

## MEMORANDUM

---

**DATE:** March 12, 2020

**TO:** Contracted Community Providers

**FROM:** Kim Valkhard - Director Community Strategy and Seniors Health

**RE:** Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

---

To Our Valued Providers,

We are writing to give you updated information on the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), a new virus causing respiratory illness. While there are confirmed cases in the province, the risk to British Columbians remains low.

Island Health is working in partnership with the Ministry of Health and the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) to monitor the situation with COVID-19. We are reaching out to our community partners who directly serve clients to share health information.

As of March 12, no changes in services, are recommended. At present, for any clients with a fever, cough, or other flu-like symptoms, established protocols for Influenza should continue to be followed. Although COVID-19 is not the same as influenza, we are following the BCCDC recommendations of droplet and contact precautions. N-95 masks are not required except for aerosol-generating medical procedures, and these are not usually done in these settings.

Health Canada has developed recommendations for vulnerable populations around COVID-19:

- [How to support your clients or residents](#)
- [Self isolating in the home or co-living setting](#)

The British Columbia Centre for Disease Control is the recommended resource for provincial information that is accurate and current: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>. Information is being updated frequently on the site at this time and individuals are encouraged to check back regularly (eg. daily).

Anyone concerned that they may have been exposed to, or are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, should call their primary care provider or call 8-1-1.

At this time, we are reminding everyone, during cold and flu season to follow proper hand hygiene, cough and sneeze into your sleeve or a tissue, avoid others who are unwell, and stay home when you are sick.