

Subject: COVID-19 Update - April 29, 2020
Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 at 11:54:56 AM Pacific Daylight Time
From: Ernie Baatz
To:

CLBC Conference Call for Front Line Staff:

CLBC is inviting agency staff to join a conference call with Shane Simpson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, and Dr. Daniele Behn-Smith, Deputy Provincial Health Officer this Friday.

Please invite your staff and support workers to join us on Friday, May 1, 2020 from 9:35 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. for a teleconference update. (This message will also be posted and promoted to all support workers in the sector on CLBC’s web site.)

Presenters include:

Shane Simpson, Minister, Social Development and Poverty Reduction
Dr. Daniele Behn-Smith, Deputy Provincial Health Officer
Ross Chilton, CEO, Community Living BC
Gentil Mateus, CEO, Community Social Services Employers’ Association of BC
Brenda Gillette, CEO, BC CEO Network

When: Friday, May 1, 2020
Time: 9:35 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

How to call in:

Vancouver – 604-681-0260
Elsewhere – 1-877-353-9184
Participant code: 37568#

Special Instructions: Due to the large number of participants, please start dialing in by 9:25 a.m.

Support workers are invited to pre-submit questions to CLBCInfo@gov.bc.ca by 3 p.m. on Thursday, April 30, using the words “Support Worker Question” in the subject line.

Ways to Stay Home, Stay Safe in your Neighbourhood

We had a Zoom meeting on Tuesday, April 21st, 2020 to share ideas on ways to keep healthy and busy while we stay home and stay safe. There is lots of room for your ideas too, so send them to [Arlene](#) for addition to this page. Thank you Arlene for collecting the ideas, and thanks to everyone who shared their ideas and joined us on the zoom!

Key Ideas:

- Stay social - find ways to connect with family and friends.
- Stay active - get exercise every day
- Get fresh air - Get outside and appreciate nature
- Be creative - explore arts, crafts, baking, writing

<https://www.spectrumsociety.org/ways-to-stay-home-stay-safe-in-your-neighbourhood/>

Re-opening the Economy

There have been a variety of government initiatives around the world focused on reducing restrictions and helping people get back to work. In BC, we have been successful in flattening the curve and protecting our hospitals from being overwhelmed. But there is not a vaccine for COVID-19 and there is not a reliable test for immunity, so we will be vulnerable to the virus returning and infecting people in the community for many more months. We will need to continue safety measures this year and follow the instructions of the Medical Health Officer carefully.

Provinces and the Federal Government have agreed on a common set of principles and criteria for restarting the economy. You can read more here:

<https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/statements/2020/04/28/first-ministers-statement-shared-public-health-approach-support>

And BC has an Economic Recovery Task Force

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PREM0046-000618>

The task force will help ensure the benefits of provincial programs are reaching their intended targets and complement federal programs, and discuss ways to ensure the best possible information is available to workers and member organizations.

It will also explore issues around the designation of essential and critical services; child care and other supports for essential workers, and safe workplace operations for businesses operating now, as well as those restarting after the crisis.

Importantly, the task force will begin to discuss long-term economic recovery following COVID-19. It will provide participants the opportunity to advise government on economic impacts in their sectors and solutions for long-term economic recovery.

“COVID-19 is a huge challenge, but British Columbians can be assured their government has their back – and together we will get through this,” Premier Horgan said.

Supporting People in Hospital a Concern during COVID-19

The government has ordered that access to hospitals and long term care facilities be restricted to reduce the spread of infection. This has caused concern for people with disabilities, their families and agencies that provide their community support. There has

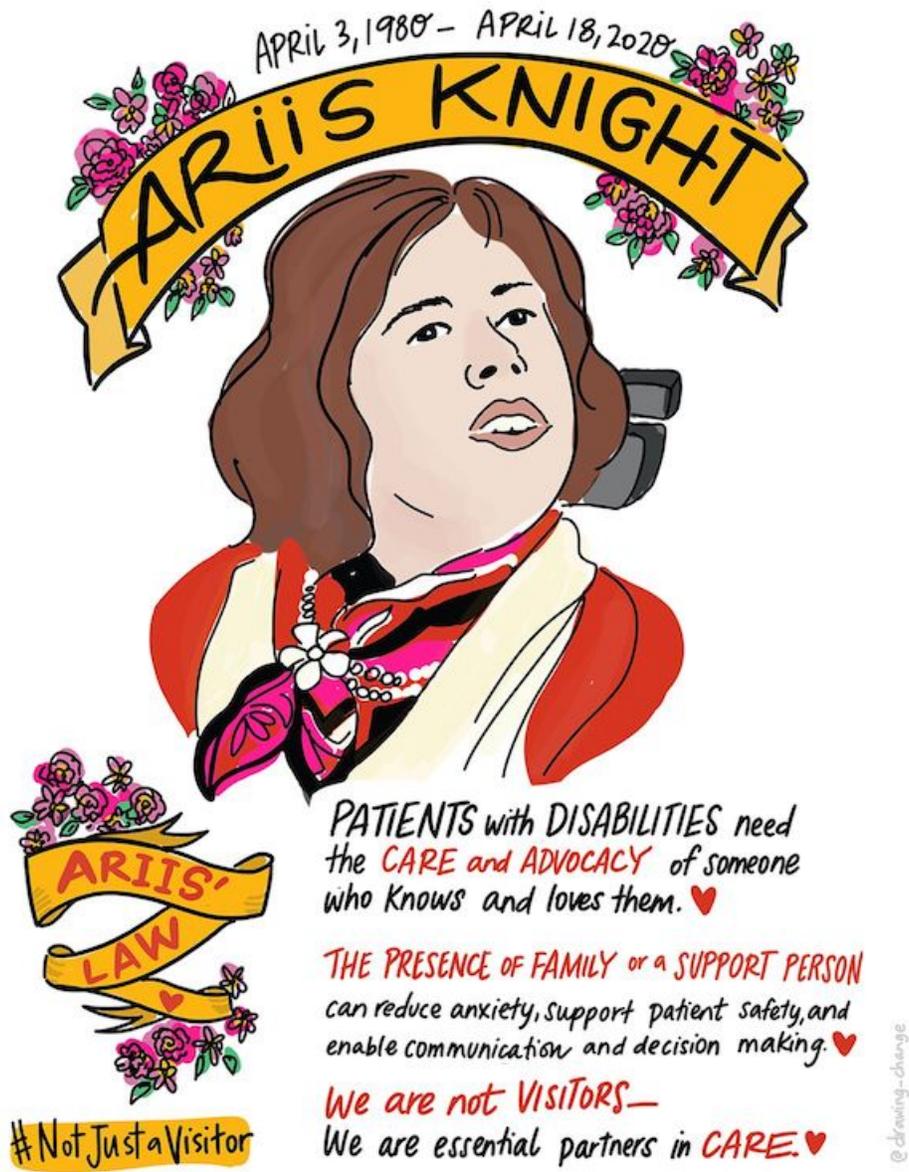
always been, from the beginning of the order, an exception for essential care and for end-of-life support, but it has been difficult to get hospitals to recognize what is essential. Recently in Surrey, a woman was taken to hospital with respiratory issues. Her support staff were not allowed to stay with her. Her condition deteriorated and her family was notified that she was gravely ill only 90 minutes before she passed away, so she died without anyone who knew her, by her side. There is more of this story available in this news article:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/woman-disability-dies-white-rock-hospital-covid-19-1.5543468>

In the press conference on April 23rd, 2020, Dr. Bonnie Henry addressed the question of people with disabilities being permitted to have family or the support team in hospital with them.

"In terms of people with disabilities who are having challenges in communicating in particular, I know that this is something that has been a concern for many people. There are exceptions to the restrictions that we have in both long-term care and in the hospitals to ensure that people who have these extra needs around being able to verbalize or have other issues in not being able to communicate effectively or hear. We do believe that there is accommodation being made. My expectation is that there is accommodation being made. It can be very difficult sometimes and of course people need to wear appropriate personal protective equipment in that setting so that both the healthcare providers and the patients and the support people are protected." - Dr. Bonnie Henry, April 23, 2020

Advocacy groups are asking for greater awareness in the health system of the essential need for family or support workers to be with people with disabilities when they are in hospital, to ensure their communication and wishes are respected.



There is a letter writing campaign under way to get governments to recognize the human rights of people with disabilities. Read more here:

<https://www.include-me.ca/covid-19/action/stop-discriminatory-triaging-people-disabilities>

Remember:

- Wash your hands!
- Stay home when you are sick
- Be Kind, Take Care - We will get through this

Ernie Baatz

Executive Director

Spectrum Society for Community Living

Express yourself. Build your network. Find your voice.

www.spectrumsociety.org

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