

## COVID-19 UPDATE – March 23, 2020

---

In an effort to keep our community partners connected, we are providing you with regular COVID-19 updates.

### Key Updates for March 23, 2020

- For a full list of updates from VCH visit [vch.ca](http://vch.ca)
- Testing Capacity has increased to 3000 tests per day
- Social distancing orders continue to be issued to help to flatten the curve
- Premier announces COVID-19 Action Plan to provide relief to people and businesses
- New satellite testing centres operating for health-care workers
- Visits to all VCH sites restricted to essential services only

### Increased Testing Capacity

Dr. Henry and Health Minister Adrian Dix announced growing capacity for testing and for providing information to British Columbians. Testing capacity has increased to about 3,000 tests per day, with more coming online this week, and the number of 811 calls answered has grown to more than 4,000 calls per day, as a result of adding 12 more nurses and 42 more navigators to our call centres.

### Social Distancing

Directions, rules and orders for social distancing — staying two metres from others — continue to be issued and now enforced as all levels of government implement new measures. Only by keeping our distance from each other can we “flatten the curve”: stagger the number of new cases over a longer period, so that sick people have better access to care.

### Premier Announces COVID–19 Action Plan

To help mitigate the impact of the virus and the necessary steps taken to fight it, today Premier John Horgan announced the COVID-19 Action Plan: the government’s first step to provide relief to people and businesses in British Columbia. The \$5 billion plan includes immediate measures to help individuals and families cope with potential illness, financial strain or precarious employment. It also adds funding to key services, such as health care, housing and social services, to make sure they continue to support British Columbians and help contain the spread of COVID-19.

### New Satellite Testing Centres for Healthcare Workers

Protecting healthcare workers, sites and equipment is also a priority. New satellite testing centres began operating last week for health-care workers as well as clear guidance for use of personal protective equipment.

### Visitor Restrictions: Essential visits only

Today Vancouver Coastal Health also announced it is restricting visitors to essential visits only at all of our facilities including our hospitals, community, long-term care, assisted living sites, community health centres and clinics.

Essential visits include:

- Compassionate care (e.g. end of life, critical illness);
- Visits paramount to patient/client/resident care and well-being, such as assistance with feeding or mobility;
- Existing registered volunteers providing services related to the above.

Additional measures for [long term care homes can be found here](#). Visitors who are unwell with cold or flu-like symptoms cannot visit patients, residents or clients in any VCH facility.

### Key Messages to Share

- Wash your hands frequently and stay home if possible
- Practice social distancing if you have to go out
- If you think you have COVID-19 take the self-assessment here: [covid19.thrive.health](http://covid19.thrive.health)
- Self-isolate at home for 10 days if you have COVID-19 symptoms