

Dear Fellow Sunshine Coast Residents:

The waiting and not knowing is the hardest part. At this stage, we do not have a lot of information as only a limited number of people are being swabbed, so it is only time that will tell us whether our preventive measures have been successful.

We know the current measures are difficult for a lot of people, but we would strongly encourage you to stay the course. If we continue to practice social distancing, we may be able to stop COVID-19 on the Coast. Unfortunately, it will take a few more weeks before we have any indication as to whether our measures are truly working and likely much longer than that before we can ease up on social distancing.

Our best-case scenario is that we do everything we can and successfully contain COVID-19 on the Coast. If we manage to save hundreds of lives in our community, then all of this will be worth it. Social distancing is hard, but the alternative is harder, so please keep doing everything you can to keep our community safe.

We also thought it might be helpful to clarify something about social isolation, that perhaps wasn't clear from our previous Community Updates. If you self-isolate due to return from travel or because you develop cold or flu symptoms, please remember that coming out of that self-isolation period means you get to come out of your room, but does not mean that you get to stop all the other social distancing measures.

If you self-isolate because of symptoms, you have no way of knowing whether you had COVID-19 or any one of a thousand other viruses that cause similar symptoms, and unfortunately we have no way to test for this yet. So although you self-isolated for presumed COVID-19, you should still act as if you have never been exposed once you come out of self-isolation.

So everyone, please **wash your hands** thoroughly and frequently; **don't touch your face** unless you have just washed your hands (and wash your hands after touching your face); **practice social distancing**; and **stay home** unless you have an essential reason to be out in public. We do encourage everyone to get outside for fresh air and sunshine; just make sure to **maintain social distancing** and **avoid groups larger than five people**.

If you are looking for ways to get involved, please keep an eye on the SCRCD, Gibsons and Sechelt websites for more information. We need all the help that we can get!

For those of you who develop cold or flu-like symptoms that are severe enough to feel you need to see a doctor, but not severe enough to call 911, please call or text our new Respiratory Assessment Clinic at 604-740-1252 or email coastrespclinic@gmail.com.

The Respiratory Assessment Clinic is open seven days a week from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Please note that this clinic is only for people living on the Sunshine Coast and that it is by appointment only.

Please check the Coast Reporter and the Local Weekly websites regularly for updates on COVID-19 in our community, and tune in daily on Eastlink Community TV at 5:30, 7:30 and 10:00 PM. Also stay tuned to Coast FM for breaking news on COVID-19.

Keep well, wash your hands, keep your distance, and stay at home unless you have a medical emergency or another essential task!

The Sunshine Coast COVID Physician Task Force

Dr Jennifer Baxter, Dr Ted Krickan, Dr Herman Mentz, Dr Brian Nelson, Dr Daren Spithoff