



SEMIAHMOO  
HOUSE  
SOCIETY

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SOCIETY

THE  
SEMIAHMOO  
FOUNDATION

March 12, 2021

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.*

### **March 12<sup>th</sup> Update**

It's been a while since my last letter; I'm happy that positive things are starting to happen and we can see progress towards a time when we will be able to gather together with our family and friends. Won't that be nice!

### **Vaccinations**

On Wednesday, SHS staff members attended an online meeting with Rod MacDonald, Regional Manager for Fraser Health, on the topic of vaccinations. The good news is that people living in SHS's five group homes will be receiving their first vaccination shot within the next two weeks—in fact two homes were done today! The not-so-good news is that staff members working in those homes are not included in the list of people who can get their shots during Phase 2 of BC's vaccination drive. I've also found it very frustrating that people with developmental disabilities, particularly those with proven vulnerabilities to COVID-19 (for example, people who have Down syndrome are 10X more likely to die from the virus) have not been moved up to Phase 2. They clearly are part of the "high-risk population" of Phases 1 and 2. Fortunately, Phase 3 begins in April, and there is a category there for "[Adults with very significant developmental disabilities that increase risk.](#)" Fraser Health's [online vaccination booking page](#) is the best way to book your vaccinations (you are only able to book your appointment during your vaccination phase). It is very possible that timelines for vaccinations may move up (ie Phase 3 starting earlier than April 1<sup>st</sup>), so please be prepared to book your appointments for yourself or your loved ones at short notice from Fraser Health. It would also be very helpful for the planning (and opening up) of our services, if you would let the appropriate SHS staff member listed at the end of this letter know when you have received your vaccination shot.

People supported through SHS's Inclusive Living Services (group homes, home share, and Chorus) will receive more various levels of support in getting their vaccinations. People living in group homes will be visited by a Fraser Health nurse in the next two weeks for their shots; we have forwarded pertinent information about SHS home shares to Fraser Health and are awaiting their direction; and people SHS supports in Chorus will be assisted with the vaccination process (it could be staff or family members that assist with the vaccination shot appointment—whichever makes the most sense).

***Although SHS has in the past run flu vaccinations campaigns at our office, that is not possible for the COVID-19 vaccinations and people and families will need to book their vaccination appointments using Fraser Health's system.***

### **New Provincial Health Order**

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

The [latest Provincial Health Order on March 11, 2021](#), features an easing of restrictions on outdoor gatherings. Specifically, people can gather outdoors or in a back yard in groups of up to 10 people. Indoor gatherings that include people who do not live in that home are still not allowed. As the weather gets better and more people get vaccinated, the province will likely continue to "open up." As this happens, SHS will also continue to "open up" our Community Services by supporting people in larger groups, which will likely increase the amount of time people can be supported as well. As we have done throughout the pandemic, we will follow our principles, which are attached at the end of this letter.

### **Harmony Apartment Update**

Since I have you here... I wanted to share [this article](#), published today, about UNITI's affordable and inclusive Harmony Apartment project. As always, we appreciate your support for this project as we work our way closer to the finish line.

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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Tennant'.

Doug Tennant

## Additional Support

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

SHS Staff Member	Service/Program
Jasper Macabulos Associate Director of Inclusive Living <a href="mailto:j.macabulos@shsbc.ca">j.macabulos@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	Community Services
Brianna Hopaluk Associate Director of Community Services <a href="mailto:b.hopaluk@shsbc.ca">b.hopaluk@shsbc.ca</a> 604 536 1242 ext. 232	South Campus
Teresa Randle Transitions Services Supervisor <a href="mailto:t.randle@shsbc.ca">t.randle@shsbc.ca</a> 604 536 1242 ext. 311	North Campus 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

## **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/>