Subject: COVID-19 Update - April 23, 2020 - Testing

Date: Thursday, April 23, 2020 at 5:32:29 PM Pacific Daylight Time

From: Ernie Baatz

To: Ernie Baatz

Hi all;
I nice short update today, but a very important topic.

Testing for Employees and Individuals

As we mentioned in yesterday's update, the Province is now making Covid-19 testing available to anyone showing symptoms of the virus, especially those who are considered more vulnerable including "people living and working in communal settings such as work-camps, correctional facilities, shelters, group homes, assisted living and seniors' residences": http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/testing

Some of Spectrum's services pose greater risk of infection than others. In our staffed homes, where several staff come and go from the home through the week, the risk of someone bringing the virus into the home is greater than a homeshare setting where a caregiver and an individual are in their "bubble." This is why we've worked to reduce the number of staff working in each of our homes to a core group who don't work in other homes, and enhanced cleaning and PPE use in the homes.

Stay Home if You are Sick: As Dr. Henry reminds us every day, we need to stay vigilant and this means staying home if you're sick. The revised testing guidelines say to take the online self-assessment if you develop cold, influenza or Covid-19 symptoms - https://bc.thrive.health/. For those working in higher risk settings, they should ask their doctor about Covid-19 testing if they are showing any symptoms. Testing is now available at a number of different collection sites across the province. To find a collection site near you, call 811 or ask your doctor.

As a service provider, Spectrum has a duty to safeguard the well-being of the individuals we serve. As an employer, we also have a duty to ensure a safe work environment for our staff. For this reason, we expect that any individual, employee or caregiver will immediately call their doctor or 811 to inquire about testing if they show symptoms of cold, influenza or Covid-19. Dr. Henry suggested in her briefing yesterday that even symptoms you might associate with seasonal allergies – sneezing, coughing, itchy throat – should be investigated.

With testing more widely available, we encourage everyone to check out the BC Centre for Disease Control Testing Page and familiarize themselves with the testing process. If an employee develops symptoms, we expect that they will get tested and stay home until cleared to return to work by the health authority. If an individual we support develops symptoms, we expect that they will get tested and self-isolate. Spectrum will continue to provide essential supports to the best of our ability, while minimizing contact with the person until they are cleared to come out of self-isolation by the health authority.

Our leaders and health authorities keep reminding us that we're not out of the woods yet. Until a vaccine is developed, our focus will be on managing the virus and minimizing its spread. Testing is an important piece of the overall public health strategy. **Get tested as soon as possible if you're showing symptoms** and this will help to contain the spread and minimize the risk to others.

Let us know if you have any questions.

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