

**Subject:** Spectrum's COVID-19 Update - March 26 2020

**Date:** Thursday, March 26, 2020 at 9:19:42 PM Pacific Daylight Time

**From:** Ernie Baatz

**To:** Ernie Baatz

Hi all;

- **Thank you to all our staff and contracted caregivers** who are continuing to provide excellent care to the people we support. By staying close to home and keeping a physical distance from people, we are helping to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- **Thank you to Naomi and Rachel** who are helping staff and managers to find new roles for people who are displaced and maintaining their hours while we identify good matches. We are doing everything we can to ensure our employees keep getting paycheques and are safe and healthy at work.
- **Thank you for helping people to stay connected** with their friends and family by phoning and by making video calls. There are a number of projects aimed at helping people with ideas for maintaining social connections. The press release below about Safe Seniors, Strong Communities includes a call for volunteers interested in helping seniors. As well, PLAN has a page of ideas to help people build and maintain their networks: [www.plan.ca](http://www.plan.ca)
- **Thank you to Judy and Jeriah** for searching through our list of suppliers to find protective equipment and cleaning supplies for our teams.
- **Thank you to family and friends** who are staying connected and helping out with supplies and training.

Three updates today:

1. **The BC Government's daily update is on their website:**

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0111-000574>

"Every day that we stay home and stay apart, while still staying connected to friends and loved ones, will bolster our COVID-19 response. You can connect with friends online, you can share stories about your day through photos and videos, and you can make a difference.

"We need everyone to be 100% committed now, next week and next month."

**Learn More:**

For recommendations on protecting yourself and your community from COVID-19, and to use an online self-assessment tool, visit: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>

The COVID-19 self-assessment app can be downloaded at: <https://bc.thrive.health/>

For non-medical questions about COVID-19, call 1-888-COVID-19 or visit: [www.gov.bc.ca/covid19](http://www.gov.bc.ca/covid19)

2. **Safe Seniors, Strong Communities:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0109-000570>

"Seniors in B.C. are especially vulnerable to the impact COVID-19 will have on their health and their ability to stay connected with others," Mackenzie said. "The outpouring of calls from people who want to help our seniors is inspiring, and using bc211 to match British Columbians who want to help, with seniors who need some help to stay connected and meet basic needs, is a perfect match."

The funding provided to the United Way of the Lower Mainland will address immediate needs

associated with the impact of COVID-19, as well as maintain and expand some existing programs.

“We’re excited to be collaborating with bc211 and the Ministry of Health to deliver these essential supports to seniors,” said Michael McKnight, president and CEO, United Way of the Lower Mainland. “It is important that we support our most vulnerable citizens during this challenging time with local communities and community agencies being essential to these efforts. If you are a senior in need of support, we urge you to reach out.”

Improving access to local support for seniors includes expanding current services and addressing both geographic and capacity gaps, to better serve seniors locally during this crucial time.

#### **Quick Facts:**

- In 2019, 20% of B.C.’s population was 65 years of age or older. In 15 years, this percentage is expected to rise to 25%.
- The information and referral service will gather information and share it with participating local community agencies that will match seniors and volunteers who live in the same community.
- The phone service will be available seven days a week during daytime hours and is free.

#### **Learn More:**

To learn more about bc211, visit: <http://www.bc211.ca/>

To learn more about United Way Better at Home Program, visit: <http://betterathome.ca/>

**Seniors and people who want to volunteer** and who are well can call bc211 or visit: [www.bc211.ca/](http://www.bc211.ca/)

To learn more about the benefits of volunteering, visit:  
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/seniors/health-safety/active-aging/volunteering>

### **3. Province takes unprecedented steps to support COVID-19 response:**

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PSSG0020-000568>

Using the extraordinary powers under the Emergency Program Act, the minister is issuing a series of ministerial orders to ensure a co-ordinated response to COVID-19 across all levels of government for the duration of the provincial emergency. These include:

- Supply Chain Coordination
- Protecting Consumers
- Enforcement Orders
- Ensuring minimum travel
- Protecting services for vulnerable people
- Coordination of emergency measures across the Province.

These unprecedented steps, made based on the recommendation of B.C.’s health and emergency management officials and invoked for the first time under a provincial state of emergency, will support the provincial health officer and minister of health in a co-ordinated cross-government approach to COVID-19 response and recovery.

A list of essential services was established, and it includes the services provided by Spectrum Society:

- care for seniors, adults, children or individuals with disabilities;
- child care services for those persons providing essential services;

- caregivers for children in care and out of care;
- elder and disability care, including disabled service support for people with physical and cognitive disabilities;

By identifying essential services, government can remove regulatory and administrative barriers to make it easier to support critical services for vulnerable people, like food banks and shelters. We hope that one of the benefits of these emergency orders will be an improved supply of personal protective equipment.

Let us know if you have questions.

Thanks for helping the people we support to stay home and stay safe. (Wash your hands!)

**Ernie Baatz**

Executive Director

Spectrum Society for Community Living

Express yourself. Build your network. Find your voice.

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