



SEMAIHM  
MOO  
HOUSE  
SOCIETY

PENINSULA  
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SOCIETY

THE  
SEMAIHM  
MOO  
FOUNDATION

November 25, 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.*

### **November 25<sup>th</sup> Update**

#### **Community Services**

We are experiencing people associated Community Services at both North and South Campuses, including staff members, testing positive for COVID-19. Thus far there have been no recorded transmissions of the virus at SHS buildings or services. I believe this is due, in large part, to the health and safety protocols we have had in place since March (with revisions based on the latest information from the Public Health Officer (PHO), Dr. Bonnie Henry). One of the recent changes to our protocols has been the implementation of in-person check-in stations at both North and South Campuses. People entering the buildings during regular service hours will be asked COVID-19 symptom questions and have their temperature checked (people entering the building outside of regular hours must perform a self-check).



*Tanya checks Liz's and Agnes checks Krista's temperature at the Treehouse (they did get within 2 inches for a good reading!)*

#### **Fraser Health Region COVID-19 Outbreak**

It is clear that Surrey is now the epicentre for COVID-19 in B.C. There are a variety of reasons for this, including the number of Surrey citizens who work on the front lines of health and social service organizations, and who work in congregate settings such as meat packing plants. As well, the population of Surrey is significantly younger than other regions, and the latest outbreak is being driven by young people, particularly those between the ages of 20 and 39. This outbreak is of significant concern to SHS because our services are located in this health region and most of our staff members and people we support also live in this health region. Everyone needs to do their part to ensure that we are as safe as possible at this time. All of the COVID-19 cases associated with SHS staff members and people we support have occurred in the person's home or at a different workplace (not SHS)—be aware of people in your family or household who are showing COVID-19 symptoms and dial 811 for advice if they are. We currently have some people who use SHS's Community Services who are choosing to stay home (many of whom are accessing our Online Campus to stay connected)

and if this is an option for you, it may be something that you consider during this outbreak in Surrey and Fraser Health. Please contact the relevant person listed at the end of this email if you are considering this. **Finally, please stay at home and communicate with us if there is someone in your home who has COVID-19 symptoms and/or has gone for a COVID-19 test.**

### **COVID-19 Communication**

While Fraser Health is responsible for COVID-19 contact tracing, out of an abundance of caution, SHS is also contact tracing as soon as we are made aware of a COVID-19 case within our community. This means that we will communicate with you if you have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19 at a SHS building or service. Please understand that we cannot legally or ethically release any personal information or identify anyone who has COVID-19. It is very important that we have a culture that supports people letting us know if they have COVID-19 or have had contact with someone who has COVID-19. Respecting people's privacy will allow for more open sharing of this type of information, which will make everyone safer.

### **New Provincial Health Order**

(I'll the information below with today's new information)

On Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, [Dr. Bonnie Henry announced new health order with restrictions](#) in response to the rising COVID-19 count in the Province, particularly in the Fraser Health region. These restrictions include the following:

1. Socialize only with your immediate household (your immediate family or roommates that live in the same home)
2. No gatherings of any size with anyone other than your immediate household (does not matter where—no gatherings)
3. Funerals and weddings may proceed with immediate household only
4. Suspend indoor group physical activities
5. In-person health screening of all onsite workers
6. Travel outside of the Fraser Valley should be limited to essential travel only

While our major funder, Community Living British Columbia (CLBC), has stated that these orders do not apply to service providers, we will be incorporating these practices as much as we can into our services (we continue to follow our COVID-19 Principles found at the end of this letter). For example, we will be making our safety checks for people entering South Campus and North Campus buildings a bit more rigorous and also moving supports from people's homes to the community or our buildings wherever possible.

Dr. Henry was pretty clear that the danger of COVID-19 infection is greater from at home gatherings than it is at the workplace. The virus is being spread by people gathering together in homes for significant periods of time, usually without masks or social distancing. During the festive season that we are entering, please do not meet in person and find alternate ways to celebrate with your family and friends—until December 7<sup>th</sup>, at least, this is an order from the Public Health Officer that must be followed.

If you have any questions about SHS services and the new provincial health order, please contact the relevant person from the list on the next page.

Sincerely,



Doug Tennant

## Additional Support

If you need additional support, please contact the relevant person listed below.

| SHS Staff Member   | Service/Program  |
|--|--|
| Lise Boughen<br>Director of Inclusive Living<br><a href="mailto:l.boughen@shsbc.ca">l.boughen@shsbc.ca</a><br>604 536 1242 ext. 227                      | Staffed Residential (Group Homes)<br>Chorus Apartment Supports                 |
| Gale Cooper<br>Manager, Community Support Network<br><a href="mailto:g.cooper@shsbc.ca">g.cooper@shsbc.ca</a><br>604 536 1242 ext. 231                   | Home Share Providers   |
| Liz Deschenes<br>Community Services Director<br><a href="mailto:e.deschenes@shsbc.ca">e.deschenes@shsbc.ca</a><br>604-536-1242 ext. 234                  | Community Services   |
| Brianna Hopaluk<br>Community Services Manager<br><a href="mailto:b.hopaluk@shsbc.ca">b.hopaluk@shsbc.ca</a><br>604 536 1242 ext. 232                     | South Campus   |
| Teresa Randle<br>Transitions Services Supervisor<br><a href="mailto:t.randle@shsbc.ca">t.randle@shsbc.ca</a><br>604 536 1242 ext. 311                    | North Campus<br>Focus Group<br>Encore  |
| Anita Bhatti<br>Recreation and Leisure Services Program Coordinator<br><a href="mailto:a.bhatti@shsbc.ca">a.bhatti@shsbc.ca</a><br>604-536-1242 ext. 255 | Rec & Leisure Services   |
| Kristyl Downing<br>Program Coordinator—ABIS<br><a href="mailto:k.downing@shsbc.ca">k.downing@shsbc.ca</a><br>604-592-1006 ext. 230                       | Acquired Brain Injury Services   |
| Seema Tripathi<br>Employment and Innovative Services Director<br><a href="mailto:s.tripathi@shsbc.ca">s.tripathi@shsbc.ca</a><br>778 888 5916            | WISE Employment Solutions<br>Culinary Arts Program (CULA)<br>SPARK<br>tidyAlot |

## **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/>