

Subject: COVID-19 Updates - November 17, 2020
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Staying Safe and Healthy

The basics of keeping the people we support, our teams and your families Healthy and Safe are important to practice every day:

- Stay home if you sick – Call 811 for further directions – Contact HR before you return to work
- Wash your hands regularly
- Keep your distance – at least two metres or six feet from people outside your bubble
- Wear a mask on transit, in stores, in all indoor public spaces.
- Keep your social bubble small – But stay connected with friends and family. Phone, video chat, go for a walk outside – it is so important to keep in touch.

Thank you to everyone for the amazing job everyone has done over the past eight months!

Covid-19 Response Planning

Much of our pandemic planning has focused on preventing the spread of Covid-19, putting safeguards in place to minimize the risk of exposure to the people we support and their supporters. Keeping our teams small, maintaining safe distance, wearing masks when distancing cannot be maintained, frequent hand-washing, and ensuring people stay home if they are ill – all of the strategies that are so familiar by now – have proven effective over the past 8 months and we will continue to focus on these strategies.

In addition to the important steps we all are taking every day to prevent the spread of Covid-19, Spectrum's planning has also included preparing for the possibility of an outbreak or exposure event in our services.

- **Rapid response:** if an individual, caregiver or staff member shows any symptoms, they should let the supervisor or HR know immediately, and call their doctor or 811 for further instructions. They must self-isolate until cleared to come out of isolation. They must get tested if advised to do so and inform the supervisor or HR of the result. Responding quickly and decisively will help to contain the exposure and keep others safe.
- **Communication:** in consultation with health officials, we will communicate with individuals, teams and families on a need-to-know basis about any known or suspected exposures. We will

follow CLBC and public health reporting guidelines and assist with contact tracing as required. One designated spokesperson will be the point of contact at Spectrum to ensure clear and consistent communication and provide regular updates to all concerned.

- **Continuity of services:** in the event of an outbreak at Spectrum, we will ensure that essential service levels are maintained. Non-essential activities and services will be suspended until the outbreak is declared over.
- **Covid Relief Team:** Spectrum's Covid Relief Team is an opportunity for anyone interested in being part of Spectrum's emergency response planning to contribute their time and talents. The team meets monthly over zoom. Our goal is to build capacity to support to individuals and teams in the event of an outbreak, including having a pool of people who can step in to provide direct care as well as supplemental support like meal delivery, coordination of PPE, and assistance with administrative tasks.

If you would like to be part of the Covid Relief Team or to learn more, please contact susan@spectrumsociety.org.

Pandemic Pay Update

We have heard from a few agencies now that have received confirmation of their pandemic pay and have received the funding so they can pay employees. We have only received confirmation that the government has received our invoice. Next steps will be confirmation that they will pay our invoice, and that funds are being transferred. Once the funds are received, we will pay out the amounts with a separate paystub. The amount is a lump sum payment so will not have vacation paid in addition, nor will it have MPP deducted. There will be CPP and EI deducted, and tax will be deducted at a flat rate of 10%.

As a reminder, Pandemic Pay is for employees who worked between March 15, 2020 to July 4, 2020, and is a \$4/hour increment to all hours worked providing services. We will let you know as soon as we know when we can make this payment.

Getting a Flu Shot

Now more than ever, getting a flu shot is an important step to protect yourself and those around you. A flu shot can reduce your chance of developing symptoms that resemble COVID-19 which would require you to get tested and self-isolate. This can increase wait times at testing centres as well as test results and can delay the identification of COVID-19 cases.

Getting a flu shot is the best way to protect yourself and others against influenza, especially when used with other infection prevention practices such as proper hand hygiene and staying home from work or school when sick, even with mild symptoms.

Where you can get a flu shot:

- VCH Public Health clinics

- Your family doctor
- Walk-in clinics
- Your pharmacist
- Urgent & primary care centres

Find a location

Appointments are strongly recommended this year to help us maintain physical distancing and to reduce wait times.

[More information on flu shots at Vancouver Coastal Health](#) (Vancouver, Richmond, North Shore, Sunshine Coast)

[More information on flu shots at Fraser Health](#) (Burnaby, New West, Delta, Surrey, Coquitlam, Fraser Valley)

An Exhaustive Resource on Supporting Adults with Autism Through Uncertain Times

A family forwarded me this resource from the University of North Carolina:

<https://sscl.sharevision.ca/public/Files/COVID19/SupportingAdultswithAutismthroughUncertainTimes.pdf>

The materials are divided into four topic areas: COVID-19 Resources, Daily Living Resources, Social Connectedness Resources, and Mental Health Resources. Each section contains developed materials and links to websites for other materials that may be useful.



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Thanks Nancy!

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Spectrum Society for Community Living

Express yourself. Build your network. Find your voice.

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Be Calm, Be Kind, Be Safe