

Dear Fellow Sunshine Coast Residents:

It's a delicate balance isn't it? How do we do the right thing when others choose not to? How do we encourage those around us to practice social distancing in a way that is respectful and caring? How do we express our concerns in a way that increases the likelihood of a positive resolution when we interact with people who choose to visit the Coast during the COVID-19 pandemic? How do we maintain and build the positive spirit of our community when we are stressed and worried and, in some cases, directly affected by COVID-19?

Like many people on the Coast, we were frustrated to see hundreds of visitors ignoring Public Health advice and coming up to the Sunshine Coast this past weekend. At the same time, most of us continue to work together and to find ways to support each other in ways that range from simple and practical to beautiful and inspiring. Often the simple and practical are also beautiful and inspiring. We would encourage everyone to continue to focus on the many amazing things that are happening in our community, and to continue to build our community in ways that will make us stronger and more connected when this is all over.

In the meantime, we will continue to advocate for voluntary adherence to social distancing and travel restriction measures and would support more enforceable measures if it appears that too many people continue to put our healthcare system and our community at risk. If you feel strongly about this, we would encourage you to write to our provincial and federal representatives to request more effective measures to address these issues.

We were very pleased to see the provincial government step forward to provide additional mental health support to all British Columbians, through funding counselling services as well as increasing free online access to group and self-help programs such as Living Life to the Full and Bounce Back. If you feel you are needing additional support or wish to find out more about available resources, please visit the [Canadian Mental Health Association](#) website.

Locally, Dr.'s Gupta, Kitt and Welgemoed will be hosting their second weekly online MedTalks session on Tuesday, April 14 from 2:00 to 3:00 PM. Tuesday's topic will be on managing emotions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please check the [Sechelt Hospital Foundation](#) website for details.

Given that we have seen a number of cases on the Lower Mainland where symptoms have worsened rapidly in people with initial mild symptoms, we are now asking everyone on the Sunshine Coast who develops cold or flu symptoms and goes into self isolation to call their family doctor to let them know. If you do not have a family doctor, please call the Respiratory Assessment Clinic to let us know. You will receive a follow up call within 24 to 48 hours to ensure that you do not need to be assessed further.

Please remember that returning travelers must self-isolate for 14 days from the date of return, and everyone with even mild cold or flu symptoms must self-isolate for a minimum of ten days from the onset of symptoms (with or without a travel history).

Recently updated guidelines now state that self-isolation must be extended past ten days if fevers have not been resolved for at least 72 hours and if symptoms (other than a dry cough) persist at ten days. Self isolation guidelines are available at the [BC CDC](#) website.



If you develop more severe cold or flu-like symptoms and feel you need to see a doctor, or your symptoms have not improved after five to seven days, please call or text the Respiratory Assessment Clinic at 604-740-1252 or email <mailto:coastrespclinic@gmail.com>. If your symptoms are severe enough to require an ambulance to get to hospital, call 911.

Please note that the Respiratory Assessment Clinic is open seven days a week from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM and is intended for people living or staying on the Sunshine Coast.

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. The SCR and the Town of Sechelt are also putting out regular COVID-19 emergency updates with community-specific information on local government services.

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

The Sunshine Coast COVID Physician Task Force

-Dr Jennifer Baxter
-Dr Herman Mentz
-Dr Daren Spithoff

-Dr Ted Krickan
-Dr Brian Nelson

