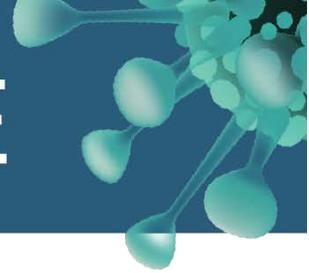


COVID-19 UPDATE



Physician Coordination Centre Bulletin

May 14, 2020

Update on new and existing COVID-19 cases

- On May 13th, the Ministry of Health confirmed 16 new cases of COVID-19 in B.C. for a total of 2376 cases in the province. Fraser Health has had 1137 cases.
- Of this total, 14 patients are in intensive care or critical care units.
- Total number of deaths as of May 13, 2020 was 132 deaths in B.C., with 45 deaths in Fraser Health.
- Fraser Health has 35 current hospitalized patients of which 8 are in our ICU/HAU settings.
- Fraser Health staff and medical staff that are currently COVID-19+ are 22.

Source: CEO Update May 13, 2020 & BCCDC

For detailed case counts please refer to the BCCDC COVID-19 [Dashboard](#) & Situation Reports on their [webpage](#)

CEO Town Hall with Physicians

JOIN US FOR A CONVERSATION WITH THE CEO AND MEDICAL EXPERTS

- Update from Fraser Health CEO, Dr. Victoria Lee followed by a moderated conversation and general Q&A using SLIDO (www.slido.com; event code #medstaff)
 - **SLIDO remains open.** Post your questions early [here](#) for our next conversation on May 25.
 - With no meeting on May 18, we will try and answer early questions in the May 21 bulletin.
 - **Upcoming Meeting: May 25th** from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
 - Connect by Skype or t-con. Details in your email & text message invites. Or, request the physiciancoordinationcentre@fraserhealth.ca

TOP QUESTIONS FROM PHYSICIANS

Here are next-to-last of the unanswered questions from the May 4 COVID-19 Town Hall. Dr. Elizabeth Brodtkin, EMD IPC, and Dr. Kevin Afra, Medical Director AMS have provided these responses.

Q: Do we have daily symptom checks for the staff working with COVID-19 positive cases?

- We do twice daily symptom checks on staff and patients on units where there is any question that transmission between patients and staff or between staff members themselves may be occurring.

Q: With 'questionnaire' negative patients - will asymptomatic patients be considered COVID(-) or COVID (+)?

- Assuming this means a screening questionnaire looking for any symptoms or possible exposures. These policies are still in development but patients will be risk stratified based on symptoms, exposures and in some cases testing. Those that fall into the low risk category will be considered negative and those that fall into the high risk category will be considered positive.

Q: Any observation on smoking & COVID in BC/Canada. Does tobacco increase the risk or is protective?

- A review of studies by public health experts convened by WHO on April 29, 2020 found that smokers are more likely to develop severe disease with COVID-19, compared to non-smokers. [See here.](#)

COVID-19 UPDATE



On Monday, May 11th, 183 physicians joined Dr. Victoria Lee and medical experts at the weekly COVID-19 Town Hall. Panelists included Drs. Akber Mithani, Doris Barwich, Grace Park and other senior leaders. Following are the top unanswered questions with responses by Dr Feisal Mohamedali, RMD Anesthesiology, Dr. Mithani, RMD LTC/AL, Dr. Elizabeth Brodtkin, EMD IPC, Dr. Sharon Vipler, PMD/RDH Addiction Medicine, Jacqueline Per, ED Patient Experience & CNO, Chris Buchner, Director PPH and Rita Ciconte, Leader Health & Safety. Future bulletins will provide responses to the remaining questions.

Q: Please elaborate on the use of nurse anesthetists? Which potential sites, who will govern them (medical or nursing college), expected timeline, etc.?

- At this time, there are no actual plans in place to implement nurse anesthetists. While this is always mentioned as a possibility, there are several concerns around training and governance and the likelihood of implementation is low. BC Anesthesiologists' Society has worked closely with the government in the past to clarify why this is not a practical idea & we are sure that they will once again connect with the Ministry to identify appropriate solutions.

Q: LTC funeral transfer staff have often been in contact with deceased with COVID-19. Is there a protocol for them regarding masks, gloves, cleaning and gurneys?

- There is a guideline to be followed developed by the Ministry and is on the BCCDC website. Click [here](#) for recommendations. Also, there is a reference created by Fraser Health for [terminal extubation](#) (note: intranet link).

Q: What is being done about the increase in community overdose deaths?

- As we are in the midst of dual public health emergencies, there continues to be a focus on providing access to harm reduction services and education to our patients. Supervised consumption sites continue to remain open. All of our addiction medicine clinics remain open with staff available to provide care to individuals who do not have access to virtual or telehealth means. Access to treatment has expanded through the creation of a Virtual Health Addiction Clinic. The federal government has provided an exemption to the CDSA (Controlled Drugs and Substances Act), allowing pharmacists and physicians to work collaboratively in attempts to ensure there is no disruption in patient's access to treatment. There has been interim clinical guidance released by the BCSCU to assist physicians in making clinical decisions on how to support patients who use substances, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, increased messaging to drug users to use with a friend and stagger use so someone can respond. We are also in the process of shifting Take Home Naloxone to mail order among other strategies to try and mitigate these risks.

Q: What are we doing to support nurses and AHP as they remain committed to their positions?

- In addition to families, physicians, and leaders including Professional Practice thanking and bringing in treats, multiple actions across the continuum are being taken to support nursing and AHP that include:
 - Provincial Chief Nursing & Allied Health Council Town Halls and Fraser Health CEO led town halls.
 - Managers/leaders connecting in with staff regularly and Mindfulness/Resiliency/EFAP resources made accessible to all Fraser Health employees.
 - Professional Practice consultants making themselves available to provide practice support.
 - Created orientation and deployment resources for staff who are deployed to other areas.
 - Clinical Policy Office uploading revised CDSTs, guidelines and policies to support nursing and allied health practice during COVID-19.
 - Supporting upskilling for over 450 nurses in HAU and med-surg interested in working in critical care in a support/assist role to the Critical Care nurses as part of the CCN Surge Plan for COVID-19.

COVID-19 UPDATE

- It's Nurses Week. We are profiling stories of nurses across Fraser Health and are encouraging them to share their stories so we can continue to share them as 2020 is Year of the Nurse/Midwife.

Q: We have been told we can only use N95 for AGP however some clinical conditions generate aerosols that are not on the list. Can providers now choose their mask?

- Providers should wear a surgical/procedure mask for patients on droplet precautions and a N95 respirator for patients on airborne precautions. There is a provincially-agreed on list of what constitutes an AGP; there is a provincial process that has been developed to assess procedures that are not on the list and consider them for inclusion. Providers who are concerned a procedure they are performing may be an AGP can submit a request with the relevant information to the Clinical Guidelines Review Committee.

Q: Is there any discussion/ information plan to involve family members to help with patient care as they do want to help (with education for caregivers)?

- As we start to open-up and work towards a “new normal” there are discussions underway about loosening some of the restrictions on visitors. Policies are not fully developed yet but should be coming over the next few weeks.

PHYSICIAN RESOURCES

What we heard at the May 11 forum

LTC/Palliative

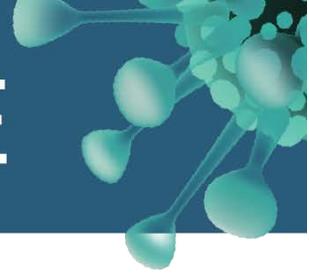
- With the immense work done during COVID-19, reduced number of transfers from long-term care to acute care.
- Embracing virtual care in LTC, except for clinically essential physician visits; routine visits at physician discretion.
- Home health is expanding their support across the region including a ramp up of home health monitoring to support patient self-management; trained nurses will be going to homes/sites for nurse practitioner () swabs.
- Palliative care has commenced a Rapid Access to Consultative Expertise line (RACE); all palliative care resources on the medical staff web page under [clinical resources and forms](#)
- LTC family visitation guidelines are under development, soon to be released.
- Many hospices are located with LTC sites, hence a need to follow their regulations. Our visitation policy includes two visitors/day with special consideration for compassionate care. This maybe adapted based on each hospice location.
- ACP now has federal attention and funding. There is a new initiative being coordinated by Health Canada.
- Recommendation that admissions to LTC from hospital be isolated with droplet precautions for 14 days. Not a requirement as it is not possible with all populations e.g. dementia etc.
- [View long-term care resources and information on the medical staff web page.](#)

PPEs

- Guidance is that physicians manage patients virtually as much as possible and examine in-person as needed; triage patients with respiratory symptoms to assessment centres.
- Non-medical masks are helpful for source control, but more important to practise physical distancing and hand hygiene guidelines already in place.
- Masks to be used for indication specific use and we need to be rational about our supplies.
- Extent of guidance to be provided by WorkSafe BC is unknown. [Refer to their guidance](#) for safe return to work.
- Wearing PPEs appropriately is most important. [Find information for staff on self-monitoring and self-isolation](#), along with additional resources, including [PPE information](#) and [videos for donning and doffing PPE](#).

Other

COVID-19 UPDATE



- Start goal of care conversations early in acute care before patients are transferred to LTC.
- Learning from this pandemic on potential solutions/creative ways to address post-COVID-19 surge in emergency.
- Hallway medicine has been a huge challenge for years - We will have to be creative and wait for provincial directions. We will be learning from this pandemic and learning as we go

CEO Updates

- Check your Fraser Health emails for [daily CEO Updates](#) (note: Intranet link) for specific data, comments and responses to questions on COVID-19. Recent highlights include:
 - Reiteration of top priority 'health and safety of staff, medical staff, patients, families and communities' as we transition to recovery; significant planning ongoing to resume surgical recovery.
 - Maintain vigilance in monitoring our surveillance and predictive data, case and contact management, and testing and assessment, especially in vulnerable populations and settings.
 - For mental health resources and tools, including additional videos from Dr. Van Den Berg on managing stress and anxiety and coping with uncertainty, visit [here](#).
 - Investigating if increases in COVID-19 cases amongst HCW's are community or health care related.
 - Phased ambulatory care recovery plan outlined - structures, processes, infection control practices and guidelines ensuring safety of all; includes integrating virtual care within appropriate outpatient settings.
 - COVID-19 Ethical Issues Webinar Series continue. For more information and to register see [FH Pulse](#).
 - As part of our recovery work Primary Care Coordination Committee will continue with leveraging virtual health and technological capabilities to improve care and delivery. Virtual care will be embedded within Long-Term Care, Mental Health and Substance Use, Home Health and Home Support.
 - [The Province of BC announced](#) it has extended the provincial state of emergency.

Surgical Renewal Plan

- Surgical Recovery starting May 19th, 2020.
- Determining with each site process and flows with social distancing and pre-screening, as well as virtual preoperative assessment.
- [Virtual pre-admission for surgery to keep you safe at home – May 11, 2020](#)
- [Additional elective surgery information can be found here.](#)

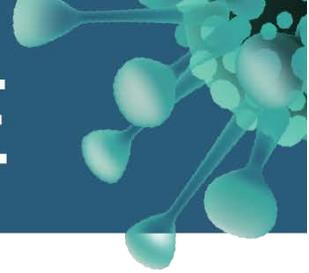
Provincial updates

- Read [here](#) the Premier's plan to restart + latest updates from Minister Dix and Dr. Henry

Supporting Long-term care during COVID-19

- Resources and information for physicians on issues specific to COVID-19 in long-term care homes. Visit the long-term care section on the [Medical Staff COVID web page](#).

COVID-19 UPDATE



Supporting Advance Care Planning (ACP) and serious illness conversations

- Resources are available to support clinicians to start or continue ACP conversations specific to COVID-19. Visit the Clinical Resources & Forms section on the [Medical Staff COVID web page](#).

PPE Supplies for Community Physicians

- UPDATE** Connect with the Division of Family Practice in your region to place orders for PPE. For care providers who are not supported through their Division or are unsure where to go, contact the PPE Community Support Desk at PPECommunitysupport@fraserhealth.ca or call 604-561-2037.

Home Health Monitoring for COVID-19 acute, emergency and community patients

- Launched home health monitoring service for patients who are, or suspected COVID-19 positives. See [FYI](#).
- Patients are referred to the service by their doctor – either at a clinic or at a hospital – and are monitored daily by a registered nurse or respiratory therapist from Public health, Home Health or Community Respiratory Services. A handout for prospective patients is available [here](#).

Medical Health Officer Updates

- Updated COVID-19 testing guidelines were released April 24. For most recent updates [click here](#).

Information Technology Resources

- Access the information you need to care for patients remotely, such as diagnostic imaging reports and provincial lab results with Unifying Clinical Information (UCI). For help refer to the [IMIT section](#).
- Access your Fraser Health emails directly on your own device - [instructions on how to setup](#) emails on your mobile device without enrolling into Workspace ONE.
- A dedicated [mailbox](#) has been set up to support physicians with non-urgent inquiries related to any IT issues, including but not limited to email support, remote access & Meditech; response time < 4 hrs.
- TEXT ALERTS:** Receive COVID-19 updates via **text messaging**. Sign up [here](#) using keyword 'COVID'.

Community Discounts and Appreciation of Health Care Workers

- To show support and say thank-you, several businesses and organizations are offering discounts to health care professionals. Visit the [Medical Staff COVID-19 page](#).

COVID-19 UPDATE



CARING FOR SELF - WELLNESS & SUPPORT

Medical Staff Psychological and Well Being Supports available

- Opportunity for medical staff. [Get trained](#) to join frontline staff huddles to strengthen team engagement & reduce staff anxiety. Led by Dr. Marietta Van Den Berg.
- UBC Medical Students have put together a comprehensive [handout of resources](#) for physicians and families.
- [Supports](#) vary from in-person to telephone conversations and group sessions. These include emotional support, mental health and well being, stress and anxiety management and self-care tools. More tools also posted [here](#).
- [ABC123](#) a memory aid and psychological first aid tool providing techniques to reduce anxiety and distress, and
- Canadian Society of Physician Leaders COVID-19 Crisis [Bulletin](#) shares the five C's Resilience Framework.

Physician Coaching Service (30 or 60 minute virtual sessions - no charge)

- Certified coaches provide 1-1 coaching to support decision-making and urgent action
 - Medical Leaders – contact physiciancoordinationcentre@fraserhealth.ca
 - Frontline physicians, retired physicians, residents, medical students – contact Physician Health Program 604-398-4300 or info@physicianhealth.com
 - Article from a group of physician coaches: [Thriving while surviving – why we need more healthcare coaching support during the COVID-19 crisis.](#)

REMINDER ABOUT MEDIA

If you receive a media inquiry or see media at any of our locations please contact the Fraser Health media line at 604-613-0794 or by email at media@fraserhealth.ca

Physician Coordination Centre

physiciancoordinationcentre@fraserhealth.ca

Previous Bulletins:	March 31, 2020	April 3, 2020	April 8, 2020	April 16, 2020
		April 21, 2020	April 24, 2020	April 30, 2020

The information in this bulletin pertains to physicians and medical staff and is a summary of updates and new resources on COVID-19. Please continue to visit the [Fraser Health Medical Staff web page](#) for additional up-to-date information and resources.

For Physician Coordination Centre membership see [here](#).

Dr. Kevin Afra, Elizabeth Armstrong, Dr. Neil Barclay, Dr. Peter Barnsdale, Dr. Ralph Belle, Dr. Elizabeth Brodtkin, Rita Ciconte, Dr. John Diggle, Dr. Raymond Dong, Dr. Joshua Greggain, Dr. Roland Guasparini, Dr. John Hamilton, Dr. Rob McDermid, Dr. Sarah Ostler, Dr. Connie Ruffo, Dr. Akbar Mithani, Dr. Pam Thornton, Dr. Michael Yatscoff, Jag Sandhu, Kavita Sarwal, Jemimah Membreve, Tomi Daramola

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