

May 15, 2020

## **COVID-19 Stakeholder Update | Restart BC – A Time for Reflection and Recovery**

Hello everyone,

As we head into the long weekend, I would like to once again thank you for all that you've done to be supportive of your loved ones and our Association. There continue to be no positive cases of COVID-19 amongst the individuals we serve. This week, let's think about how the gradual opening of society, the economy and our lives will impact community living services – our phase 2.

Some have been wondering if we will see service changes following the long-weekend, or relaxed restrictions on things like family and visitor guidelines. It's safe to say no, that it will be at least two more weeks until we begin to see those changes. We will continue services as they are now until we receive further guidance from CLBC, which is expected the week of May 25. Please read [this week's update](#) from Community Living BC's CEO Ross Chilton, for more insights.

As we actively plan our "Restart *posAbilities*" road map, know that we will take the time we need to ensure that each individual, employee, family member and caregiver, is feeling safe, comfortable and well supported as they go forward with the "new normal." Part of that newness, includes new WorkSafe requirements, and the continuation of eight public health principles, as set out by Dr. Henry, which apply to every person, and every situation (see [BC's Restart Plan](#), page 5).

When we restart our person-centered day services, we must also consider how our plans will impact all of the other supports and systems an individual relies on in their community. This is where it gets complex! Many folks receive services from multiple agencies, and rely on HandyDart for transport, or go on volunteer outings or to activities that may now be suspended, or operating very differently.

Employees are also being deployed to new roles and different responsibilities, showing us their patience, flexibility and kindness. We are very proud and grateful for *posAbilities*' essential service workers.

In closing, we recognize that there is a big difference in comfort level around coming out of self-isolation. We know we can't immediately return to the way it was before COVID-19, however, we will work carefully with guidance from CLBC, other ministries and public health officials to take actions that will start moving us in that direction.

For other items of interest to families with children of all ages, please continue reading this week's update, or check out the weekly summaries posted by CLBC. Subscription to their service begins by [clicking here](#).

With best wishes for a relaxing and enjoyable weekend,

Fernando Coelho, CEO  
*posAbilities*

## ***posAbilities'* Pandemic Response Committee Update for All Stakeholders**

### **How Does BC's Restart Plan Apply to Community Living?**

We have flattened the curve, and now we wonder how will the gradual opening of society, the economy and our lives impact our services? Read this week's [update](#) from Community Living BC's CEO Ross Chilton and learn about the parameters we are working within to keep everyone safe and supported.

### **Pandemic Learning: Take BC's COVID-19 Survey, and tell your story!**

Public health and government leaders have made significant decisions impacting every aspect of our lives in recent weeks. Take this survey, and share your experience. Your input will help shape future decisions as they plan to ease restrictions while keeping citizens safe, especially those who are most vulnerable. Click [here](#) to begin. The survey is open until May 31, 2020.

Next week, *posAbilities* and friends are releasing our story collecting initiative, which will inform our Association's emergency response and future strategic planning. Stay tuned!

## **Advocacy Updates**

**Did you know...** that several organizations got together to survey the impacts of COVID-19 on BC Families of Children and Youth with Special Needs? The results are in, and being used to guide advocacy so that services can become more responsive to needs. Visit the [Family Support Institute](#) to read more and follow them for their own updates on their advocacy efforts.

## **Campaign Calls for Policy Change to Permit Personal Support for Individuals Requiring Hospitalization**

Many parents and families are afraid of their loved one being in hospital, and denied the presence of the only people who can help them communicate and comprehend – such as family members, friends or staff. A campaign is underway asking for systemic policy changes that will prevent tragic deaths, like the one of an Ariis Knight, a woman served by a peer organization. To learn more, see [this letter](#).

For information on how to prepare your documents for going into hospital care at this time, see Vela Microboard Association's website, [click here](#). Vela and the Family Support Institute host weekly family Q&A calls too. If you need a hand navigating resources, please contact Monique Nelson, at (604) 369-4073 or [mnelson@posAbilities.ca](mailto:mnelson@posAbilities.ca)

**Resources:**

The May long-weekend brings with it just a little extra time to relax and refresh, or to tidy up the yard or patio for the warm days ahead. Who'd like to have a little fun:

- [Playing the Family Support Institute's Photo Bingo](#)
- [Taking an accessible and pandemic-safe hike](#)
- [Submitting photos of your pandemic journey to Galen, for a photo-journaling project?](#)

Don't forget to check out <https://posabilities.ca/covid-19-resources/> for a full list of various helpful programs and services set up to support us all through this pandemic.