

Subject: COVID-19 Updates - September 23, 2020 - Staying Safe

Date: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 at 5:37:04 PM Pacific Daylight Time

From: Ernie Baatz

To: Ernie Baatz

Back to Basics Part 3 – Staying Safe

In Part 3 of our “Back to Basics” update, we review some of the important safety practices that help to limit the spread of Covid-19 and protect individuals and their supporters.

[Exposure Control Plan](#)

Spectrum’s Exposure Control Plan lays out our overarching plan for preventing exposure to the virus, including:

- *Links to Spectrum policies on universal precautions and communicable diseases*
- *Continuity of services – how we will maintain essential supports through the pandemic*
- *Risk assessment and risk management (see below)*
- *Responsibilities of key personnel*

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment refers to the steps we take to increase our awareness of the risks in any situation. Assessing the risks related to Covid-19 is an ongoing part of our pandemic planning, covering all parts of the organization from our homes to the office to our HR and finance activities. Clearly identifying the risks allows us to develop targeted solutions rather than simply imposing across-the-board restrictions. Much of this risk assessment happens at an organizational level and informs the steps we’ve taken to safely continue our day to day operations. At an individual level, staff and caregivers play an important role in assessing risks in their particular situation or work environment, for example:

- *Pre-planning – checking in with yourself before coming to work (am I feeling well, symptom-free?), checking in with individuals who receive intermittent or occasional services (see [community inclusion / outreach guidelines](#)), knowing what the plan is for the day’s activities*
- *Point of care risk assessment – before any close personal interactions, doing a quick scan to ensure the environment is safe and that you and the other person are ready for the interaction*
- *Reporting of illness or symptoms – if staff, caregivers or individuals are ill or showing any symptoms, reporting immediately to the supervisor or HR*

Risk Management

Risk management refers to the steps we take to minimize the identified risks. At an organizational level, this includes things like limiting the number of staff working in each location, providing access to PPE and cleaning supplies, and office use guidelines that allow for the safe continuity of our administrative supports. At an individual level, it includes all the safety measures that have become so familiar to everyone, including:

- *Staying home if you are sick or showing [symptoms of Covid-19](#)*
- *Physical distancing – maintaining 2 metre distance whenever possible*
- *Masks – wearing a mask when physical distancing is not possible*
- *Handwashing – washing hands with soap and water for 20 seconds before and after any physical interactions, when preparing food, using the washroom, or using shared items*
- *Disinfecting shared items and surfaces*
- *Use of PPE – using appropriate protective equipment when providing personal care or caring for*

someone who is ill or may have been exposed to the virus

Ongoing communication and training are an important part of Spectrum's risk management plan. We will continue to provide regular updates as new information becomes available and as we refine our safety practices. Staff training on these measures will continue to be a focus. We encourage anyone who has questions or concerns about anything related to health and safety to speak to their supervisor or HR.

CLBC/BC CEO NETWORK SERVICE PROVIDER CALL

The next Service Provider Call is now scheduled for Tuesday, September 29th and you should be receiving this information from CLBC over the next day or two. I have also included it here so that you can enter it into your calendars.

Service Provider Call

Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2020

Time: 2 – 3 p.m.

Call in:

Vancouver: 604-681-0260

Elsewhere: 1-877-353-9184

Participant code: 37568#

Spectrum's Covid Relief Team

A critical piece of our pandemic planning is to ensure that we have enough staff not only to meet the day to day needs of each team but also to provide essential care and support if someone becomes ill with Covid-19. The first and best option would be for those who are closest to the person to continue providing support, but where this is not possible or if staff also become ill, we will need a pool of people to draw from who can step in and provide additional support.

We are inviting Spectrum employees who have some extra capacity to join our Covid Relief Team. This team will provide backup support to our existing teams in the event of an outbreak. Support could be either in-person direct care – working in the home alongside existing team members – or supplemental support, such as delivering meals to the home or assisting with administrative tasks. If you are interested or want to learn more, please contact our [HR department](#) or email susan@spectrumsociety.org. We will be hosting an information session to provide more information and answer questions. Staff who are selected for the Covid Relief Team will be fully trained and compensated for their time, including their attendance at training sessions and team meetings. If you are interested or want to learn more about this opportunity, please let us know! The first presentation to the COVID Relief Team is available on Sharevision.

Joint Statement on BC's COVID-19 Response and Latest Updates – Wednesday,

Sept 23, 2020

Dr. Bonnie Henry, B.C.'s provincial health officer, and Stephen Brown, deputy minister of health, have issued the following joint statement regarding updates on the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) response in British Columbia:

“Today, we are announcing 91 new cases, including five epi-linked cases, for a total of 8,395 cases in British Columbia.

“There are 1,376 active cases of COVID-19 in the province, 3,368 people who are under active public health monitoring as a result of identified exposure to known cases and 6,769 people who tested positive have recovered.

“Currently, 62 individuals are hospitalized with COVID-19, 18 of whom are in intensive care. The remaining people are recovering at home in self-isolation.

“Since the start of the pandemic, there have been 3,016 cases of COVID-19 in the Vancouver Coastal Health region, 4,302 in the Fraser Health region, 203 in the Island Health region, 515 in the Interior Health region, 273 in the Northern Health region and 86 cases of people who reside outside of Canada.

“There have been no new COVID-19 related deaths, for a total of 227 deaths in British Columbia. We offer our condolences to everyone who has lost their loved ones during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“There have been no new health-care facility outbreaks, and outbreaks at Bear Creek Villa independent-living facility and Normanna long-term care facility have been declared over. In total, nine long-term care or assisted-living facilities and five acute-care facilities have active outbreaks.

“There have been no new community outbreaks, although there continue to be community exposure events. The outbreak at the Loblaws warehouse has been declared over.

“Public alerts and school notifications are posted on the BC Centre for Disease Control's (BCCDC) website, as well as on health authorities' websites, providing details on where the potential exposure occurred and what actions to take – whether to self-isolate or monitor for symptoms.

“New cases and clusters of COVID-19 remain higher than where we would like them to be.

“The impact of this means that thousands of people in B.C. are now under active public health monitoring and care, with many forced to deal with the stress and anxiety that comes with having to self-isolate away from work, friends and family.

“Each of us has the ability to make a difference by continuing to follow the COVID-19 safety basics: washing our hands frequently, giving the space to stay safe and using a mask when

that is difficult, limiting our social interactions and always staying home when ill.

“By using the layers of protection, we reduce our personal risks and the number of new cases, and we make our communities safer.

“We want to ensure we are in the best position possible to protect our communities and keep as much as is safe open and operating during the pandemic. To do this, we need everyone to do their part today to help push our curve back down tomorrow.”

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0053-001849>



Inclusion Canada, our National Federation, has provided highlights from today's Speech from the Throne. There were some very significant and positive announcements regarding federal disability issues.

150th Speech From The Throne

Inclusion Canada Highlights

September 23rd, 2020

The Speech from the Throne opens every new session of Parliament. The Speech introduces the government's direction and goals and outlines how it will work to achieve them. The items below may be of interest to federation members from today's 54 minute speech in the Senate:

Disability Specific

COVID-19 has disproportionately affected Canadians with disabilities, and highlighted long-standing challenges. The Government will bring forward a Disability Inclusion Plan, which will have:

- A new Canadian Disability Benefit modelled after the Guaranteed Income Supplement for seniors;
- A robust employment strategy for Canadians with disabilities;
- And a better process to determine eligibility for Government disability programs and

benefits.

Other Significant Highlights

Healthcare

- \$19 billion investment in healthcare infrastructure in partnership with P/Ts for COVID-specific PPE
- Universal vaccine access for all people in Canada + investments in distribution network
- Further access to mental health supports
- Committed to National Universal Pharmacare program including:
 - A rare disease strategy
 - Commitment to keep prescription drug prices low
 - And working with Provinces and Territories to move these items along
- Strengthen food supply chains

Employment

- A robust employment strategy for Canadians with disabilities;
- Campaign to create 1 million jobs by using direct investments in social sector, infrastructure, training, incentives for employers to hire and retain workers
- Extending Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy to Summer 2021
- Scaled up youth employment strategy
- EI will be sole mechanism for employment benefits, including self-employed and those in gig economy
- Support job-creating businesses - wage subsidy extension, expand Canada Emergency Business Account, introduce further support for industries hardest hit (travel and tourism, cultural industries)
- Focus on targeted investments in middle class, build resiliency, generate growth, tax extreme wealth (limit stock option deduction)
- Largest investment in Canadian history through a robust employment strategy
- Support manufacturing, natural resource, farming industries in reducing emissions and growing green initiatives
- Invest in international development and the recovery of developing countries economies

Income Security

- A new Canadian Disability Benefit modelled after the Guaranteed Income Supplement for seniors;
- Federal wage subsidy for personal support workers

Women

- Action plan for women in economy to ensure a feminist, intersectional approach to recovery led by a government-appointed taskforce
- Accelerate women's entrepreneurship strategy
- A national action plan on gender-based violence

Long Term Care

- Federal government will support seniors while working alongside P/Ts
- Work on criminal code amendments regarding senior neglect
- Work with P/Ts on new national standards for LTC for **seniors**
- Additional action to help people stay in their homes longer
- Boost CPP survivor's benefit
- Targeted measures to support PSWs

- The Government will work with Provinces and Territories on new standards for long term care homes

To watch or read the full speech from the throne, go to the website:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/privy-council/campaigns/speech-throne/2020/speech-from-the-throne.html>

Ernie Baatz

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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