

Coastal Health Services: HSDA Pandemic Response Plan

COMMUNICATIONS

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COMMUNICATIONS

Communication During a Pandemic

Communication during a pandemic will be phase-specific and will include information on the prevention and mitigation of a pandemic. The VCH Pandemic Influenza Response Plan details the key messages, stakeholders and means of communication to be used. Additional information will be developed specific to the pandemic strain.

Communication Lead

The Vice President, Communications & Community Engagement, as primary communication lead, is responsible for communications, in conjunction with the Chief Medical Health Officer, and for liaison with and updating the Board and Senior Executive Team.

Communication with the Media

The Director, Media and Issues Management will deal with all media queries.

Process

The Director, Media and Issues Management will:

- Coordinate all information released to the media.
- Ensure key messaging is consistent with the Chief Medical Health Officer or designate.
- Recommend appropriate response strategies.
- Approve all written, electronic, or photographic information for media use.
- Act as official spokesperson, as needed.

Key Spokespersons

The official spokesperson during a pandemic is the Chief Executive Officer or designate. The Chief Medical Health Officer will be the primary designate for speaking to and answering media queries.

Chief Medical Health Officer (Dr. Patricia Daly or designate)

Regional Director, Public Affairs (Laurie Dawkins)

Office: 604-708-5312

All media queries forwarded to Director

Medical Health Officer On-Call (available 24/7)

604-527-4893

Media Relations Officer (Viviana Zanocco or designate)

604-708-5282

After-hours Media Pager For media inquiries after regular office hours and on weekends, call the media pager at 604-686-9983

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Contacting Employees

During a pandemic, consistent and timely communication with health care workers will be critical to managing response and appropriately deploying resources. We will maintain accurate and current contact information for all employees and develop and maintain the mechanisms necessary to contact them.

Process

Manager, **Employee Engagement** should:

- Work with line managers to maintain accurate and current contact information for all employees.

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Information for Employees

During a pandemic, employees will need access to accurate and timely information about the disease outbreak and to information about the response within the HSDA and throughout the region.

Process

VCH Communications, in collaboration with VCH Communicable Disease Control will:

- ❑ Develop internet- and intranet-based resources to respond to employee information needs throughout the region.
- ❑ Develop plans for the dissemination of information by alternate means, including a toll-free hotline for employees.

During a pandemic, VCH Staff should:

- ❑ Visit the VCH Intranet site at www.vcha.ca for access to staff bulletins, policies and procedures and question and answer documents.
- ❑ Call the VCH toll-free **hotline for employees** at **1(877) 822-4646** for pre-recorded information (regularly updated) for those calling from home or without access to e-mail.

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For External Audiences

VCH Website

Information on influenza and the VCH Pandemic Influenza Plan are posted on the VCH website at www.vch.ca/pandemic.

When a pandemic is declared, an information portal will be available on the VCH home page at www.vch.ca and will include:

- Up-to-date pandemic information.
- Information on the availability of vaccine and eligible groups for vaccination.
- Information for travellers returning from or travelling to pandemic areas (co-ordinated with Health Canada).
- Information on seeking medical care during the pandemic.
- Information on prevention and self-care.
- Links to other sites.

Toll-free Hotline

A toll-free hotline for the public has pre-recorded messages that can be updated, as needed. During a pandemic, it will be staffed by trained personnel to answer questions from the public.

The toll-free hotline for public enquiries is 1 (888) 875-4334.

References & Resources

For additional information on communications plans for a pandemic see VCH Pandemic Influenza Plan, Chapter 11, http://www.vch.ca/pandemic/docs/ch11_communication.pdf.

Vancouver Coastal Health's pandemic self-care guide, "Look after yourself" is available at: http://www.vch.ca/pandemic/docs/Look_after_yourself.pdf.