



SEMIAHMOO
HOUSE
SOCIETY

PENINSULA
ESTATES HOUSING
SOCIETY

THE
SEMIAHMOO
FOUNDATION

September 11, 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.

September 11th Update

The past few weeks have seen an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in British Columbia. There have also been cases in groups homes and other services of organizations that support people with disabilities. While Semiahmoo House Society has fortunately not had a case thus far, we are very focused on ensuring that people we support and staff members are as safe as possible as we head into the fall. In March, when we greatly reduced our services to respond to the immediate threat of COVID-19, all the people we support (and their families and home share providers) were impacted greatly. It is likely that COVID-19 cases in BC will continue to rise in the fall and winter but we plan to continue to provide in-person services, with safety precautions based on what we have learned about the virus. Here are two of the actions we are taking to enable our continued support of people:

- 1) Securing more indoor locations where we can deliver services when the weather shifts—we have freed up three townhomes where people can be supported as safely as possible within their ‘pods.’
- 2) Creating a staff ‘first response’ team that can be activated if any of SHS’s group homes have a COVID-19 case.

Acquired Brain Injury Services

Rod Field, ABI Services’ resident tech and game guru, has developed some great SHS Online Campus classes. We would love to see more ABI Services participants access these and other online offerings. If you need assistance or devices to access the campus, please get in touch with Kristyl (contact info at the end of this letter).

HandyDART

It’s been nice to see more people using HandyDART to move about. Currently HandyDART’s safety protocol is limiting the number of passengers, but they are up and running and have the capacity to deliver many more rides. Please do consider using them to attend SHS services or to do your usual shopping, etc.

Sibling Collaborative

The Sibling Collaborative supports sisters and brothers of people who have disabilities thrive in the present and future through:

- supportive connections with other siblings
- opportunities to share and learn from other sibling experiences

- access to helpful and relevant resources; and
- information to improve well-being over the long term for both you and your sibling.

You can visit the [website](#) to learn more.

International Study on the Impact of COVID-19

UBC is involved in this international study, which takes about 25 minutes to complete. This survey is focused on the experiences of paid and unpaid supporters of people with disabilities during the pandemic. If you are interested in taking the survey, the link is below:

[Please click here to take the survey](#)

Important and Ongoing Information

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 new [SALNBC.com website](#).

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.

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/>