job seekers. Once the learning labs are launched Employment Specialists will begin individual discovery sessions as well. Employment and Innovative Services will be communicating more about their re-activation through a specific email to job seekers and their families today (May 1).

Inclusive Living Services

Group Homes

One of the stories that should be shared is how amazing SHS residential support workers have been during this crisis. They have supported our decisions about safety for the people living in SHS group homes and are working in single sites only. Some staff members have taken people who live in SHS group homes to their own family homes for the duration of the crisis. Group home ‘re-activation’ will involve loosening some of the protocols we have in place around visitors and staff working in more than one location. We will base our decisions on our protocols for the safety of the people we support and staff members and advice from the Provincial Health Officer.

Chorus Apartments

Re-activation at Chorus will involve welcoming back tenants who are staying at their family homes during the crisis. Chorus has shared a document that describes the safety levels and protocols that need to be observed by tenants who return.

Home Share

Another shout out to home share providers—who are doing exceptional support work 24/7 during the crisis. Over the next month, SHS will begin online processing of referrals using Zoom and other meeting software. We will also use the same technology for home studies and applications. Transitions into or out of home share homes will begin once we are sure they can be done safely. People living in home shares will also be welcomed to access SHS’s Online Campus (both those who use our day services and those who do not). Home share providers with questions about CLBC emergency funding should contact Gail (contact information at the end of this letter).

Ariis Knight



As you know, Ariis Knight passed away in hospital without her loved ones by her side. SHS support workers were also not allowed in to the hospital to support her while she was there. The SHS community and provincial and federal community living groups are continuing to advocate for a change in the provincial COVID-19 Health Policy to allow support staff, home share providers, or family members to be in hospital with a person who has a disability and needs support with communication, decision-making, or personal care. I'm hopeful that the policy will be changed in the next little while. SHS is very appreciative of the dedicated health care workers at Peace Arch Hospital during this crisis. Their work will be easier once the policy is changed and people are allowed in to support those that need it.

Culinary Arts Program (CULA)

Chef Roger and May have been putting together tasty meals and delicious treats for the community. I'd like to thank board members and others who have helped distribute these meals and treats, and Seema for organizing all of this. Meals have been made and distributed to seniors, health care workers at Peach Arch Hospital, home share providers, and people living and working in SHS group homes. Thank you, CULA!

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/) < <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

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.

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 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 (formerly PD)
Teresa Randle Transitions Services Supervisor t.randle@shsbc.ca 604 536 1242 ext. 311	North Campus (formerly Transitions) Focus Group Encore
Anita Bhatti Recreation and Leisure Services Program Coordinator a.bhatti@shsbc.ca 604-536-1242 ext. 255	Rec & Leisure Services
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://unit4all.com/covid-19-information/>