



SEMIAHMOO
HOUSE
SOCIETY

PENINSULA
ESTATES HOUSING
SOCIETY

THE
SEMIAHMOO
FOUNDATION

May 15, 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 15th Update

Today I will be sharing Semiahmoo House Society's re-activation plan for the next two weeks (which is roughly co-ordinated with BC's COVID-19 Go-Forward Strategy, our province's plan for re-opening). Last week I shared our COVID-19 Response Principles that have guided our decisions during this crisis. Our re-activation will also be guided by these principles (included at the end of this letter). We are also setting policy and protocols in place to ensure that all of our buildings remain safe during our re-activation. This includes defining the maximum number of people allowed in any of our buildings or rooms at any given time, as well as cleaning regimens for each building. We will be sending a short survey next week to our stakeholders, including families and home share providers, to gather information on your worries and hopes with our re-activation so that we can address the concerns you may have as we move forward. People we support will also be consulted directly about their worries and hopes, and a Self-Advocates of Semiahmoo (SAS) committee is reviewing and giving feedback on our re-activation plans.

Community Services—"Re-Activation"

Phase One re-activation for Community Services (CS) was the introduction of the SHS Online Campus. Over 100 of the people we support have joined these classes, which include fitness, music therapy, and a variety of other classes and online social gatherings. While not the same as getting together in the same physical space, the Online Campus has supported people getting together, being active, and learning. The Online Campus is a project that will continue throughout all phases of CS's re-activation. During Phase Two, starting on May 19th, Community Support Workers will be reaching out to people we support and families to see if they are interested in a couple of hours of one-to-one in-person direct support. We will try to be as flexible as possible in these supports in order to make them work. Community Services during the re-activation phases will be quite different from what they were before COVID-19—we are starting with one-to-one direct support and gradually expanding the numbers of people who can be together, but we will not be returning to congregate day services the way they were run before. Fortunately, the gradual approach to our re-activation will allow everyone to figure out together what is working or not working, and SHS will strive to ensure that people are supported in the best way possible, within safety and resource constraints. Below in point form is an overview of our Phase Two approach:

PHASE TWO (May 19 onwards)

- Offer a specific number of direct service hours each week to all people receiving CS services
 - This will be coordinated by assigned staff with the person or their supporter through a consultative approach
 - Service delivery will be done safely and at preferred locations (options to be discussed)
- Safety protocols will be in place and must be followed
- Tracking and reporting systems will be developed
- On-line Campus option remains in place

I should also add, that the support offered by SHS is not at all mandatory—people we support, their families, and home share providers may decide to not access our adapted and limited services at this time, in the same way that other BCers may choose to remain at home for a bit longer. This is absolutely fine, and will not in any way change the services we are offering you throughout our re-activation. You need to return to SHS's in-person services when you are comfortable doing so.

Acquired Brain Injury Services

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 involve smaller groups getting together, in line with provincial and SHS safety protocols. This will happen in Phase Three of our re-activation, likely mid-June.

Rec & Leisure

We have cancelled all May and June Rec & Leisure in-person events. Phase Two of our re-activation includes free access to SHS's Online Campus for Rec & Leisure participants.

Employment and Innovative Services (EIS) “Reboot & Revive”

EIS will Reboot & Revive using technology, including online learning labs they have developed for job seekers. Phase Two will feature online learning labs and Employment Specialists will begin individual discovery sessions as well. EIS will be communicating Reboot & Revive information directly with job seekers and their families/home share providers. If you have any questions, please contact Seema (contact information below).

SPARK Community Connectors

During Phase Two, SPARK will be connecting virtually with participants in a group setting to share their experiences, stories, fears, and hopes around the COVID-19 crisis.

Culinary Arts Program (CULA)

CULA has been supporting SHS and other community organizations with food preparation and delivery throughout this crisis. During Phase Two, CULA will be examining how they can re-activate their training program. This will likely include smaller classes and enhanced safety protocols, but the goal will be to get students into the kitchen during Phase Three (mid-June).

Inclusive Living Services—“Still Strong, Still Safe, Stepping Forward”

Group Homes

Group home Phase Two 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 safety and staffing decisions on our COVID-19 response principles.

Chorus Apartments

Tenants living in and returning to their homes in Chorus will be supported to go to Level 2 (Chorus is using levels of safety in their plan to gradually reduce restrictions—in line with BC's Go-Forward Strategy). All Chorus tenant (and families where pertinent) have been sent more thorough information about this. If you have not received this information, please contact Jasper at J.Macabulos@shsbc.ca .

Home Share

During Phase Two of re-activation, all people living in SHS home shares will continue to be welcomed to use SHS's Online Campus (both those who use our day services and those who do not). People supported in home share who access other SHS services should find relevant information under those services in this letter. Please direct any questions you have to the relevant person in the list at the end of this letter. Home share providers with questions about CLBC emergency funding should contact Gale (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. Yesterday, Health Minister Adrian Dix stated that the health policy will be changed, “hopefully next Tuesday.” Part of Ariis’s legacy will be that her situation in hospital has produced a policy change that will keep people with disabilities safer and healthier in hospital. We will be referring to the revisions in the health policy as “Ariis’s Law” in her honour.

SHS’s Crisis Response Team will continue to meet on a daily basis during Phase Two of our re-activation and we will continue to communicate with our community.

I wish you all a healthy and safe long weekend.

Doug

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.

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 below.

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

Semiahmoo House Society's COVID-19 Principles

- 1) All our decisions will be made with the safety of the people we support and our staff members being our first priority**
- 2) We will support people with disabilities to have the same right to safety as all other citizens in BC**
- 3) We are person-centred and will adapt our services to support people in the way that is best for them, given safety and resource realities**
- 4) We are open-minded and will revise our plans when new information suggests this**
- 5) We will be responsible with taxpayer funds and will use alternate resources when necessary in our response**

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](#)
- [CLBC COVID-19 Information Page](#)

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

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